

1 Introduced by Senate Committee on Government Operations

2 Referred to Committee on

3 Date:

4 Subject: **Emergency Public safety** communications; E-911 Board; dispatch  
5 services

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to expand the  
7 jurisdiction of the Enhanced 911 Board to include development,  
8 implementation, and supervision of regional **emergency public safety** dispatch  
9 services.

10 An act relating to the modernization of **emergency public safety**  
11 communications in Vermont

12 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

13 Sec. 1. TITLE

14 This act shall be known and may be cited as the **Vermont Public Safety**  
15 Communications Modernization Act of 2023.

16 Sec. 2. FINDINGS AND INTENT

17 (a) The General Assembly finds:

18 (1) Protecting public safety and welfare is an essential function of State  
19 government.

1           (2) A comprehensive and effective public safety communications  
2           system comprises both an emergency call calling system and an emergency a  
3           public safety dispatch system.

4           (3) Since 1994, the Enhanced 911 Board has successfully overseen the  
5           development and implementation of a nationally recognized, statewide  
6           Enhanced 911 system.

7           ~~(4) The State has struggled, however, for many years to develop,~~  
8           ~~maintain, and equitably finance a regional emergency dispatch system.~~

9           (4) Over the past few decades, the State has not developed or equitably  
10           financed a regional public safety dispatch system.

11           (5) As stated in the 1974 report from the Governor’s Commission on the  
12           Administration of Justice, “Police communications as presently structured in  
13           Vermont demonstrate more than any other component of law enforcement the  
14           dearth of planning and coordination that exists throughout the system.  
15           Duplication fostered by this absence of planning is proving costly in terms of  
16           efficiency as well as money.” See the Regional Dispatch Working Group  
17           Report, dated December 1, 2022, for a brief history of past efforts to improve  
18           emergency communications.

19           (6) There are currently more than 45 approximately 40 dispatch centers  
20           in the State, including two State-run public safety answering points, as well as  
21           six dispatch centers located in neighboring states, that provide dispatching

1 services for hundreds of local, largely volunteer first responders in Vermont,  
2 such as fire, ambulance, rescue emergency medical, and law enforcement  
3 agencies.

4 (7) In several areas of the State, regional dispatch centers have designed,  
5 funded, and implemented exceptional systems that practically ensure every 911  
6 caller in their respective catchment areas receives timely and appropriate  
7 emergency response services.

8 (8) Some municipalities and State and local agencies rely on the  
9 dispatching services offered by the two regional public safety answering points  
10 operated by the Vermont State Police in Williston and Westminster, and do not  
11 pay directly for those services.

12 (9) Nearly all dispatch centers struggle with staff recruitment and  
13 retention. These staffing shortages jeopardize the reliability of public safety  
14 communications and exacerbate the stress on existing personnel who provide  
15 the critical link between caller and responder.

16 (10) The General Assembly established the Regional Dispatch Working  
17 Group in 2022 to make recommendations regarding a new regional dispatch  
18 model, including a mechanism for transitioning to and equitably financing that  
19 model.

20 (11) In retrospect, the Working Group was not given sufficient time and  
21 resources to accomplish its tasks. Despite this, the Working Group made

1 substantial and effective progress with further framing the issues, underscoring  
2 the challenges, and compiling significant historical and current data that will  
3 underpin the State’s future efforts to build a statewide **public safety**  
4 communications system.

5 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to draw upon the expertise and  
6 successes of the E-911 Board and the existing dispatch centers for the purpose  
7 of creating a reliable, **resilient**, high quality, secure, interoperable, cost-  
8 effective statewide **public safety** communications system overseen and  
9 managed at the State level, and to do so in a manner that does not disrupt or in  
10 any way jeopardize **either** the exceptional dispatch services currently in **place**  
11 or the existing E-911 system.

12 Sec. 3. 30 V.S.A. chapter 87 is amended to read:

13 CHAPTER 87: ~~ENHANCED 911~~; **EMERGENCY PUBLIC SAFETY**

14 COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

15 § 7050. PURPOSE

16 Protecting public safety and welfare is an essential function of State  
17 government and, to that end, it is the purpose of this chapter to establish a  
18 statewide, reliable, state of the art **emergency public safety** communications  
19 system that is equitably and sustainably financed and universally accessible by  
20 all persons throughout the State.

