

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Text to 911 goes live and operational for all residents and visitors of Lee County on Dec. 15

Call if You Can, Text if You Can't

Fort Myers, FL, Dec. 15, 2021 – The Lee Board of County Commissioners and Lee County Sheriff's Office today announced that county residents and visitors now can send a text to 911 in an emergency.

Placing a voice call to 911 remains the most effective method for requesting emergency assistance.

Text to 911 should only be used when the caller is deaf or hard of hearing; experiencing a medical event that makes clear speech difficult; or is in a dangerous situation where it is not possible to safely make a voice call, such as an active shooter, domestic violence incident or home invasion. Text to 911 is only for emergencies. It is a crime to text or call 911 as a "test" or with a false report.

When texting to 911 in an emergency:

- Enter 911 in the "To" field (do not use dashes between numbers)
- Give your exact location and type of emergency.
- Keep it brief.
- Be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 911 call taker.

Do not:

- Do not use slang, abbreviations, GIFs, or emojis.
- Do not send to more than one person; group texts are not received.
- Do not text and drive.
- Do not send photos and videos.

A text or data plan is required to text to 911 and regular rates apply. Mobile carriers handle texts to 911 like any other message. You can experience the same service speeds or delays, depending on network strength in your area.

The Lee Board of County Commissioners is committed to Public Safety technology initiatives. Text to 911 is one of several initiatives planned in the next few months. Additional projects include:

- The operational launch of the new Government Communications Network P25 project in February 2022, improving the capacity and resiliency of countywide emergency communications.
- The arrival of Next Generation 911 in April 2022, allowing the public to share videos, images and texts with emergency call centers and improving the handling of 911 calls in Lee County.

For more information about texting 911, visit www.leegov.com/911

The Lee County Department of Public Safety comprises several primary divisions with functions designed to assist residents, visitors and local government agencies. These include Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Emergency Management, Emergency Communications, and Technology Services. Visit www.leegov.com for more information.