

# Managing 911 Calls for Non-Emergency Incidents

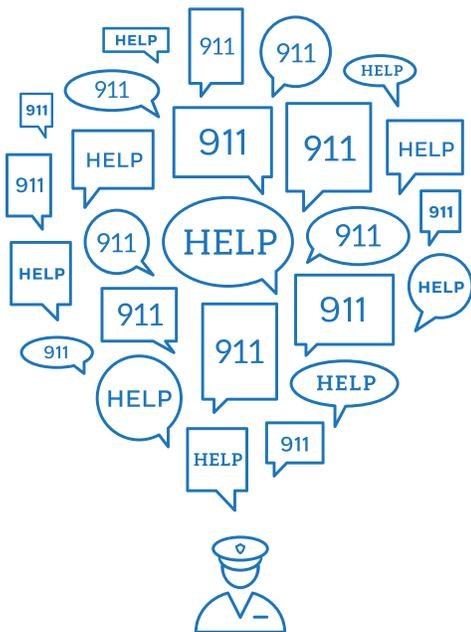
## Department-Wide Briefing

### Overview

Our agency is committed to providing all of our citizens who call 911 a high level of service, and to use our patrol resources as safely and efficiently as possible. We have selected new technology, Case Service, that will provide us with an effective alternative to sending patrol units to certain non-emergency calls when we so choose.

This document is intended to provide agency staff with an understanding of what this technology does and how it is to be used. This document is not intended for distribution to citizens or the media. We have materials that are intended for that purpose.

**Please do not distribute this document outside of the agency.**



### The problem: Call priority vs. customer service

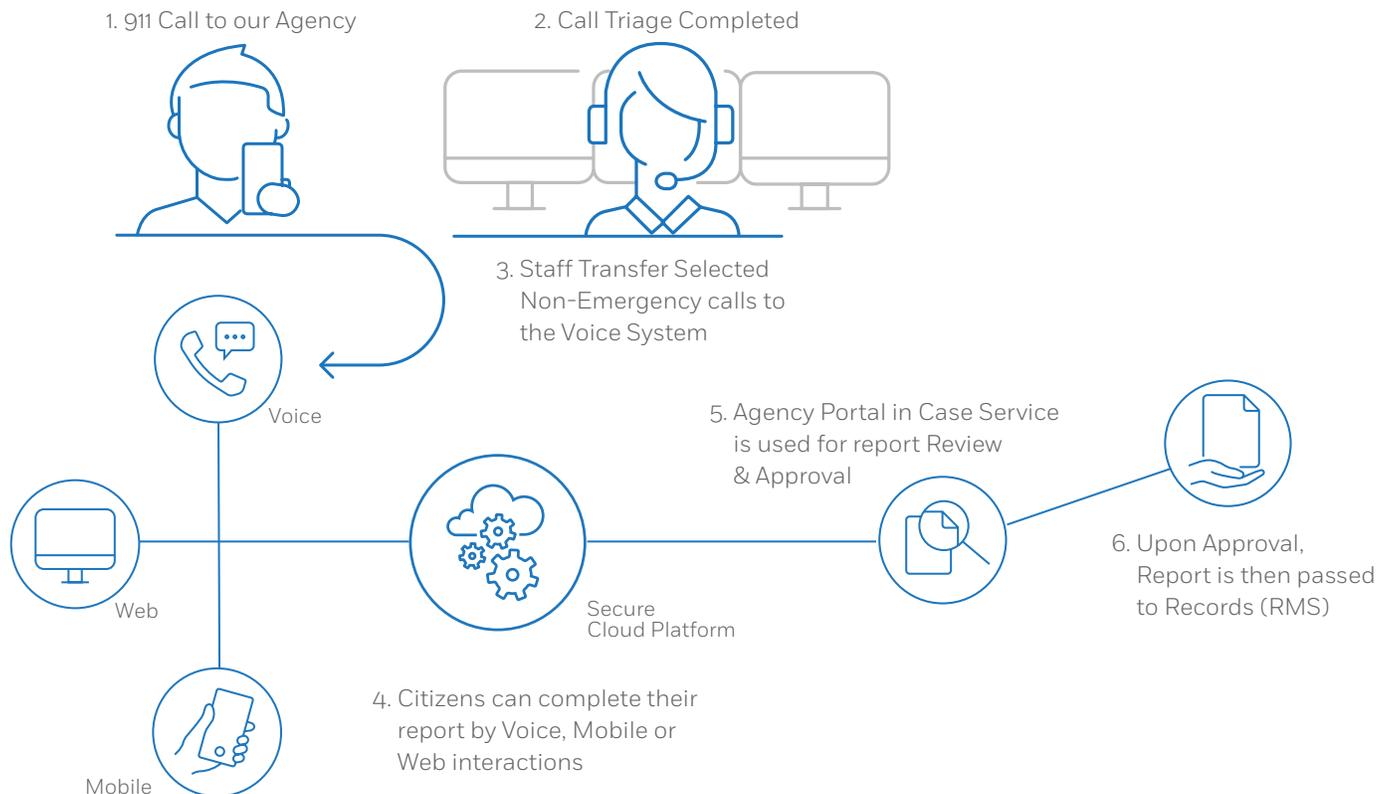
We answer many 911 calls each day—everything from a lost cell phone to an attempted murder. Obviously, we must respond more quickly to calls where lives are in danger. We work hard to ensure the number of patrol units we have on-duty will cover our anticipated needs. Despite having limited resources, our patrol staff must continue to work safely and efficiently even when there are too many calls and not enough units.

