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PRESS RELEASE

DATE: September 11, 2019

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SUBJECT: Dispatch Center Now Accepts Text-to-911 Messages as Alternative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SYNOPSIS:

Beginning on September 16th, the Concord Police Department's emergency dispatchers will be able to receive text messages in situations where the caller is unable to speak aloud. Callers from cellular phones who are unable to make a traditional voice call to 911 can now send emergency text messages to the department's 24-hour Emergency Dispatch Center.

The new Text-to-911 service does not replace phone calls to 911. The option is intended for callers who:

- Are hearing or voice impaired
- Are incapable of talking due to a medical emergency
- May face danger if those persons victimizing them hear their conversations with a 911 operator, such as during an abduction, a home invasion robbery, or a domestic violence situation

Tips for Text-to-911 in an emergency:

- Provide the exact location of the emergency and describe what type of help is needed.
- Keep text messages simple, brief, and concise.
- Do NOT send electronic media, such as Emoji's, photos, or videos.
- Silence your phone if you do not want anyone else to hear the incoming reply messages from the 911 operator.

Traditional voice calls to 911 are still the fastest way to reach emergency help and should always be the first option. The Concord Police Department is proud to offer Text-to-911 as a back-up option and would like to remind the public to call 911 if you can speak aloud and to text 911 only if you cannot.