

"911, What Is Your Emergency?"

How to Reach Emanuel County 911 and How to Best Communicate—Because Moments Matter!

Knowing when and how to contact 911 can make a crucial difference in an emergency. This guide provides essential dos and don'ts for calling, texting, and video chatting with Emanuel County's E-911 services. Following these tips ensures a smooth process and helps dispatchers send the right assistance as quickly as possible.

• **Voice Calls to 911**

Voice calls remain the most effective method for emergencies where you can speak safely. They enable dispatchers to ask follow-up questions, gather immediate details, and relay information to responders in real-time.

What To Do

Speak clearly. Describe the emergency and provide your location. Take a breath, stay calm, and speak slowly to ensure dispatchers understand you.

Stay on the line. Don't hang up until the dispatcher advises you to. They may have additional questions that can improve response.

Admit mistakes. If you dial 911 accidentally, stay on the line and let the dispatcher know there is no emergency.

What NOT To Do

Don't hang up abruptly. Hanging up without explanation may lead dispatchers to follow up or send responders to confirm safety.

Avoid background noise. If possible, move to a quiet area to minimize distractions and help dispatchers hear you clearly.

• **Texting 911**

Texting is useful if you cannot speak safely, such as in situations requiring silence or for individuals with hearing or speech impairments.

To initiate a text to 911:

1. Open your cell phone's text messaging program and enter 911 in the "To" field.
2. Type a message with the location of the emergency (including city) and the nature of the emergency (what is happening and whether you need police, fire or medical aid).
3. Press the "Send" button or arrow.

Here's how to make the most of your emergency text message:

- **Keep messages simple.** Use clear, concise language, and avoid slang or abbreviations that could confuse the dispatcher.
- **Watch for responses.** The dispatcher may have follow-up questions, so keep an eye on your screen for replies.
- **Avoid lengthy messages.** Stick to the facts to keep communication clear and quick.
- **Don't use group texts.** Texting 911 does not support group messaging, so keep it a direct message to avoid delays.

• **Video Chatting with and Sending Images to 911**

This feature lets you share live video or images directly from the scene, enhancing dispatcher awareness and helping responders arrive prepared. If the footage meets certain standards, it may even be used as evidence in legal proceedings, potentially strengthening a case with visual documentation of the incident.

What To Do

Ensure good visibility. When possible, use the camera to capture a clear view of the emergency scene. This helps dispatchers assess the situation accurately.

Prepare to describe the scene if necessary. Use video to show rather than explain, but be ready to answer follow-up questions as needed.

• **Important Reminders for All Methods**

No matter how you reach 911, following these tips ensures a quick, clear, and effective response. Keep these best practices in mind to help dispatchers get you the assistance you need.

- **Provide location details.** Whether calling, texting, or video chatting, always prioritize your location in the first message.
- **Respond quickly to dispatcher questions.** Each question is asked with a purpose. Answering clearly and quickly supports a faster response.
- **If you mistakenly contact 911, stay on the line** to let the dispatcher know. This prevents unnecessary follow-up actions.

As your 911/EMA director, I'm confident our team of dispatchers, with their extensive training, skill, and compassion, is ready to assist you when it matters most. We hope you'll do your part by approaching 911 communications with clarity and composure. This guide is here to help you make the most of our services and understand when to use each option. For non-urgent matters like property theft without immediate danger, non-injury traffic incidents, or noise complaints, please use our non-emergency line at 478-237-0911. Thank you for partnering with us to keep our community safe and ensuring that 911 remains accessible for true emergencies.

Martha Culbreth

What NOT To Do

- **Don't record unnecessary footage.** Only share relevant visuals to avoid overwhelming the dispatcher with excess information.

Avoid distracting angles. Focus on providing useful visuals that help dispatchers assess the scene efficiently.