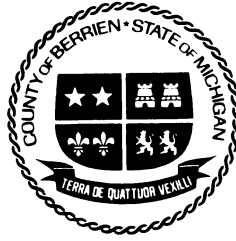


BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

OFFICE OF
911 ADMINISTRATION



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Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022

Telephone: (269) 983-3060
www.berriencounty.org

September 6, 2016

"TEXT-TO-911" IS AVAILABLE IN BERRIEN COUNTY

The Berrien County and Niles City 9-1-1 centers are now capable of corresponding with mobile device users via text messaging. Berrien County 9-1-1 has been testing with Text-to-911 services since early March, after new 9-1-1 customer premises equipment was installed at both centers. The final provider was brought on-line September 1, 2016

Customers with a text or data plan provided by a wireless carrier service may access the 9-1-1 system in Berrien County. This alternative may be utilized by callers who cannot speak openly to summon emergency services. It is also a major step forward in providing more convenient access to public-safety services by our hearing and speech impaired citizens.

Users should be reminded that text correspondence is a more time-consuming and abbreviated method of communication than voice; calling 9-1-1 and speaking to an operator remains the best way to receive the most effective public-safety response.

We encourage everyone to: **Call if you can; Text if you can't!**

Important Information about Text-to-911:

- Location of the emergency is the most vital information when placing a Text-to-911.
- Be prepared to answer follow-up text questions and follow instructions.
- Don't text while driving.
- A text or data plan provided by a mobile carrier service is required to access Text-to-911.
- Photos and videos cannot be sent via Text-to-911 at this time.
- 9-1-1 Centers cannot receive group text messages.
- Don't abuse 911 - Text-to-911 is only for emergencies.
- Text-to-911 is not yet available everywhere in Michigan and the U.S.
- If you attempt to send a Text-to-911 and service is not available, you will receive an "auto-reply" message advising service is not available, and to make a voice call.

For further information, please review the following FCC link.

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/text-911-quick-facts-faqs>