21 § 7051. DEFINITIONS

1 As used in this chapter:

2 (1) “Automatic location identification” or “ALI” means the system  
3 capability to identify automatically the geographical location of the electronic  
4 device being used by the caller to summon assistance and to provide that  
5 location information to an appropriate device located at any public safety  
6 answering point for the purpose of sending emergency assistance.

7 (2) “ALI “database” or “database”” means a derivative, verified set of  
8 records which contain at a minimum a telephone number and location  
9 identification for each unique building or publicly used facility within a  
10 defined geographic area in Vermont.

11 (3) “Automatic number identification” or “ANI” means the system  
12 capability to identify automatically the calling telephone number and to  
13 provide a display of that number at any public safety answering point.

14 (4) “Board” means the Vermont ~~Enhanced 911~~ **Public Safety**  
15 Communications Board established under section 7053 of this title.

16 (5) “Caller” means a person or an automated device calling on behalf of  
17 a person.

18 (6) “Director” means the Executive Director for the statewide ~~Enhanced~~  
19 ~~911~~ **emergency public safety** communications system.

20 (7) **“Dispatch center” means a facility that provides regional emergency**  
21 **dispatch services and may also be a public safety answering point.**

1           ~~(8)~~ “(Dispatchable location)” means the location information delivered to  
2 the public safety answering point with a 911 call.

3           (8) “Emergency call system” or “Enhanced 911 system” means a system  
4 consisting of devices with the capability to determine the location and identity  
5 of a caller that initiates communication for the purpose of summoning  
6 assistance in the case of an emergency. In most cases, summoning assistance  
7 will occur when a caller dials the digits 9-1-1 on a telephone, mobile phone, or  
8 other IP-enabled service, or by a communication technology designed for the  
9 purpose of summoning assistance in the case of an emergency.

10           ~~(10) “Emergency communications system” or “system” means a system~~  
11 ~~that comprises an integrated emergency call system and an emergency dispatch~~  
12 ~~system.~~

13           ~~(11) “Emergency dispatch system” means the system for receiving calls~~  
14 ~~from the Enhanced 911 system and requesting emergency response services~~  
15 ~~from police, fire, emergency medical services, public safety service, or other~~  
16 ~~designated provider of emergency response services.~~

17           ~~(8)~~(9) “Emergency response services” means fire, police, medical, and  
18 other services of an emergency nature as identified by the Board.

19           (10) “Enterprise communications system” means any networked  
20 communication system serving two or more stations or living units within an  
21 enterprise and includes circuit-switched networks, such as multi-line telephone

1 systems or legacy enterprise communications systems, IP-enabled service, and  
2 cloud-based technology.

3 (9)(11) “IP-enabled service” means a service, device, or application that  
4 makes use of Internet protocol, or IP, and ~~which~~ that is capable of entering the  
5 digits 9-1-1 or otherwise contacting the emergency 911 system. IP-enabled  
6 service includes ~~voiceover~~ voice over IP and other services, devices, or  
7 applications provided through or using wire line, cable, wireless, or satellite or  
8 other facilities.

9 (10)(12) “Municipality” means any city, town, incorporated village,  
10 unorganized town, gore, grant, or other political subdivision of the State.

11 **[Revise?]**

12 (11)(13) “Other methods of locating caller” means those commercially  
13 available technologies designed to provide the location information of callers  
14 when a call is initiated to access emergency 911 services regardless of the type  
15 of device that is used.

16 (12)(14) “Public safety answering point” means a facility with the  
17 capability to receive emergency calls, operated on a 24-hour basis, assigned the  
18 responsibility of receiving 911 calls and dispatching, transferring, or relaying  
19 emergency 911 calls to other public safety agencies **or private safety agencies.**

1           (15) “Public safety communications system” or “system” means a  
2 system that comprises an integrated emergency call system and a public safety  
3 dispatch system.

4           (16) “Public safety dispatch system” means the system for receiving  
5 calls from the Enhanced 911 system or directly from the public and requesting  
6 emergency or non-emergency response services, as appropriate.

