

### Do I have to give my name?

The call taker is always required to ask the caller's name and phone number. This is in case we have to call you back or if the responders need to talk to someone who actually witnessed what happened. However, you can choose not to give your name. Your call will be handled the same regardless if you chose not to identify yourself.

### Now what happens?

The call is entered into the computer aided dispatch system and sent to the appropriate dispatcher (fire or police). In some cases, depending upon the call, it is sent to both dispatchers. The dispatcher then sends the fire and/or police responders.

### When will help arrive?

The time it takes for a responder to arrive after your call depends on several factors. For routine police calls, the calls are prioritized based upon the incident type and whether or not the incident is still in progress. Emergency (high priority) police calls and all fire and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) calls are dispatched as soon as basic information is obtained and entered into the CAD System.

### Calling 911 by Mistake

Don't worry! It happens more often than you think. Stay on the phone and explain to the dispatcher that you dialed in error.

### Non-Emergency Telephone Numbers

Animal Control (203) 235-4179	Library (203) 238-2345
Dispatch (203) 238-1911	Parks & Recreation (203) 630-4259
Eversource 1-800-286-2000	Police Department (203) 238-1911
Fire Headquarters (203) 630-5868	Public Utilities (203) 630-4256
Fire Marshal (203) 630-4010	Public Works (203) 630-4018
Health/Human Srv. (203) 630-4226	Records (Police) (203) 630-6237
Info Line 211	Senior Center (203) 237-0066

**To report a routine call for service, call dispatch.**

Meriden's Emergency Communications Center handles all calls for Police, Fire, and EMS emergencies, routine calls for service, and general requests for information. Each of the Emergency Communications Center dispatchers are Certified Public Safety Telecommunicators. They are highly trained in obtaining up-to-date information, crisis management, and managing police and fire resources at multiple incidents.

When calling 911 it is very important to answer ALL of their questions regarding the location you are calling from, the location of the incident (which can be different), the phone number you can be reached at, your name, and the incident you are calling about.

# THE FACTS ABOUT 911

## City of Meriden Emergency Communications



**50 West Main Street  
Meriden, CT 06451  
(203) 238-1911**

**911@meridenct.gov  
www.meridenct.gov**

### **Why so many questions?**

The call taker is required to ask many questions in order to give responders an accurate picture of the situation. It is important to understand that when an emergency is being reported, responders are already on the way while you are on the phone.

The call taker needs to ask the 4W's for every call. Where, What, Who and When. The first two questions of every 911 call is "What's the address of the emergency?" and "What is the telephone number you are calling from?"

**Where:** this includes more than just the address. An apartment number, floor, suite, a business name, or the color of your house, will make it easier and quicker for responders to find the location.

**What:** This is the basic "bottom-line" of why you are calling.

**Who:** This is to identify suspects in crimes, especially if they just left. This will aid officers responding to be on the lookout for the suspects. Things like age, race, height, weight, clothing description and vehicle description are helpful.

**When:** This is when or approximately when the incident occurred. Incidents occurring in progress are a higher priority than incidents that happened long ago.

### **Medical Calls**

When you call to report a medical emergency, your call will be transferred to an ambulance dispatcher. The ambulance dispatcher will provide real-time instructions in CPR, severe bleeding control, child birth as well as other life saving techniques. Once the address and phone number have been verified, they will ask the following:

1. Okay, tell me exactly what happened.
2. Are you with the patient now?
3. How many people are sick (or injured)?
4. How old is the patient?
5. Is the patient awake?
6. Is the patient breathing?

The ambulance dispatcher will then ask questions about the patient's specific condition. Getting this critical information take about 30 seconds. **Remember, help is already on the way!**

### **Text to 911**

You can send a text to 911 if you are unable to speak or if it is unsafe for you to speak. Some examples include: If you are hard of hearing or have a speech disability; you are in a situation where it's not safe to call (some domestic disturbances or you are hiding from someone); you are having a medical emergency and can't speak. Simply put 911 in the "to" field and then enter your message. Include the location and brief call nature. Call if you can, text if you can't.

### **Police and Fire Calls**

Depending on the incident, the call taker may need to ask for specific types of information. Some examples are:

#### **Police Calls**

- Suspect and/or vehicle information
- Is anyone in danger?
- Does anyone have or have access to weapons?
- Are drugs and/or alcohol involved?
- Do you want to see the officer?

#### **Fire Calls**

- What exactly is burning?
- Do you see flames or smoke?
- Are there're any injuries?
- Are hazardous materials involved?
- Is anyone trapped?

Remember: Never go back inside for any reason if you are reporting a fire!

Be prepared to tell firefighters where any hazards or trapped people are.

#### **Children and 911**

Remember to discuss with your children when and how to call 911 on all phones (rotary, touch tone and cellular). Never refer to 911 as Nine Eleven because this phrase may confuse children because there is no eleven on the telephone keypad or dial.