Call prioritization helps us use our patrol resources where they are most urgently needed. We make every effort to provide the highest level of service for every 911 caller, and that is why, at times, we want to employ alternative methods to respond to certain non-emergency calls. Protecting our citizens on priority 911 calls is, by definition, part of good customer service. For lower-priority, non-emergency calls, we now have an effective way to help citizens, even if there are no units immediately available to respond.

### Serving citizens: Non-Emergency incidents and Case Service

Case Service is a new alternative made possible by Ten8Tech. It was built by police for police. This service will enable us to off-load selected non-emergency calls to this next-generation, computerized reporting system. It allows us to gather incident details from a citizen without sending a patrol unit. After the citizen completes the initial interview through Case Service, report information is then reviewed and approved by agency staff (if applicable) and then the report goes to Records (RMS).

## Case Service Basics: Voice, Web and Mobile options for our citizens to give us their incident information electronically.



Robust system logic at the core of Case Service engages the citizen with the same investigative techniques used by law enforcement, using a dynamic and responsive interactive engine that minimizes citizen reporting errors.



As citizens talk to Case Service using the Voice, their spoken responses are either processed real-time using computerized voice recognition, or are automatically transcribed. In a short time, all information from the citizen is available electronically for official review in a police-friendly web portal included with Case Service. This enables efficient handling of each report with data validation, automated citizen follow-up, keyword notifications (gun, bomb, etc.), and report output options.

This service is also multilingual and supports a number of languages, not just English and Spanish. Case Service provides our agency with a way to achieve first-call-resolution for citizen requests using the primary means they use to ask for help, the telephone. For those who wish, they may also switch freely between the voice, mobile or web to do their report.

## What we will do differently: Case Service Workflow

Our 911 communications staff will make a small but important change to how they currently operate. In addition, agency staff who typically handle phone reports or front counter reports will now also attend to reports that come to us via Case Service (light-duty officers, community service officers, etc.). Below is the workflow associated with these 911 calls for non-emergency incidents.

