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Next Generation 911 Transition Process Underway

The current 911 system will be fully replaced by a next generation 911 system in 2025

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has required that Canada's 911 system [transition to next generation \(NG\) capabilities](#) by [March 2025](#). The transition process involves multiple steps and requires action from 911 service providers, public safety answering points (PSAPs) and municipalities.

What is NG911?

[NG911 utilizes new technology](#) to move beyond traditional voice-based, analog 911 service, which primarily relies on a 911 caller to verbally indicate their location, the emergency, etc. This approach has limitations in cases where callers are injured or disoriented, or when incidents occur in locations with no clear address or in an area unfamiliar to the caller.

NG911 utilizes technology such as precise location data, photo-sharing, video calling, connected vehicles, and others to allow for the nature and location of emergencies to be more easily, quickly, and accurately relayed to emergency dispatchers.

The NG911 Transition Process

As the 911 service provider in Alberta, the CRTC has tasked TELUS with migrating the province's service to NG911 by 2025. While TELUS provides the overarching service across the province, local access to 911 services and dispatch occurs through public safety answering points (PSAPs). In most cases, PSAPs are non-profit or private sector entities operated by or on behalf of municipalities for the purposes of receiving 911 calls. To accommodate the new technology utilized in NG911, PSAPs are required to upgrade their infrastructure and operational capabilities. To help off-set the costs of such upgrades, [Alberta's 911 levy was recently increased from \\$0.44 per month to \\$0.95 per month](#).

Municipal Role in NG911 Transition Process

Although local 911 service is typically provided through a PSAP, municipalities and First Nations are required to have a 911 agreement in place with TELUS to receive 911 service. As the legacy 911 system is replaced with NG911, all municipalities will be required to sign a new NG911 service. The [NG911 agreement is identical](#) for all municipalities and is not open to negotiation or amendment. The agreement has been reviewed and approved by the CRTC.

TELUS is currently in the process of gathering signed agreements from municipalities across Alberta. TELUS has reached out to all Alberta municipalities to identify a specific administrative contact person to facilitate the signing of the agreement and does not plan to engage directly with municipalities beyond the designated contact. TELUS has also held several webinars explaining NG911 and the transition process in recent months intended for designated municipal contacts.

It is important to note while a PSAP can begin the onboarding process with TELUS following a signed agreement from one municipal member, the PSAP cannot migrate onto TELUS NG911 network until all municipal members of a PSAP sign NG911 agreements.

Municipal Addressing Requirements

A second municipal responsibility related to the NG911 transition is for municipalities to [provide addressing and location data to a standard required for NG911 use](#). NG911 requires GIS data to allow for high levels of precision and consistency in routing calls. More specifically, municipalities will be required to provide addressing data that aligns with GIS standards established by the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) for GIS locating and common civic address formats. Some municipalities or PSAPs may already have addressing data meeting the NENA standards, while for others, significant work may be required. At this point, the exact deadline for providing the GIS data is not known but it will likely be required by 2024 / 2025.

To assist municipalities in ensuring their data meets NENA standards, [ESRI](#) has developed a free GIS validator tool. For questions or to access the tool contact Barry Costello, ESRI NG911 Specialist, at bcostello@esri.ca.

For municipalities with questions or concerns specifically related to the data sharing requirements, consider contacting the [Alberta Municipal Data Sharing Partnership](#) for advice and support.

Questions?

Any questions about the transition process can be directed to Assunta Marozzi, TELUS LGA Relations Manager for NG911 at assunta.marozzi2@telus.com.

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