7           (17) “Regional dispatch center” means a facility that provides regional  
8 public safety dispatch services and may also be a public safety answering  
9 point. A regional dispatch center shall be a:

10           (A) State dispatch center operated by the Department of Public  
11 Safety;

12           (B) dispatch center that is operational on the effective date of this act  
13 and approved by the Board; or

14           (C) union municipal district or public authority formed for the  
15 purpose of providing public safety dispatch services and approved by the  
16 Board.

17           (13)(18) “Selective routing” means a telecommunications switching  
18 system that enables all 911 calls originating from within a defined  
19 geographical region to be answered at a predesignated public service  
20 answering point.



1           ~~(14) “Dispatchable Location” means the location information delivered~~  
2 ~~to the public safety answering point with a 911 call.~~

3           ~~(15) “Enterprise Communications Systems (ECS)” means any~~  
4 ~~networked communication system serving two or more stations, or living units,~~  
5 ~~within an enterprise. ECS includes circuit-switched networks, such as multi-~~  
6 ~~line telephone systems or legacy ECS, IP-enabled service, and cloud-based~~  
7 ~~technology.~~

8           ~~(16)~~(19) “Station” means a telephone handset, customer ~~premise~~  
9 ~~premises~~ equipment (~~CPE~~), or calling device that is capable of initiating a call  
10 to 911.

11 § 7052. VERMONT ~~ENHANCED 911~~ **PUBLIC SAFETY**

12           COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

13           (a) The Vermont ~~Enhanced 911~~ **Public Safety** Communications Board is  
14 established to develop, implement, and supervise the operation of the statewide  
15 ~~Enhanced 911~~ **public safety** communications system. **The Vermont Public**  
16 **Safety and Communications Board shall be the successor in interest to and the**  
17 **continuation of the Enhanced 911 Board with respect to the statewide**  
18 **Enhanced 911 system.**

19           (b) The Board shall consist of nine members as follows:

20           (1) one county law enforcement officer elected by the membership of  
21 the Vermont State Sheriffs’ Association;

1           (2) one municipal law enforcement officer elected by the Vermont  
2 Association of Chiefs of Police;

3           (3) one official of a municipality appointed by the Executive Director of  
4 the Vermont League of Cities and Towns;

5           (4) ~~a~~ one firefighter appointed by the Vermont Career Fire Chiefs  
6 Association;

7           (5) ~~an~~ one emergency medical services provider technician or paramedic  
8 appointed by the Vermont State Ambulance Association;

9           (6) ~~a~~ one Department of Public Safety representative appointed by the  
10 Commissioner of Public Safety; and three members of the public

11           (7) one member appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees  
12 who shall have expertise in finance;

13           (8) one member appointed by the Speaker of the House who shall have  
14 technical expertise in public safety communications systems; and

15           (9) one member appointed by the Commissioner of Health who shall  
16 have expertise in the area of public health. ~~Board members shall be appointed~~  
17 ~~by the Governor to three-year terms, except that the Governor shall stagger~~  
18 ~~initial appointments so that the terms of no more than four members expire~~  
19 ~~during a calendar year. In appointing Board members, the Governor shall give~~  
20 ~~due consideration to the different geographical regions of the State, and the~~

1 ~~need for balance between rural and urban areas. Board members shall serve at~~  
2 ~~the pleasure of the Governor.~~

3 (c) ~~Members shall serve terms of three years, except that the members first~~  
4 ~~appointed by the Committee on Committees and the Speaker of the House~~  
5 ~~shall each serve an initial term of four years; and the members first appointed~~  
6 ~~by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the Commissioner of Public~~  
7 ~~Safety, and the Commissioner of Health shall each serve an initial term of two~~  
8 ~~years. A vacancy shall be filled by the respective appointing authority for the~~  
9 ~~balance of the unexpired term. A member may be reappointed. A member~~  
10 ~~may be removed for cause only. Any member of the Enhanced 911 Board on~~  
11 ~~July 30, 2024 shall serve on the Public Safety Communications Board for the~~  
12 ~~balance of the member’s unexpired term as of that date, and may be~~  
13 ~~reappointed.~~ Members who are not State employees or not otherwise  
14 compensated in the course of their employment shall receive per diem  
15 compensation and expense reimbursement for meetings in accordance with the  
16 provisions of 32 V.S.A. § 1010. Members who receive per diem shall receive  
17 compensation for no more than 12 meetings per year.

