

Enhanced 911 Legislation in Virginia

What Your Organization Needs to Know to Be Compliant



Background

Did you know that the level of 911 protection millions of Americans have in their homes is far better than what they receive at their nearby office, campus, hospital, or government building?

This is because the phone systems of many large facilities, such as office buildings, healthcare institutions, colleges, and universities transmit only the main billing phone number to the 911 answering point – not the 911 caller’s exact phone number. By providing only the main billing number, the 911 answering point can only derive the main billing address of where the 911 caller is located. In many cases the main billing phone number and main billing address are not enough for emergency personnel to find the 911 caller. The ability to pinpoint a caller’s exact location is known as enhanced 911 (E911).

In situations where a caller’s precise whereabouts could not be determined, emergency response teams have been unable to help until it was too late. Several 911-related wrongful death cases have gone to trial, and juries have not been sympathetic to organizations that didn’t take precautionary measures to protect the people on their premises.

Changes in Legislation Are Sweeping the Country Regarding Enhanced 911 Services

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) have led the charge to encourage legislators to create more strict E911 regulations and protection. Many states have implemented laws requiring organizations to be responsible for taking measures in support of E911. As an example, non-compliant businesses in Illinois and Minnesota could face thousands of dollars in fines for neglecting to carry out E911 safety measures.

Why E911?

It is the law in Virginia.

Owners of new multi-line telephone systems (PBXs) must use E911 so that emergency callers can be located.

Safety is key.

Keeping employees, students, visitors, and the reputation of your facility safe is a priority for any campus or business. E911 is an extension of this objective.

Liability and fines can be avoided.

Failure to provide E911 protection could result in regulatory fines and expose your organization to large damages from civil and criminal litigation. Viewed in the context of a potential liability, the cost of deploying an E911 system is much easier to justify. Also, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) may consider failing to adopt E911 as evidence that an institution did not maintain a hazard-free workplace for employees. That could also result in regulatory fines.

Virginia's E911 Legislation (Effective July 1, 2009)

Virginia has enacted legislation which specifically addresses the issue of PBX phone systems and 911 call handling. Below is the exact wording of the law:

§ 56-484.23. Provision of emergency call information.

A. The MLTS provider of any multiline telephone system that is acquired or installed on or after July 1, 2009, commencing on the date of its installation, shall maintain and operate the MLTS in a manner that ensures that each emergency call placed from any telephone station on the MLTS provides either (i) calling party information to the 9-1-1 network that connects to the PSAP or (ii) an alternative method of providing call location information.

B. Notwithstanding the requirements of subsection A, the MLTS provider of any multiline telephone system using portable VoIP services that is acquired or installed on or after July 1, 2009, commencing on the date of its installation, shall make all reasonable efforts to maintain and operate the MLTS in a manner that ensures that each emergency call placed from any telephone station on the MLTS provides either: (i) calling party information to the 9-1-1 network that connects to the PSAP or (ii) an alternative method of providing call location information.

C. The MLTS provider shall arrange to update the automatic location identification database with appropriate master street address guide, valid address and callback information corresponding to the calling party information for each telephone station. Such updates shall be provided as soon as practicable for new MLTS installations or within one business day of record completion of the actual changes for previously installed systems. When an MLTS provider obtains service through a MLTS service provider, the MLTS service provider shall be responsible for meeting this requirement. [View source](#)

How Amcom Software Can Help You Achieve E911 Compliance

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