



Frequently Asked Questions about 911 Services

Emergency calls in Northfield for Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services are handled through a consolidated dispatch center in Glenview. This consolidated public safety cooperative provides operational and financial efficiencies through economies of scale and maximization of resources.

When calling 911 it is important to:

- Remain calm, and listen to the questions asked by the Telecommunicator.
- Know your address and the location of the emergency. If you do not know the specific address, be sure to note the town you are in, major intersections or landmarks. Try your best to be specific.
- Don't hang up until told to disconnect the call.

Why am I asked for my location when I call 911? Doesn't the 911 center know where I am?

Unless you are calling 911 from your home phone, there is a good chance the 911 center doesn't have your exact location. Although you can order a pizza or a car service from your smartphone and they know where you are, the 911 technology currently in place does not have dependable location information and cell providers are years from improving this. When answering a call, the Telecommunicator will ask the location where the incident is occurring, including the name of the town you are calling from. It is very important to know where you are or where the incident is occurring. If you do not know the exact street address, the next best location is the closest intersection. This information is needed on all 911 calls but especially wireless calls as there is no guarantee your initial wireless call will route to the correct 911 center.

Why am I asked so many questions by the Telecommunicator? Doesn't this delay the response?

The Telecommunicator may ask you questions that you believe are irrelevant, but trust in their training and experience, and they will guide you to provide the information needed by the first responders to get you the quickest and most helpful response. There are multiple Telecommunicators working in the 911 center, and while you are being asked questions by one, someone else reading the information on a computer screen is actually dispatching based on the information you are providing.

Why do I need to stay on the phone when I misdial or change my mind about dialing 911?

Never just hang up. You may have called 911 by accident, or your situation may have resolved itself, but it is important to let the Telecommunicator know this. If you end the call abruptly, the Telecommunicators will assume that something has gone wrong and will call you back or send help anyway. This takes away from the 911 center's ability to take calls and dispatch services to true on-going emergencies. Always make sure the Telecommunicator tells you it is OK to disconnect before you hang up.

Is my 911 call answered by someone in Northfield?

The responders who come to assist you are most likely from your community, but your call is answered in a consolidated dispatch center by trained professionals working outside of your community. Each Telecommunicator receives extensive classroom and hands-on training including geographic awareness and ride-alongs with those who serve your community. In addition, Telecommunicators have access to highly detailed mapping technologies.

Does Northfield have 311 service for non-emergency calls?

No. All non-emergency matters should be directed to the Village during business hours.