18 (d) ~~The Governor shall annually appoint a member to serve as Board chair~~  
19 ~~and a member to serve as Board vice chair. At its initial organizational~~  
20 ~~meeting, and annually thereafter, the Board shall elect from among its~~  
21 ~~members a chair and vice chair.~~ The Board shall hold at least four regular

1 meetings a year. Meetings of the Board may be held at any time or place  
2 within Vermont upon call of the Chair or a majority of the members, after  
3 reasonable notice to the other members and shall be held at such times and  
4 places as in the judgment of the Board will best serve the convenience of all  
5 parties in interest. The Board shall adopt rules and procedures with respect to  
6 the conduct of its meetings and other affairs. Membership on the Board does  
7 not constitute the holding of an office for any purpose, and members of the  
8 Board shall not be required to take and file oaths of office before serving on  
9 the Board. A member of the Board shall not be disqualified from holding any  
10 public office or employment, and shall not forfeit any office or employment,  
11 by reason of their appointment to the Board, notwithstanding any statute,  
12 ordinance, or charter to the contrary.

13 (e) The Board shall appoint, subject to the approval of the Governor, the  
14 Executive Director who shall hold office at the pleasure of the Board. ~~He or~~  
15 ~~she~~ The Director shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the Board.  
16 The ~~Executive~~ Director is entitled to compensation, as established by law, and  
17 reimbursement for the expenses within the amounts available by appropriation.  
18 The ~~Executive~~ Director may, with the approval of the Board, hire employees,  
19 agents, and consultants and prescribe their duties.

20 (f) The Board may form subcommittees as it deems appropriate to  
21 accomplish the purposes of this chapter, including a subcommittee on the

1 Enhanced 911 system and a subcommittee on the public safety dispatch  
2 system.

3 § 7053. BOARD; RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS

4 (a) The Board shall be the single governmental agency responsible for  
5 ~~statewide Enhanced 911~~ the statewide public safety communications system.

6 To the extent feasible, the Board shall consult with the Agency of Human  
7 Services, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Public Service,  
8 and local community service providers on the development of policies, system  
9 design, standards, and procedures. The Board shall develop designs, standards,  
10 and procedures and shall adopt rules on the following:

11 (1) The technical and operational standards for public safety answering  
12 points and regional dispatch centers.

13 (2) The system database standards and procedures for developing and  
14 maintaining the database. The system database shall be the property of the  
15 Board.

16 (3) Statewide, locatable means of identifying customer location, such as  
17 addressing, geo-coding, or other methods of locating the caller.

18 (4) Standards and procedures to ensure system and database security,  
19 resiliency, redundancy, and interoperability.

20 (b) In addition to the powers and responsibilities identified in subsection  
21 (a) of this section, the Board:

1           (1) may negotiate or enter into contracts or agreements on behalf of one  
2           or more regional dispatch centers for public safety equipment or services;

3           (2) may purchase, lease, or otherwise obtain equipment or services for  
4           use by one or more regional dispatch centers;

5           (3) shall establish safety-based response-time standards;

6           (4) shall develop a statewide map of wireless communications “dead  
7           zones,” which identifies areas of the State that do not have access to radio  
8           communications service;

9           (5) shall work with the Department of Public Service to develop a plan  
10          to increase wireless communications coverage throughout the State; and

11          (6) shall develop a model and process for ensuring every municipality is  
12          a member of a regional dispatch center.

13          ~~(b) (d) [Repealed.]~~

14          ~~(e)(b)~~ The Board is authorized:

15               (1) to make or cause to be made studies of any aspect of the ~~Enhanced~~  
16          914 public safety communications system, including service, operations,  
17          training, database development, and public awareness;

18               (2) to accept and use in the name of the State, subject to review and  
19          approval by the Joint Fiscal Committee, any and all donations or grants, both  
20          real and personal, from any governmental unit or public agency or from any

1 institution, person, firm, or corporation, consistent with the rules established by  
2 the Board and the purpose or conditions of the donation or grant; and

3 (3) to exercise all powers and conduct such activities as are necessary in  
4 carrying out the Board’s responsibilities in fulfilling the purposes of this  
5 chapter.