1. After 911 calls are triaged and determined to be non-emergency in nature, communications staff will choose to either dispatch a unit—or instead, transfer the citizen to Case Service immediately.
2. Citizens will then interact with Case Service (CS) via the phone:
  - a. Citizens are invited to enter incident details via the web at [www.CaseNumber.com](http://www.CaseNumber.com).
  - b. Citizens are also invited to use a mobile app via a link provided to them by Case Service.
  - c. Citizens submit their responses to interview questions, which will determine subsequent questions.
  - d. Citizens complete the report input within 10-15 minutes on average, depending upon incident details.
3. Level 1 Review: The citizen's report is then reviewed initially and a case number may be assigned if the reviewer is so directed.
  - a. If there is a need to obtain additional information from the reporting party, the reviewer will direct Case Service to do an outbound re-call to the citizen. Case Service will automatically call them and get the additional responses.
4. Level 2 Review: The report will then be reviewed at a second level by a patrol supervisor or other designated staff.
5. The case number for the report will be pulled from CAD and entered then—if not previously done.
6. The report data is transmitted electronically to RMS (or entered by records personnel into RMS—TBD).
7. The citizen may then be provided with a case number upon automatic notification by Case Service.

## Our expectations: When Case Service should be used

The workflow above only applies when our communications staff chooses to transfer a caller to Case Service, or refer them to [CaseNumber.com](http://CaseNumber.com). The number of citizens who will benefit from this alternative reporting method depends upon:

1. The number of non-emergency calls received by 911 staff during a given day
2. The types of incidents we choose to target for this method of service (theft, vandalism, etc.)
3. The relative availability of patrol units at the time given other calls for service

Given our current circumstances, our agency desires to use this alternative to better serve citizens who call us and need to report non-emergency incidents. There may be citizens who insist on having a patrol officer respond in-person to their location, and we should send an officer when possible. However, once we believe a caller is a good candidate to transfer to Case Service, we should endeavor to do that, as it is beneficial to them and to our department!

## Frequently asked questions

### **Q: Who provides Case Service and what makes it a good fit for us?**

**A:** In the summer of 2012, two prior law enforcement officers shared a vision with an assistant chief of police: a new way to take non-emergency reports using a new voice reporting technology they developed. In December 2012, that voice reporting technology was deployed for a few hours at Escondido Police Department and it facilitated the reporting of a stolen cell phone incident. The feedback from the citizen was extremely positive, the report was completed, and no patrol officer was required to respond. Since that point in time, Case Service has been fully developed by the talented staff at Ten8Tech and is now inclusive of voice, mobile, web, and text message. This solution was built by police for police. We share the same challenges faced by thousands of law enforcement agencies across the country that need an alternative way to serve citizens who call about non-emergency incidents.

### **Q: How do we decide which non-emergency calls to transfer to Case Service?**

**A:** Our agency designates the types of cases to target, and the affinity to send a unit, place a call in the queue, or to transfer the caller. Call volume and patrol staffing will likely impact the choice our communications staff makes.

### **Q: What happens when a citizen calls back after starting a report in Case Service he/she didn't finish?**

**A:** We can transfer a citizen back into the system again and they can pick up where they left off. The Access Code (the system gives them) and the PIN (they specify) reconnect the citizen smoothly. Their phone number will also be used to avoid creation of duplicate reports.

### **Q: What if the caller only speaks Spanish or some other language?**

**A:** Case Service will ask the caller to specify English or another language.

### **Q: Why do we want to make people use this system instead of sending a unit?**

**A:** Non-emergency calls are mostly administrative in nature and are well suited for being computerized in this friendly and efficient reporting system. Sending a caller to Case Service gives greater patrol capacity to focus on higher priority activities, increase safety, and do more proactive policing.

### **Q: Can we just publish a non-emergency report telephone number to reduce calls to 911?**

**A:** Case Service is well suited for this option and we may direct citizens to call a dedicated telephone number for certain types of incident reports. However, most citizens are pre-disposed to call 911 when they are a victim of a crime, so we need to anticipate both ways a citizen might call us.

## Department Contacts

For questions or comments related to this, please contact: