

When should I call 911?

911 is for emergencies or things that could become emergencies.

- Is there a threat to life or property?
- Are you or someone else the victim of a crime?
- Do you have a police emergency?
- Do you or someone else have a medical emergency?
- Do you need the fire department?

If the situation seems urgent and has the potential to become dangerous, call 911. Dispatchers will determine whether your call should be handled by 911 or can be transferred to another person or agency. All other calls should be directed to our non-emergency number: (904) 529-2220.

What if I call 911 accidentally?

If you accidentally dial 911, do not hang up. Stay on the line and tell the dispatcher that everything is alright. If you don't, the dispatcher may think that something is wrong. The dispatcher will call you back, and may send a police officer to check on you.

Why do the dispatchers ask so many questions when I call 911?

Emergency dispatchers need to get accurate information to allow responders to make the best decision on how to approach the situation. Callers will be asked:

- Where
- What
- Who
- When
- (maybe) Why

The information you provide a dispatcher is relayed to responding units while they are on their way to the call.

If I call 911, what will they ask me?

What is the location of the emergency?

This is the address where the emergency is actually happening. If you don't know the actual address, tell the dispatcher and then:

- Give cross streets or a "hundred block."
- Provide landmarks, business names or parks near the emergency.
- Look at the house numbers in the area.
- If you are calling from inside a home or business, look on a piece of mail.

When asked for a location, we need you to be specific.

Also, if the suspect just left (such as a theft suspect), we need to know which way that suspect went and a description of how he looked.

If you are asked to describe a suspect, start with the most obvious things.

Some examples are:

- "He was a white male."
- "He/she had a gun."
- "He/she was at least 6 feet tall."
- "He/she was wearing a bright red jacket."
- "He had a long brown beard."

If you describe a vehicle, include:

- License plate information, including the state.
- Color.
- Year. (If unknown, tell the dispatcher if it was a new or old vehicle.)
- Make. (Was it a Honda? Nissan? Ford?)
- Body style. (Was it a 4-door? Hatchback? Pick-up truck?)
- Other things you may remember about it.
- **What is the problem?**
Tell us exactly what happened. Be as concise as possible. Tell us what the problem is now, not what led up to the problem.
- "I see a fight on the corner of Ferris and Palmetto."
- **What is the phone number you're calling from?**
This is the number to the phone you're actually calling from. We need this in case we have to call you back.
 - "I am fighting with my husband."
- "There is a car accident southbound on highway 17 at Center Street, or on the highway by Ace Hardware."

We also need to know if you're going to be at, or near, the scene when we arrive because the police may need to talk to you, or you may need to point out the exact location. We may ask you what kind of car you are in, or what color clothing you are wearing.

Why do the dispatchers ask so many questions during a medical emergency?

One dispatcher handles every medical call. The dispatcher will ask a few general questions, and then most likely transfer your call to Clay County Rescue, who will then ask very specific questions, the dispatcher is already sending out help. You will be asked a series of questions that will help determine the response of the units responding to the call. The responding units will be better prepared to help the patient with the information you have provided.

- What is the location of the emergency? (Where are the responding units needed?)
- Tell me exactly what is happening (with the patient right now).
- How old is the patient? (If you don't know, say so and then give a guess of the age.)
- Is the patient conscious and breathing?

The dispatcher will provide you with some instructions for keeping the patient safe and comfortable until the responding units arrive. Follow the instructions given to you by the dispatcher.

If I call to report a fire, what should I tell the dispatcher?

You should be prepared to answer questions like these:

- Where is the fire?
- What is on fire?
- How large is the fire? (This is only an estimate, think about the size of the fire in relation to something common: the size of a living room, the size of a football field, bigger than a grocery store parking lot.)
- Are any structures threatened? Are there flames moving close to any homes or buildings?
- Do you know if anyone is inside the housing or building?
- Do you know if anyone is hurt?

While you are answering these questions, the dispatcher's partner is setting off the bells at the appropriate fire stations and getting help on the way.

When I call 911, why do I get asked to hold on?

Most of the time, only one dispatcher is working at any given time at the Police Department. So, the same dispatcher who answers the 911 calls also answers the non-emergency calls for service for Green Cove Springs. When the dispatch center is busy, the dispatcher has to ask non-emergency callers to hold on while he/she answers the 911 calls. Every effort is made to get back to you as quickly as possible, and your patience and understanding is appreciated.