6 ~~(c)~~ The Board shall adopt such rules as are necessary to carry out the  
7 purposes of this chapter, including, where appropriate, imposing reasonable  
8 fines or sanctions against persons that do not adhere to applicable Board rules.

9 (d) A regional dispatch center shall submit for Board approval a five-year  
10 dispatch plan. The plan shall include:

11 (1) a projected operational budget;

12 (2) mapping of response times for the agencies within its service  
13 territory;

14 (3) mapping of wireless dead zones within its service territory;

15 (4) data regarding call volume for each response agency;

16 (5) a minimum training level plan;

17 (6) compliance with technology and equipment standards;

18 (7) redundancy and failover plans that ensure continuity of operations;

19 (8) a plan to incorporate dispatching mental health services and any  
20 other non-traditional response services, including 988 protocols;

1           (9) a technology lifecycle plan to ensure system upgrades are timely,  
2           sufficiently financed, and properly managed; and

3           (9) any other information requested by the Board.

4           (e) The Board shall develop a registry comprised of every agency in the  
5           State that requires dispatching services. On or before July 1, 2025, every  
6           agency on the registry shall be a member of a regional dispatch center. An  
7           agency may receive dispatching services from an entity outside Vermont,  
8           subject to Board approval. An agency may transfer its membership to another  
9           regional dispatch center, subject to Board approval.

10           (f) A regional dispatch center shall not discontinue or curtail dispatching  
11           services without the prior approval of the Board. If a regional dispatch center  
12           seeks to dissolve, it shall submit a dissolution plan to the Board. A dissolution  
13           plan must be approved by the Board prior to the dissolution of a regional  
14           dispatch center.

15           ~~(g), (h) [Repealed.]~~

16           § 7054. ~~FUNDING~~ EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS ENHANCED 911

17                   FUND

18           (a) The Enhanced 911 Emergency Communications Fund is created as a  
19           special fund subject to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5.  
20           Balances in the Fund on June 30 of each year shall carry forward and shall not  
21           revert to the General Fund.



1 (b) The General Assembly shall annually review and approve an amount to  
2 be transferred by the universal service fiscal agent to the Enhanced 911 Fund  
3 and shall appropriate some or all of that amount for expenditures related to  
4 providing Enhanced 911 services.

5 (c) Into the Enhanced 911 Fund shall be deposited monies transferred from  
6 the universal service fiscal agent, any State or federal funds appropriated to the  
7 Fund by the General Assembly, any taxes specifically required by law to be  
8 deposited into the Fund, and any grants or gifts received by the State for the  
9 benefit of the Enhanced 911 system.

10 (d) Disbursements from the Enhanced 911 Fund shall be made by the State  
11 Treasurer on warrants drawn by the Director solely for the purposes specified  
12 in this chapter. The Director may issue such warrants pursuant to contracts or  
13 grants.

14 (e) Disbursements may be made for:

15 (1) nonrecurring costs, including establishing public safety answering  
16 points, ~~dispatch centers~~, purchasing network equipment and software,  
17 developing databases, and providing for initial training and public education;

18 (2) recurring costs, including network access fees and other telephone  
19 charges, software, equipment, database management and improvement, public  
20 education, ongoing training, and equipment maintenance;

1 (3) expenses of the Board and the Department of Public Service incurred  
2 under this chapter and related to the Enhanced 911 system;

3 (4) costs solely attributable to statewide public safety answering point  
4 and dispatch center operations; and

5 (5) costs attributable to demonstration projects designed to enhance the  
6 delivery of emergency 911 and other emergency services, including dispatch  
7 services.

8 (f) Disbursements may not be made for:

9 (1) personnel costs for emergency dispatch answering points;

10 (2) construction, purchase, renovation, or furnishings for buildings at  
11 emergency dispatch points;

12 (3) two-way radios; and

13 (4) vehicles and associated equipment.

