

# Teach Your Children to Dial “9-1-1”

Share your 9-1-1 knowledge with your children. Help them know the basic rules about when and how to call 9-1-1. You never know, the life they save could be your own.

1. Do not use the term “nine-eleven” since there is no 11 (eleven) key on the telephone keypad.
2. **Explain the purpose of 9-1-1** and use examples to teach them when they should call 9-1-1. Tell your children about scenarios that are **more likely to occur in your home** or with friends/relatives. *Example: grandma has a heart condition, or you smell smoke.*
3. Make sure your children know their address and phone number. **Teach through repetition or use a creative song or rhyme.**
4. Teach children their **full names and the full names of their parents.**
5. Instruct your children to **look at their surroundings** when they are not at home and don't know the address. Looking at street signs, an address on a piece of mail, and street numbers on a building, house, or curb can be helpful.
6. Always have **at least one phone in the home** that your children can access.
7. Make sure they know how to dial 9-1-1 using a landline and a cell-phone since both are common. **Demonstrate how to hold a phone and speak clearly** so they will be understood.
8. Instruct your children to go to a **trusted neighbor's house before calling 9-1-1** in the event of a dangerous situation at home, like a burglary or fire.
9. Let your children know that they can trust the calltaker and that it's OK to answer **ALL** of the questions, **providing as much information as possible.**
10. Make sure your children know to follow the instructions they are given.
11. Tell your children to **stay on the phone** and keep talking to the calltaker until they are told to hang up.
12. Make sure your children know what to do if they accidentally call 9-1-1. They should tell the calltaker **it was an accident and there is no emergency.** Otherwise, emergency help may be **unnecessarily sent to check on the disconnected call.**
13. Instruct children to call **only when there is an actual emergency.** 9-1-1 is not a toy. Prank calls are illegal in most states and waste valuable time and resources. But more importantly, **prank calls can mean a delayed response** for someone experiencing a true emergency.
14. **Take the battery out of a phone before giving it to a child to play with.** Otherwise, you are still able to dial 9-1-1 and reach a calltaker even when the phone's service has been disconnected.

## CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Equal Opportunity County

### Charles County Government Department of Emergency Services

P.O. Box 2150 • La Plata, Maryland 20646  
301-609-3404 • MD Relay: 711 • Relay TDD: 1-800-735-2258  
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Charles County 911 Fire/EMS Communications' function shall be to aid the general public by providing access to emergency services in Charles county, and from time to time, neighboring jurisdictions.

This is accomplished by receiving, evaluating, processing and disseminating information to a variety of public safety agencies regarding requests for emergency services assistance in a manner that achieves the highest level of accuracy and efficiency. Our primary responsibility is to facilitate the response of the closest appropriate public safety resource in order to protect life, limb and property.

Learn more at...

[www.CharlesCountyMD.gov](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov)



**Mission Statement** — The mission of Charles County Government is to provide our citizens the highest quality service possible in a timely, efficient, and courteous manner. To achieve this goal, our government must be operated in an open and accessible atmosphere, be based on comprehensive long- and short-term planning, and have an appropriate managerial organization tempered by fiscal responsibility. We support and encourage efforts to grow a diverse workplace.

**Vision Statement** — Charles County is a place where all people thrive and businesses grow and prosper; where the preservation of our heritage and environment is paramount; where government services to its citizens are provided at the highest level of excellence; and where the quality of life is the best in the nation.

Department of Emergency Services  
**BE PREPARED  
WHEN CALLING**

# 9-1-1



Brochures provided courtesy of:  
Charles County Government  
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# 9-1-1

## What is Your Emergency?

Calltakers are trained, certified professionals **who can help you** during an emergency, but there are also a few simple points to follow to **help the calltaker help you**.

Most importantly, be patient, **stay calm**, and **speak clearly** throughout the call.

Be ready to **provide the location** of the emergency, the **phone number** you're calling from, and a brief description of what happened. **Pay attention to the calltaker's questions** and respond clearly, **answering all questions**, no matter how necessary they may or may not seem to you. Do not object to answering any of the calltaker's questions. **9-1-1 calltakers are trained to ask the questions** necessary to determine the type of medical, police, or fire response for your particular emergency. Your answers to all of their questions **provide vital information** responders need.

Remember, in most cases, **help is already on the way** as the calltaker continues to ask you questions and gather information. Calltakers pass **your important information on to first responders** en route to help them prepare for your emergency. The 9-1-1 calltaker may also give you immediate lifesaving instructions over the phone while you await help to arrive on-scene. **Follow these instructions carefully** and **do not hang up** the phone until the calltaker instructs you to do so.

**9-1-1 calltakers are trained to ask the questions necessary for your particular emergency. Your answers to ALL of their questions will help them quickly provide the best possible response for your situation.**



## Tips to Follow When Calling 9-1-1

1. **Use a landline phone to call 9-1-1, if possible**, because cellphone calls do not always provide 9-1-1 with an address or phone number. **However, do not delay calling** in an effort to find a landline phone.
2. If calling from a cellphone, **study your surroundings**. The calltaker might need more **specific information**, including landmarks and cross streets, **for responders to locate you** and the emergency.
3. **Call 9-1-1 right away** if you or someone else is facing a situation that may pose an immediate **risk to health, life, property, or the environment**.
4. Remember that 9-1-1 is a **24/7 service** and all **calls are free**. Sometimes it takes time to route the call to the correct answering point, so **stay on the line**. If you become disconnected, call back.
5. **Be respectful** of your 9-1-1 calltaker. These first **responders are there to help you**.
6. If you call 9-1-1 **by mistake**, **stay on the line**. When the call is answered, tell the calltaker that the call was made **accidentally** and there is **no emergency**. Otherwise, **emergency help may be sent unnecessarily** to check on the disconnected call.
7. **Post your phone number and address by the telephone** or on the refrigerator. It is not uncommon to forget your address or phone number during an emergency situation, especially if you have recently moved. A child making a call to 9-1-1 might not remember this information unless it's written down. **Emergency responders cannot help you if they cannot find you**.
8. Put your house/apartment/condo number on your home's front, outside wall, or curb to **aid responders in locating the emergency**.
9. **Compile critical information** and put the information in a **safe place** known to other family members or close friends. Include an updated record of the following information for everyone living in your household: **name, phone numbers, personal contacts' phone numbers, doctors' phone numbers, allergies, medications, and blood types**.
10. **Provide answers** in a controlled tone of voice. Try not to lose your composure. **The calltaker understands** any fears you may be feeling and will do his or her best to help you stay calm.
11. If you have **trouble answering the calltaker's questions** or following his or her instructions, **hand the phone to someone else** at the scene, if possible.
12. **Remain on the line** until the calltaker says it is OK for you to end the call.

**These tips will help you be even more prepared in case you need to make an emergency call to 9-1-1.**