

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



RI E-911 UNIFORM EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM DIVISION **2022 ANNUAL REPORT**



Daniel J. McKee, Governor

*Colonel Darnell S. Weaver
Director, Department of Public Safety
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police*

*Arthur J. Martins
Director, Rhode Island E-911*

311 Danielson Pike
North Scituate, RI 02857
Telephone: (401) 459-0911
Fax: (401) 459-0933
Website: RI911.RI.GOV

Director's Message

I am pleased to present the Rhode Island E-911 2022 Annual Report. This document summarizes the overall activities of the agency and our ability to meet the public safety needs of the community and all those whom we serve.

As the State of Rhode Island's first, first responders, the agency processed 477,270 E-911 calls in 2022. This represents a decrease of approximately 4% from 2021, when the agency processed 498,395 calls.

Of the 477,270 E-911 calls received in 2022, 342,302 of these calls were transferred to a local, state, or federal emergency response agency. The difference in total incoming calls and total transferred calls is because certain incidents will generate multiple calls to E-911. For example, fires and motor vehicle collisions will typically result in numerous calls to E-911. RI E-911 also receives dropped or hang up calls, calls of a non-emergency nature, as well as routine test calls that are used to verify the technology is working as intended. These calls contribute to the total number of calls received but are generally not transferred to an emergency response agency such as a police or fire department.

Additionally, agency personnel also executed 84,936 call backs to dropped or hang up calls. These calls are considered as emergencies. Telecommunicators will return the call, leave a message, and send emergency responders to conduct a well-being check of the premises.

In July 2022, the agency implemented Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). EMD is a highly structured system that enhances medical services and pre-arrival instructions provided by our telecommunicators (call-takers). The procedures utilized by our staff allows them to quickly narrow down the caller's type of medical issue or trauma to send the appropriate personnel and equipment to the medical emergency. The essential information needed to evaluate and process the call is obtained when the telecommunicator asks specific questions of the caller, as well as the corresponding answers provided by the caller. Based on the acquisition of the essential information provided by the caller, the telecommunicator can determine the most likely type of problem and will be able to provide structured instructions to the caller prior to the arrival of emergency responders. These directives may include life support directions (CPR), how to control bleeding, and many other types of conditions that require medical attention. Furnished with this critical information, our telecommunicators can relay vital data to the emergency responders while they are enroute to better prepare for the emergency they will encounter upon their arrival.

Despite the slight reduction in overall calls for service from 2022 to 2021, the amount of time required to process a medical call has increased. This is related to the introduction of EMD. Prior to the introduction of EMD, it took, on average, approximately one minute and thirty-five seconds to process any 911 call. The average time it took to process a 911 call in 2022 was two minutes and twenty-nine seconds. This increase in call processing time is related to the questions our telecommunicators ask when processing a medical call within the EMD protocols. In fact, the time it takes to process a medical call, using the EMD procedures and protocols is approximately three minutes and fifty seconds.

Workflow calls in queue (calls not immediately answered and temporarily referred to an automated message), opioid calls, domestic violence calls, depression calls, EMD calls, and many other measurements are evaluated to understand any developing trends and is used to support our partner agencies.

A priority for 2022, and into 2023 and beyond, is our ability to address the challenges of attrition, recruitment, and retention. There is a continuous effort to streamline the hiring process to meet the staffing demands necessary to support the needs of an efficient Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP or call center). We have undertaken a vigorous effort towards recruiting personnel. In addition to placing vacancy announcements on the State's personnel website, advertising in newspapers, publicizing our vacancies on multiple social media platforms, we have also begun to attend job fairs at various colleges and universities using some of our enthusiastic employees who showcase the benefits and realistic expectations of the profession. This outreach has been met with success and we will continue these recruitment efforts and educational practices in the future.

