



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Information Manager Carrie Braun
W: 714-647-7042 | C: 714-904-7042

Orange County public safety agencies launch Text-to-911

SANTA ANA, Ca. (February 6, 2019) – Orange County law enforcement and fire dispatch centers are now equipped with Text-to-911 to allow the hearing impaired, speech impaired or those in an emergency situation who are unable to make a phone call reach emergency services dispatchers by text message.

Text-to-911 was jointly launched by every Orange County public safety agency with a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) on February 6. In 2018, more than 1,243,092 calls were made to 911 in Orange County. Eighty percent of those calls came from mobile phones.

Remember to always call if you can, and text if you can't. Calling provides a faster response, allowing information to be relayed to responding public safety personnel as quickly as possible. It also allows dispatchers to hear background noises or conversations and gather additional information.

"It's important that every member of our community has a safe and effective way to access emergency services in Orange County, and Text-to-911 provides that," said Sheriff Don Barnes.

When texting, residents should first provide their location and whether they need law enforcement, fire or medical aid services.

"It's critical that those using Text-to-911 accurately share their location and offer as many clear details as possible," said Orange County Fire Authority Chief Brian Fennessy. "Being precise means we can more quickly reach those who need help most."

More about Text-to-9-1-1

- Ensure location services on your mobile phone are turned on and be prepared to provide your location in the text.
- To get started, type "911" in the "to" field of the text message and, in addition to your location, provide the type of emergency services you need (police, fire or medical).
- Use plain text and refrain from abbreviations.
- Dispatchers cannot accept pictures, videos or icons.
- Text-to-9-1-1 cannot be used in a group text.
- If your text does not go through, you should receive a message to make a voice call.
- Calling or texting 911 when it is not an emergency is a crime punishable by up to a year in County jail and a fine of up to \$1,000.