

TIPS ON CALLING 911

If you call 911 and do not get an immediate response, do not hang up and call again. This will only further delay your call. In the majority of cases, calls are answered on the first ring. However, during high volume periods, you may experience a slight delay. When all operators are busy, calls will be answered in the order they are received.

Ambulances are sent out for emergency situations only. Minor illnesses or routine medical visits will be referred to private ambulance services. The City does charge for ambulance services, but individuals will not be turned down solely on the basis that their insurance will not cover the cost.

If you request an ambulance and the nearest one is over 18 blocks away, a Fire Department vehicle will be dispatched to your location to provide basic services until the paramedics arrive.

Calls to the Police Department are answered on a priority basis. Situations that involve threat to life, bodily injury, or major property damage or loss are the highest priorities. Calls of this nature are answered in 10 minutes or less.

Second priorities include situations that are not life threatening, do not involve injuries or major destruction to property or the crime is no longer in progress. If your call falls under this category, the Police Department will respond as soon as possible.

It is important to provide as much information on your situation as possible. Operators ask questions regarding the persons or autos involved in an accident. If you request an ambulance, the operator will inquire about your medical history. The more information you provide, the easier and faster it is for dispatchers to get services to you.

When calling 911, if you wish to remain anonymous, please indicate that at the beginning of your call.

If you call 911 from a cellular phone, operators will ask your name, approximate location and the telephone number of your cellular phone. It is very important to give this information, because operators can not pick up your exact location on a cellular phone.

You should use 311, the City's non-emergency line in situations that do not involve a crime in progress or an immediate threat to life, bodily injury, or major property damage or loss. By using 311, residents help free up phone lines for true emergency calls. However, if you have any doubt, call 911!



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley
Mayor



Office of Emergency Management and Communications
Executive Director



311 City Services
Theodore F. O-Keefe
Director

TIPS ON CALLING 311

The following are the principal functions of the 311 system:

- Provide information regarding City events and programs
- Receive requests for City Services and forward them to the appropriate departments
- Process non-emergency Police reports
- Serve as the Back-up Facility for the Center for Emergency Communication.

You can call 311 to find out what Police District and beat you live in, as well as the date, time and location of your next beat meeting. In addition, 311 allows you easy access to non-emergency police services, from filing police reports to talking to police personnel in your district. Remember, if the incident that you are reporting has occurred and the offender is gone from the scene you call 311. However, if the incident you are reporting is occurring now, and the presence of a police officer will help resolve it, (writing a parking ticket, quieting loud neighbors, etc.) dial 911.

311 operators can tell you what political district (federal, state or municipal) you live in, as well as the address and telephone number of your Alderman, so you can forward your questions and/or concerns.

311 operators can provide the date, time and location of both City and neighborhood events, including parades, Grant Park festivals, Chicago Public Library programs and more.

Residents of Chicago can call 311 to request numerous City Services. Some of these services include the need for garbage cans (to prevent the presence of rats in a neighborhood), reporting stray animals that are a threat to the community, and towing abandoned vehicles. Remember, no matter which service you are requesting, it is important to relay as much information as possible to the operator so that the City can service you as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The City of Chicago offers Chicago residents a variety of programs designed to improve the quality of life. These programs include ACity Mortgage® which is a Department of Housing program that helps low and middle income families secure low interest mortgages with small down payments. The Tax Assistance Center offers advice on how to fill out complicated tax forms and determine if individuals are eligible for benefits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit. For more information on these programs, simply call 311.

Finally, if you are unsure where to go for services and programs within the City of Chicago, or to which department you should direct your questions and/or concerns, 311 operators will be able to direct you to the appropriate parties.



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