In 2022, the agency lost a total 12 telecommunicators and supervisors throughout the course of the year. One member retired from the agency, and one was terminated. Seven staff members left the agency for

other employment opportunities elsewhere, and the other 3 employees left for an unknown reason. During the same time the agency was able to hire 12 personnel, but we were only able to retain 5 employees. Many of the staff members who left in 2022, were also hired in 2022. The net loss for the agency was 7 personnel in calendar year 2022.

During 2021, the agency began the deployment of Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) to replace legacy copper wire, and analog phones. The technology provides additional caller information, which was not previously available for the E-911 telecommunicators to transfer to local, state, or federal emergency response agencies. This project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2023.

All agency members have attained FEMA certifications in IS100 and IS200. This will permit the agency to become eligible to apply for certain federal grants and develop cooperative partnerships. RI E-911 is a member of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), providing our staff with access to a multitude of resources supplied by industry experts.

We maintain professional relationships with organizations such as the Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs, the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, the National Association of State 911 Administrators, along with many other federal, state, local, and private agencies, or organizations.

We are proud of the services we provide to the public, and we strive to continue to provide the most current technological advances available. We want to be known as more than just a number to call (911) in the event of an emergency. We want to be an educational resource for the public concerning the various services we provide, the capabilities that can be developed through shared informational resources, advanced technical solutions, data mining, innovative predicative analytics, and emerging technological advances.

RI E-911 wants to thank the citizens and visitors of the State of Rhode Island for your confidence in our staff. The men and women of RI E-911 work tirelessly to assist you regardless of the time of day and in all weather conditions to provide aid and guidance when an emergency occurs. They will answer your emergency call with professionalism, and provide you the most efficient help, service, support, and assistance available.

Respectfully submitted,



Arthur J. Martins
RI E-911 Director

GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

In 2008 the Rhode Island General Assembly passed Article 9 of House Bill 7390 to reorganize many functions of state government. The major focus of this reorganization was to bring several law enforcement and criminal justice agencies previously under the Department of Administration under one organizational structure. This re-structuring created the Department of Public Safety.

The goal of the consolidation of these agencies was to assure the provision of professional services, enable the most efficient and effective use of the state's public safety resources, allow for the consolidation of communications, training, and operating procedures of these agencies, and protect the lives and promote the safety of the citizens of the State of Rhode Island.

The legislation named the Superintendent of the Rhode Island State Police as the Director of the Department of Public Safety. Accordingly, all directors of these agencies report to the Director. The Director is appointed by, reports directly to, and serves at the pleasure of the Governor.

A statutory Advisory Commission acts in an advisory capacity to the Director. Its composition and function are described in Section 39-21-4, General Laws, State of Rhode Island:

- **39-21-4 Advisory Commission.** – (a) There shall be an E 9-1-1 Uniform Emergency Telephone System Advisory Commission consisting of fourteen (14) members to be appointed in the following manner: five (5) of the members shall be: the Director of the Department of Health or his or her designee, the Fire Marshal or his or her designee, the Colonel of the Rhode Island State Police or his or her designee, the State Telecommunications Director or his or her designee, and the Administrator of the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers or his or her designee; three (3) members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House: one of whom shall be a member of the House of Representatives, and one of whom shall be a representative of the Police Chiefs' Association, and one of whom shall be a representative of the telecommunication services provider that is the primary provider to the E 9-1-1 PSAP; three (3) members shall be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be a member of the Senate, one of whom shall be a representative of the Fire Chiefs' Association, one of whom shall be a representative of the wireless telecommunication industry; and three (3) members shall be appointed by the governor: two (2) of whom shall be representatives of the public, one of whom shall be representative of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns.
 - (b) Members of the Commission shall serve five (5) year terms, except for ex officio members.
 - (c) The Advisory Commission may make such recommendations and give such advice to the Director of the division as it deems appropriate.