14 § 7054a. REGIONAL DISPATCH FUND; ASSESSMENT; DISTRIBUTION

15 (a) The Regional Dispatch Fund is created as a special fund subject to the  
16 provisions of 32 V.S.A. chapter 7, subchapter 5. Balances in the Fund on June  
17 30 of each year shall carry forward and shall not revert to the General Fund.

18 (b) Into the Fund shall be deposited any State or federal funds appropriated  
19 to the Fund by the General Assembly, any taxes or fees specifically required  
20 by law to be deposited into the Fund, and any grants or gifts received by the  
21 State for the benefit of the public safety dispatch system.

1           (c) Disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on  
2           warrants drawn by the Director solely for the purposes specified in this  
3           chapter. The Director may issue such warrants pursuant to contracts or grants.

4           (d) Disbursements may be made for:

5                 (1) nonrecurring costs, including establishing regional dispatch centers,  
6                 purchasing network equipment and software, developing databases, and  
7                 providing for initial training and public education;

8                 (2) recurring costs, including network access fees and other telephone  
9                 charges, software, equipment, database management and improvement, public  
10                education, ongoing training, and equipment maintenance;

11               (3) expenses of the Board incurred under this chapter that are related to  
12               oversight and management of the public safety dispatch system;

13               (4) costs solely attributable to regional dispatch center operations; and

14               (5) costs attributable to demonstration projects designed to enhance the  
15               delivery of public safety dispatch services.

16           (e) Disbursements may not be made for:

17               (1) emergency response vehicles and associated equipment not directly  
18               used to support or enhance the public safety communications system;

19               (2) costs solely attributable to dispatching services provided to a State  
20               agency by a State regional dispatch center.

1           (f)(1) Beginning in fiscal year 2027, except as provided in subsection (i) of  
2           this section, a municipality shall pay an annual dispatch assessment to the  
3           Board, which shall be deposited into the Regional Dispatch Fund. The  
4           assessment shall be calculated based on the following formula:

5            $T = B \times G + R \times C.$

6           (2) For purposes of this subsection:

7                   (A) T = total owed to the Fund.

8                   (B) B = statewide base fee.

9                   (C) G = percentage of statewide grand list contained in the  
10           municipality.

11                   (D) R = remainder of the statewide dispatch budget.

12                   (E) C = statewide percentage of the three-year rolling average of call  
13           volume originating from the municipality.

14           (3) The statewide base fee shall include the Board's administrative costs  
15           pertaining to oversight and management of the public safety dispatch system.

16           (g)(1) Beginning in fiscal year 2027, except as provided in subsection (i) of  
17           this section, the Board shall annually distribute money from the Fund to a  
18           regional dispatch center pursuant to the following formula:  $F = \Sigma (T \times K).$

19           (2) As used in this subsection:

20                   (A) F = funds distributed to a regional dispatch center.

21                   (B) T = total that a member municipality paid into the Fund.

1           (C)  $K = \frac{\text{ratio of a municipality's call volume that was served by}}{\text{the municipality.}}$

3           (3) The General Assembly shall annually review and approve an amount  
4 to be appropriated from the General Fund for dispatching services provided by  
5 a State dispatch center to a State agency, which shall reflect a three-year  
6 rolling average of call volume for which a State agency is dispatched.

7           (h) As used in this section, “municipality” means a city, town, incorporated  
8 village, unorganized town, or gore.

9           (i) A new regional dispatch center established on or after July 1, 2024, and  
10 its member municipalities, shall be subject to the assessment and funding  
11 formulas established in subsections (f) and (g) of this section.

