



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Cincinnati Emergency Communications Center Announces Implementation of the Fire Priority Dispatch System**

CINCINNATI - The City of Cincinnati's Emergency Communications Center (ECC) is excited to announce the implementation of the Fire Priority Dispatch System™ (FPDS™) to better serve the residents of Cincinnati in emergency situations.

For over a decade, Cincinnati ECC's 911 call-takers have been trained and certified by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) as Emergency Medical Dispatchers, or EMD. They have used the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS™) to handle calls reporting a medical emergency. This week, the ECC has expanded this protocol-based call-taking system to include all calls requiring a fire/rescue response, and call-takers are utilizing a new Emergency Fire Dispatcher (EFD) certification to process fire/rescue emergencies. While EMD (medical protocol) is a state requirement of all 911 centers in Ohio, an expansion to EFD (fire/rescue protocol) is a local decision to improve 911 service in Cincinnati. Cincinnati's 911 center is the 10<sup>th</sup> center in Ohio to implement FPDS™.

The Priority Dispatch System follows nationally recognized standards and research-based protocols to identify life-threatening situations and to safely prioritize calls for response. The protocols guide emergency call-takers through a series of questions they ask callers in order to identify the problems so they can send the correct help.

The Cincinnati ECC provides this call-taking function to connect citizens with the Cincinnati Fire Department. Once sufficient information is gathered to initiate a response, the incident is shared electronically with Cincinnati Fire Department dispatchers, who alert their crews to respond to the emergency. Emergency 911 call-takers will use the questions to provide responders with accurate information so they can more effectively help once they are on scene. Additionally, the FPDS™ helps call-takers provide lifesaving and safety instructions to callers and patients before responders arrive.

"The Cincinnati Emergency Communications Center is an agency focused on continuous improvement, and this service delivery enhancement is just one example of our commitment to become the best 911 center in the nation," said ECC Director Bill

Vedra. “This protocol-based system will result in faster training of new 911 call-takers, more consistent call-handing, and a 911 center that is continuously aligned with national best practices.”

“This protocol-based system at ECC helps make sure our firefighters have the information they need to respond, and that our citizens receive lifesaving instructions while we are on the way,” said Fire Chief Michael Washington.

The Priority Dispatch System™ (PDS™) includes ProQA® software, a three-day certification training course for EFD-certified call-takers, and continual quality improvement (QI) benchmarks and training. All EMD and EFD emergency communications staff who work on the new system are certified by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch® (IAED™) and must recertify every two years, complete 36 hours of continuing dispatch education (CDE) and pass all requirements for IAED recertification.

Proactive quality improvement (QI) benchmarks are an important part of the PDS. Use of this system will allow Cincinnati ECC staff to assess the quality of the care they provide to their community, allowing them to make positive adjustments to training and procedures.

“At the IAED, our goal is to help the emergency dispatcher do his or her job better,” said Dr. Jeff Clawson, Chair, Rules Committee for the IAED Council of Standards. “This system increases safety and effectiveness for the first responders and creates better outcomes for callers.”

The constantly evolving PDS will help provide the highest standard of care to the community by allowing ECC staff to increase the accuracy and efficiency of the dispatching process.

With the City of Cincinnati’s implementation of this system, residents can have peace of mind that when they call 911 for assistance, highly trained emergency call-takers and dispatchers will properly handle their needs with timeliness and expert care.

## **About ECC**

The Cincinnati Emergency Communications Center (ECC), a civilian public safety agency within City of Cincinnati government, acts as a service provider to the public, and to the City’s Police and Fire departments. The agency is staffed with 130 personnel to answer the public’s emergency and non-emergency calls for city services, and to dispatch the Cincinnati Police Department, Parking Enforcement, and the Alternative Response to Crisis (ARC) team. Last year, ECC call-takers handled 748,000 incoming and outgoing telephone calls.

**For the latest information, follow the Cincinnati ECC at:**

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**For this story and the Cincinnati Emergency Communications Center**

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