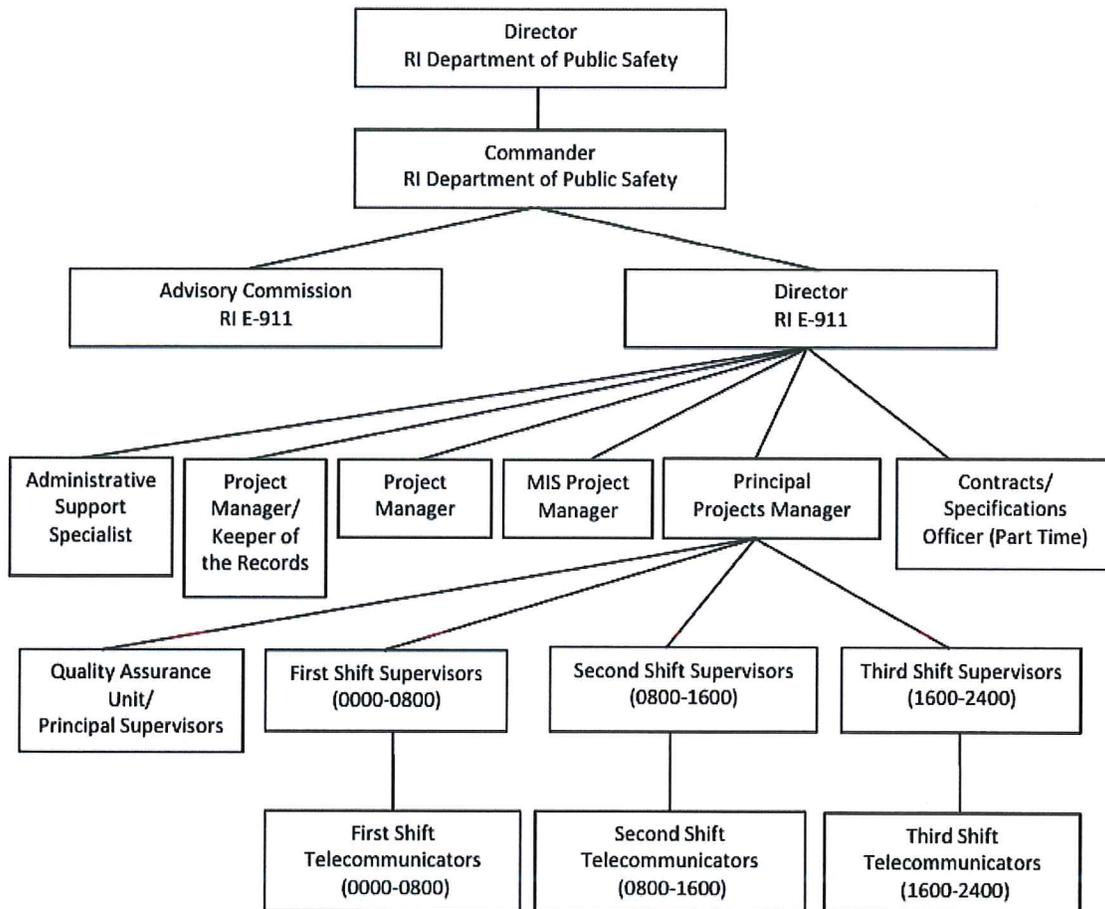
ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETINGS WERE SUSPENDED DUE TO THE PANDEMIC IN 2021, AND 2022, MEETINGS WILL RESUME IN 2023

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

RI E-911 Uniform Emergency Telephone Agency like many organizations is comprised of an Administrative and an Operational staff.

The Administrative staff consists of the Director, Principal Project Manager, Contracts and Specifications Officer, three Project Managers, and an Administrative Support Specialist. The Administrative staff leads and supports the agency's operational personnel. The administrative staff performs all the executive functions necessary for the agency to succeed.

