



## Calling 9-1-1

**9-1-1** is the telephone number to use when you need immediate police, fire, or medical assistance.

### Call 9-1-1 for:

- Crimes in progress
- Life-threatening situations
- Fires
- Traffic accidents
- Injuries requiring emergency medical attention
- Hazardous chemical spills
- Fire/smoke detector or carbon monoxide alarms that are sounding
- Sparking electrical hazards
- Smoke in a building
- Any other emergency. If in doubt, call 9-1-1

### Don't Call 9-1-1 for:

- Reporting a leaking fire hydrant (call 407-665-2038 instead)
- Inquiring about a large fire or other incident (Tune in local news)
- Seeking information about a previous call
- Other non-emergency incidents. Instead, contact the appropriate County department.

***Do not call 9-1-1 if you do not have a real emergency.*** Non-emergency calls to 9-1-1 can delay response to true emergencies. However, if you are in doubt if your situation is an emergency, call 9-1-1.

### What to Do When Calling 9-1-1

When you get on the phone with a 9-1-1 dispatcher, it is important to remember these things to get help to your emergency as quickly as possible:

- Remain calm.
- Be prepared to give the correct address of your emergency and the phone number from which you are calling.
- Stay on the phone with the dispatcher. Do not hang up until the dispatcher tells you to hang up. Keep in mind that help is being sent simultaneously as the dispatcher takes your information.

- If you are in a secured area, be sure to let the dispatcher know the fastest way for emergency vehicles to gain access. For instance, give the dispatcher a gate code if one is needed.
- The dispatcher is going to ask you several questions about the condition of the patient requiring 9-1-1 services. It is best if the person calling 9-1-1 is near the patient to answer these questions. The dispatcher may also be giving the caller first aid or CPR instructions as needed until the rescuers arrive.

Some of the questions the dispatcher may ask:

- What is the address/location/cross street?
- What is burning, exactly?
- Do you have visible smoke or flame?
- How old is the patient?
- Is the patient conscious?
- Is the patient able to talk to you?
- What is the patient's medical history?

## **What to Do Until Help Arrives**

Before 9-1-1 help arrives at your door, there are certain things you can do to ensure a quick and effective response to your emergency.

If you have a fire or smoke in the house, *get out of the house immediately and do not re-enter.*

If you have a medical emergency, *if someone other than the 9-1-1 caller is available, send them outside to flag arriving emergency units to the emergency.*

If you have a 9-1-1 medical emergency and the patient is taking any prescribed medications, *the care of the patient will be expedited if these are gathered and placed in a bag prior to the arrival of paramedics. Paramedics are able to gain knowledge of the patient's history and condition by looking at medications. They are also required take the patient's medications to the hospital with them for the doctor to examine.*

Before the arrival of emergency personnel, *please make sure all pets are secured to assure the safety of the rescuers as well as that of the pet(s).*

Before you have an emergency, *make sure your address is properly posted and can be seen at night as well as during the day.*

## **9-1-1 Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Does it have to be an emergency to call 9-1-1?**

Yes. When you need an emergency service, dial 9-1-1. This means you need a police officer, a fire engine, or medical rescue unit to come to you as soon as possible. If your situation is not threatening life or property, dial the general number of the County department you need.

**Do dispatchers provide medical care instructions before the arrival of emergency services?**

Fire/Medical Dispatchers are trained to talk callers through life saving techniques while emergency equipment is on the way. You must stay on the phone, listen to instructions, and remain calm when dispatchers are providing life saving techniques. Remember, the dispatcher is not only providing instructions to you, but is also ensuring that emergency help is on the way at the same time!

**Why does the dispatcher ask me so many questions?**

Emergency Fire/Medical Dispatchers follow a predetermined set of questions and protocols. Based on your answers to these questions, they can determine the best level of care and help for you. For example, a heart attack will elicit a different response level than a broken arm, and a trash can fire will elicit a different response than a house fire.