12           ~~[§ 7055. TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY COORDINATION]~~

13           (Deleted from bill only; will remain as is in statute)

14           ~~[§ 7056. MUNICIPAL COOPERATION; ENHANCED ANI/ALI~~  
15           ~~—————CAPABILITY]~~

16           (Deleted from bill only; will remain as is in statute)

17           ~~[§ 7057. ENTERPRISE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM]~~

18           (Deleted from bill only; will remain as is in statute)

19           ~~[§ 7058. PAY TELEPHONES]~~

20           (Deleted from bill only; will remain as is in statute)

21           § 7059. CONFIDENTIALITY OF SYSTEM INFORMATION

1 (a)(1) A person shall not access, use, or disclose to any other person any  
2 individually identifiable information contained in the system database created  
3 under subdivision 7053(a)(4) of this title, including any customer or user ALI  
4 or ANI information, except in accordance with rules adopted by the Board and  
5 for the purpose of:

6 (A) responding to emergency calls;

7 (B) system maintenance and quality control under the direction of the  
8 Director;

9 (C) investigation, by law enforcement personnel, of false or  
10 intentionally misleading reports of incidents requiring emergency services;

11 (D) assisting in the implementation of a statewide emergency  
12 notification system;

13 (E) provision of emergency dispatch services by public safety  
14 answering points in other states that are under contract with local law  
15 enforcement and emergency response organizations; or

16 (F) coordinating with state and local service providers for the  
17 provision of emergency dispatch services that serve individuals with a  
18 disability, elders, and other populations with special needs.

19 (2) No person shall use customer ALI or ANI information to create  
20 special 911 databases for any private purpose or any public purpose  
21 unauthorized by this chapter.

1 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section,  
2 customer ALI or ANI information obtained in the course of responding to an  
3 emergency call may be included in an incident report prepared by emergency  
4 response personnel, in accordance with rules adopted by the Board.

5 (c) Information relating to customer name, address, and any other specific  
6 customer information collected, organized, acquired, or held by the Board, the  
7 entity operating a public safety answering point or regional dispatch center or  
8 administering the ~~Enhanced 911~~ public safety communications database, or  
9 emergency service provider is not public information and is exempt from  
10 ~~disclosure under 1 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 3~~ public inspection and  
11 copying under the Public Records Act.

12 (d) If a municipality has adopted conventional street addressing for  
13 Enhanced 911 addressing purposes, the municipality shall ensure that an  
14 individual who so requests will not have ~~his or her~~ the individual's street  
15 address and name linked in a municipal public record, but the individual shall  
16 be required to provide a mailing address. The request required by this  
17 subsection shall be in writing and shall be filed with the municipal clerk.  
18 Requests under this subsection shall be confidential. A form shall be prepared  
19 by the Board and made generally available to the public by which the  
20 confidentiality option established by this subsection may be exercised.

1 (e) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, no person acting  
2 on behalf of the State of Vermont or any political subdivision of the State shall  
3 require an individual to disclose ~~his or her~~ the individual's Enhanced 911  
4 address, provided that the individual furnishes ~~his or her~~ an alternative mailing  
5 address.

6 § 7060. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

7 No person shall be liable in any suit for civil damages who in good faith  
8 receives, develops, collects, or processes information for the ~~Enhanced 911~~  
9 public safety communications database or develops, designs, adopts,  
10 establishes, installs, participates in, implements, maintains, or provides access  
11 to telephone, mobile, or IP-enabled service for the purpose of helping persons  
12 obtain emergency assistance in accordance with this chapter unless such action  
13 constitutes gross negligence or an intentional tort. In addition, no provider of  
14 telephone, mobile, or other IP-enabled service or a provider's respective  
15 employees, directors, officers, assigns, affiliates, or agents shall be liable for  
16 civil damages in connection with the release of customer information to any  
17 governmental entity, including any public safety answering point or regional  
18 dispatch center, as required under this chapter.

19 § 7061. ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

20 (a) The Board may file a civil action for injunctive relief in the Civil  
21 Division of the Washington ~~County~~ Superior Court to enforce a provision of



1 this chapter or a rule adopted by the Board under this chapter. The ~~court~~ Court  
2 shall award the Board its costs and reasonable attorney’s fees in the event that  
3 the Board prevails in an action under this subsection.

4 (b) A person who violates the provisions of section 7059 of this title shall  
5 be imprisoned not more than one year or fined not more than \$10,000.00, or  
6 both.

7 (c) An aggrieved individual may maintain an action in the Civil Division of  
8 Superior Court for damages, injunctive relief, costs, and attorney’s fees against  
9 any person who intentionally or with gross negligence violates any provision  
10 of, or rules adopted under, section 7059 or subsection 7055(b) of this title.