The Operational staff consists of the Quality Assurance Team (Principal Supervisors), Shift Supervisors and Telecommunicators whose primary objective is to provide an efficient and effective method for Rhode Island residents and visitors to request emergency assistance and guidance by dialing "9-1-1" on traditional landline telephones and wireless cellular telephones (by voice or text). Requests are received in a central statewide communications center and are transferred to the appropriate Federal, State, or local public safety agencies for notification and rapid response.



2022 OPERATIONAL STATISTICS

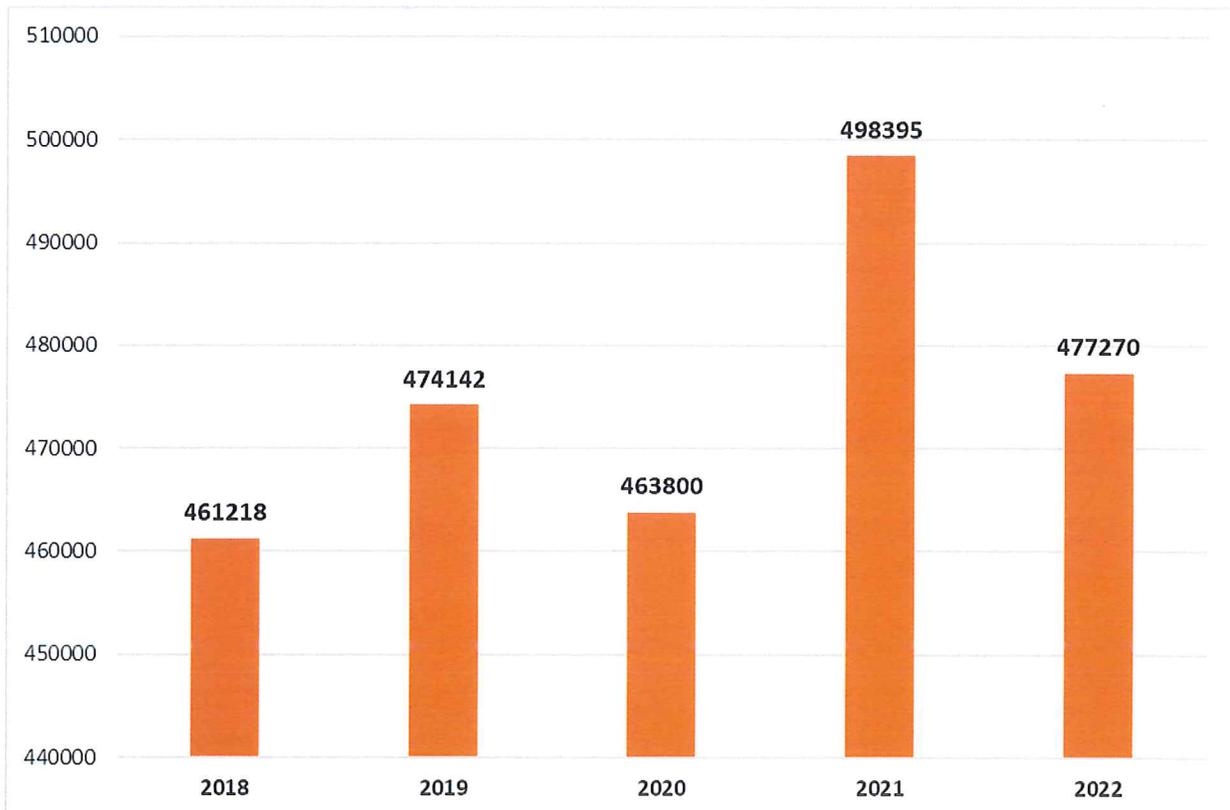
Call volume reports are generated weekly, quarterly, semi-annually, and annually through the combined efforts and data processing skills of our E-911 administrative staff, shift supervisors, and technology vendors.

