

# Fact Sheet

2022



DEPARTMENT OF  
**EMERGENCY  
COMMUNICATIONS**

- The Richmond Department of Emergency Communications **answers and dispatches all 911 calls and text messages in Richmond**. The department also handles answering and dispatching some other non-emergency calls for City of Richmond services.
- The department handled 264,117 911 calls, 2,137 text messages, and 286,656 calls for service in calendar year 2021, making it **one of the busiest in the Commonwealth of Virginia and per capita in the United States**.
- The department earned its first national Public Safety Communications Accreditation on May 4, 2019, from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. It is **one of only 2 percent of all emergency communications centers in the United States to earn this accreditation**, meaning it follows international best practices in public safety, management and service delivery. It is renewed annually.
- Currently 43 emergency communications officers (out of an allotment of 70) work around the clock to answer and dispatch calls. Additional employees with the department install and maintain the city's public safety communications systems. Support and administrative staff members bring the department's **total number of employees to about 117**.
- The department's Technology Division **supports all emergency radio, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems and telephone communications for public safety agencies**. Its staff installs lights, sirens and mobile data computers in police, fire and utility vehicles. It also supports all of the department's technology equipment, including CAD, fire station alerting, 911 phones, cameras, access control, mobile data modems and notification systems.
- The department is a **recognized leader in implementing technological advances** to keep Richmond safe:
  - ▶ It developed an original computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system that was used by the city, and other localities, for 26 years.
  - ▶ It developed the Automated Secure Alarm Protocol (ASAP), which has won 12 project awards, is in use by 20 alarm monitoring companies and more than 60 emergency communications centers, and is an American National Standard.
  - ▶ In 2017, it led the Richmond area in offering text-to-911 services.
  - ▶ In 2018, it became one of the first in the country to begin using FirstNet, a wireless broadband network built exclusively for public safety.
  - ▶ In 2021, it switched to an Internet Protocol-based 911 system.
- **For more information**
  - ▶ <http://www.rva.gov/911>
  - ▶ Social media @911RVA
  - ▶ Karen L. Gill, communications and marketing analyst, 804-646-8234