In 2022, RI E-911 received a total of 477,270 incoming calls resulting in 342,302 transferred calls for emergency response services. The difference in total incoming calls and total transferred calls is because certain incidents, such as fires and motor vehicle collisions, will generate multiple calls. E-911 also receives dropped or hang up calls, calls of a non-emergency nature, as well as routine test calls which is used to verify and authenticate that the technology is working as intended. These calls contribute to the total number of calls received but do not result in a transferred call.

Wireless calls comprised 91.8% of total call volume. This information along with transferred data can be found on the next two pages of this document.

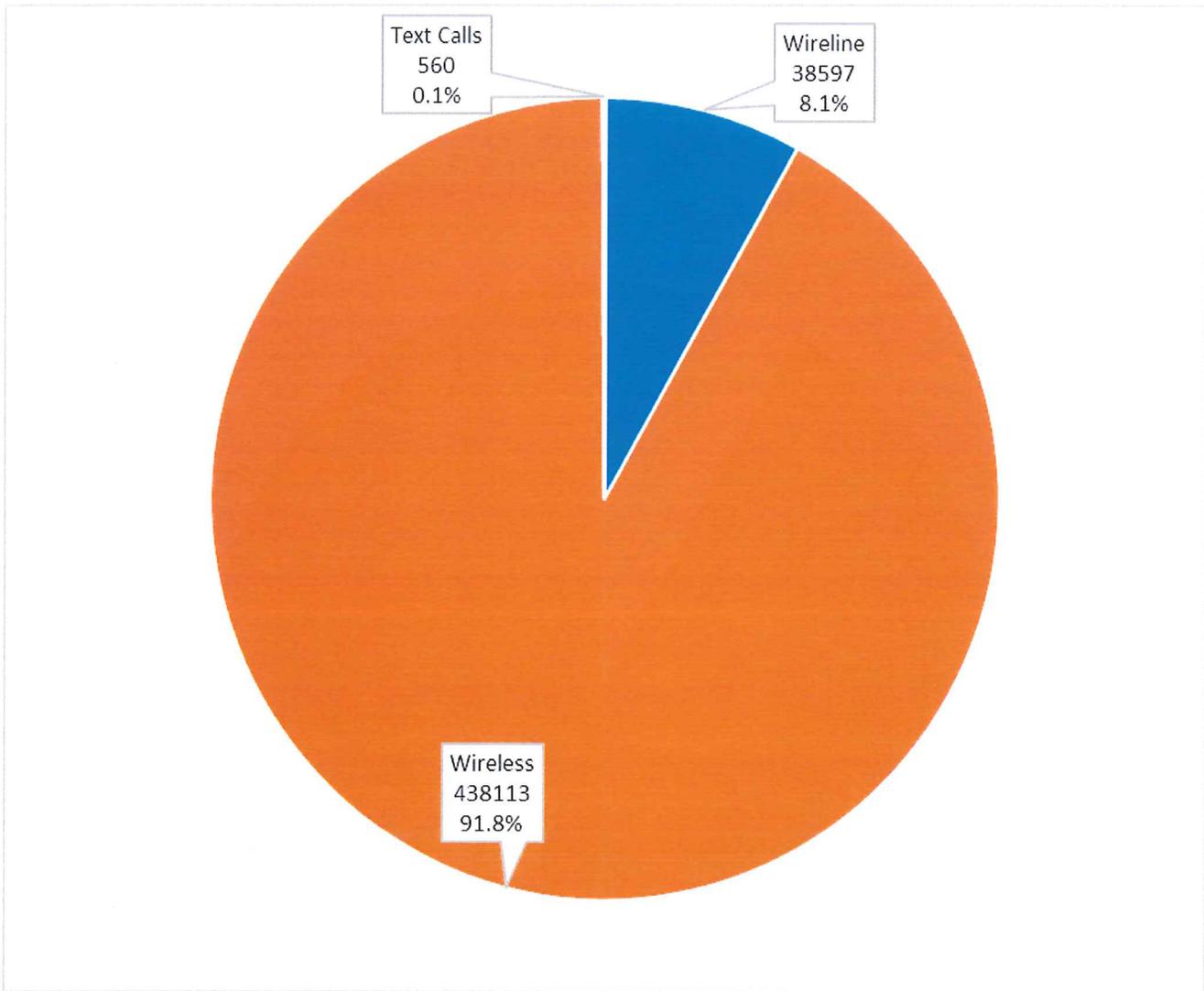
Calls in queue (calls not immediately answered and temporarily referred to an automated message) increased by 71% from 7,326 to 12,592 between 2021 and 2022. To maintain the quality of service, there was a commensurate increase in both voluntary and involuntary overtime.

CALL VOLUME REPORT



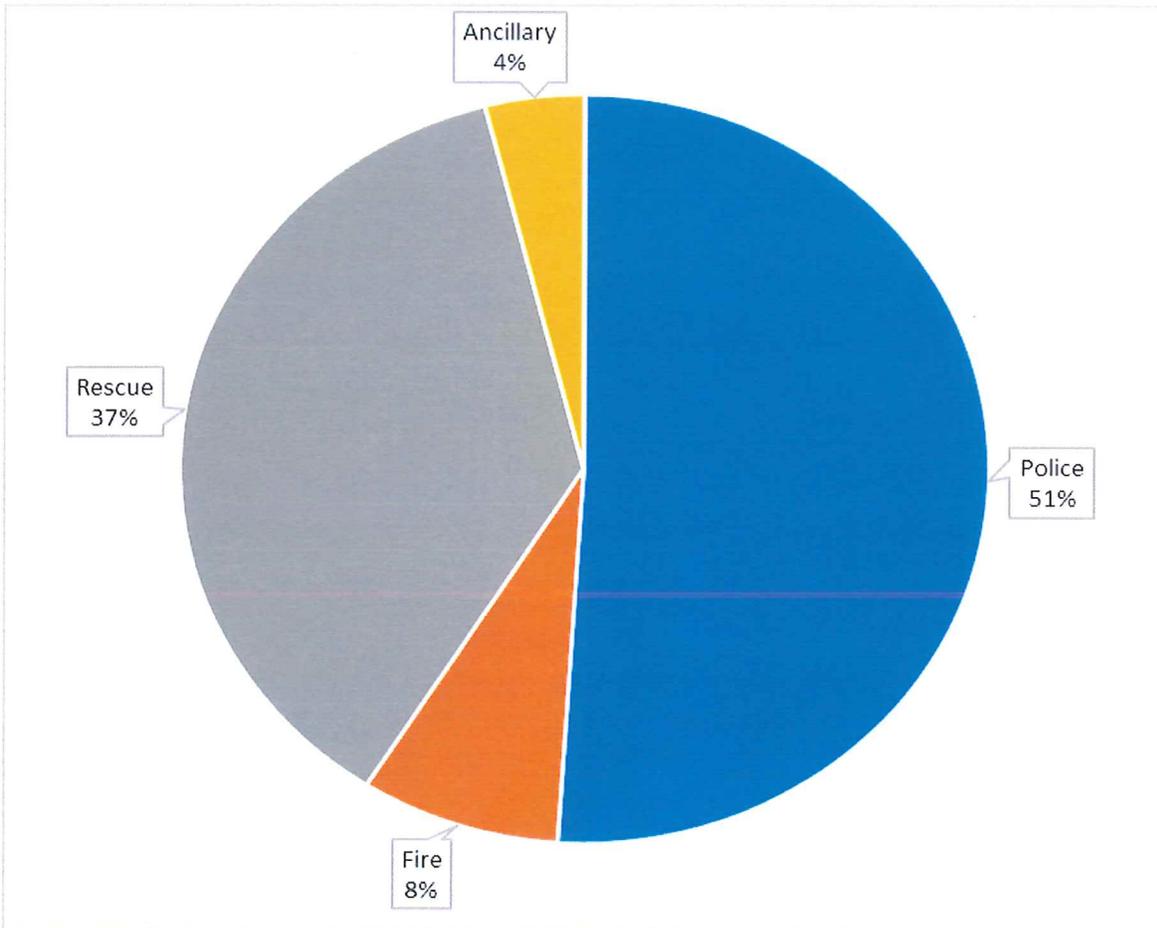
Incoming 911 Calls for 2022

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Calls</u>	<u>Percentage of Calls</u>
Wireline	38,597	8.1%
Wireless	438,113	91.8%
Text Calls	560	0.1%
Total Incoming Calls	477,270	100%



Transferred 911 Calls for 2022

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Calls</u>
Police	51%
Fire	8%
Rescue	37%
Ancillary Calls	4%
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Total	100%
Total Transfers	342,302



2022 OVERVIEW

TRAINING

RI E-911 conducts a very comprehensive training program for new personnel. After the interview process, successful candidates are invited to a formal orientation. During the orientation, candidates are made aware of the specific job requirements. For example, what is necessary as an "essential public safety" employee. During orientation the candidates are given basic information on what the job duties include, what they can expect working in an E-911 environment, the training process and development expectations, the reality concerning the nature of calls normally received, and other vital information related to employment as an E-911 telecommunicator.

Successful candidates are required to undergo and pass the following job prerequisites before beginning the training process to become an E-911 telecommunicator.

- (a) a criminal background check,
- (b) a physical examination,
- (c) a psychological evaluation,

New employees are expected to participate in a training program which will last for approximately three to four months and includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a) reviewing policies and procedures,
- b) listening to 911 calls for review and comment,
- c) familiarizing themselves with the agency's software and hardware programs,
- d) learning the agency's workflow and nomenclature
- e) taking live 911 calls in a controlled and supervised environment,
- f) American Heart Association First Aid and CPR certifications
- g) Emergency Medical Dispatcher certification
- h) listening to guest speakers from various state agencies and other disciplines whose clients traditionally dial 911 for help.

RI E-911 now requires employees to become certified in FEMA ICS 100 and 200 which are necessary to be compliant with Federal Grant guidelines. RI E-911 plans to offer additional continuing education classes, such as, stress management, autism awareness, HAM radio operator, management for supervisors, armed assailant, etc. We are also exploring the necessary steps to become an accredited agency.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Over the past three years, RI E-911 has had the responsibility of operating a critical 24x7x365 operation during the continuation of the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic. RI E-911 noticed an apparent correlation between the announcement of shelter-in-place orders and a reported temporary spike in call volume relative to callers afflicted with symptoms of COVID-19, opioid related calls for service, and domestic violence related calls. These call categories were tracked and forwarded to the RI Department of Health and the RI Department of Public Safety for additional analysis and assessment.

COVID-19 has affected the anxiety and stress levels of our entire staff, and the agency has been proactive by offering various support services that promoted staff wellness during the height of the pandemic.

RI E-911 has taken specific wellness measures including but not limited to some of the following:

- Promoting Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
- Arranging for stress management presentations.
- Timely and consistent updates from the RI Department of Health
- Dissemination of wellness webinars, articles, and related resources
- Arranging for visits from service animals

RI E-911 had to implement measures to ensure the cleanliness of the PSAP and the health of the staff. The measures were taken to avoid crippling the operations due to a widespread infection and/or quarantining protocols. The following measures were implemented:

- Activation of our Alternate PSAP
- Health screenings
- Changes to minimum staffing requirements
- Ample supplies of PPE
- New policies/procedures relative to PSAP cleanliness and social distancing measures
- Option for technical and administrative staff to work remotely.
- Taking employees temperatures at the start of shifts
- Installing UV disinfectant lights inside HVAC systems
- Prohibiting non-PSAP personnel in the call center during potential high virus transmission periods