11 § 7062. DISPATCH SERVICES; COST SHARING

12 [Placeholder; see Sec. 4]

13 § 7063. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

14 (a) The Board, in consultation with the Secretary of Administration, shall  
15 develop procedures and best practices for agency cooperation and coordination  
16 on matters of overlapping jurisdiction. The primary purpose of this section is  
17 to ensure the Board has access to information related to its oversight and  
18 management authority under this chapter, including any relevant information  
19 maintained by the Department of Public Service, the Department of Public  
20 Safety, and the Agency of Digital Services.

1        (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to waive any privilege or  
2        protection otherwise afforded information by law due solely to the fact that the  
3        information is shared with the Board pursuant to this section.

4        (c) The Secretary of Administration, in consultation with the Board and any  
5        other affected State agency, may develop a plan for transferring State-owned  
6        infrastructure and equipment to the Board to support and enhance the statewide  
7        public safety communications system.

8        Sec. 4. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS MODERNIZATION  
9                PROCESS

10        (a) Oversight. The E-911 Board shall initiate and oversee the transition to  
11        the statewide public safety communications system contemplated by this act  
12        until such time as the Vermont Public Safety Communications Board becomes  
13        operational, at which point the newly established Board shall complete the  
14        transition process. The Executive Director may retain or employ technical  
15        experts and other officers, agents, employees, and contractors as are necessary  
16        to give effect to the act’s purposes.

17        (b) Fund. There is created a special fund in the State Treasury to be known  
18        as the Public Safety Communications Transition Fund, which shall be  
19        administered by the E-911 Board. The Board may authorize disbursements  
20        from the Fund to carry out the purposes of this section. The Fund shall be  
21        composed of any monies transferred or appropriated to the Fund by the

1 General Assembly or received from any other source, public or private, subject  
2 to the provisions of 32 V.S.A. 5. Unexpended balances and any earnings shall  
3 remain in the Fund for use in accord with the purposes of this section until July  
4 1, 2026, at which time the Fund shall cease to exist and any remaining balance  
5 shall be transferred to the ~~Emergency Communications Fund established in 30~~  
6 ~~V.S.A. § 7054 Regional Dispatch Fund established in 30 V.S.A. § 7054a.~~

7 (c) *Advisory committee.*

8 (1) A ~~Public Safety~~ Communications Advisory Committee is established  
9 to make recommendations to and advise the Board on the transition process  
10 established in this section. The Committee shall comprise technology experts  
11 and public safety stakeholders to focus on critical aspects of a statewide public  
12 safety communications system. Members shall include:

13 (A) the Commissioner of Public Safety or designee;

14 (B) a representative from the Department of Public Safety appointed  
15 by the Commissioner of Public Safety;

16 (C) the Secretary of Digital Services or designee;

17 (D) the Commissioner of Public Service or designee;

18 ~~(D) the Director of Radio Technology Services, Department of Public~~  
19 ~~Safety;~~

20 ~~(E) the Vermont Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, Department~~  
21 ~~of Public Safety;~~

1 ~~(F) the Director of Emergency Management, Department of Public~~

2 ~~Safety;~~

3 ~~(E) the Director of Emergency Preparedness, Response and Injury~~  
4 ~~Prevention, Department of Health;~~

5 ~~(F) the Chair of the Regional Dispatch Working Group established by~~  
6 ~~the General Assembly in Act 185 of 2022;~~

7 ~~(G) one member appointed by the Board who shall not be an~~  
8 ~~employee or officer of the State at the time of appointment have expertise~~  
9 ~~relevant to the purposes of this section;~~

10 ~~(G) one member appointed by the Speaker of the House who shall~~  
11 ~~not be a member of the General Assembly at the time of appointment and who~~  
12 ~~shall have expertise in the area of dispatching services; and~~

13 ~~(H) one member appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees~~  
14 ~~who shall not be a member of the General Assembly at the time of the~~  
15 ~~appointment;~~

16 ~~(H) one member appointed by Vermont Care Partners with expertise~~  
17 ~~in emergency mental health services;~~

18 ~~(I) one firefighter appointed by the Vermont Career Fire Chiefs~~  
19 ~~Association;~~

20 ~~(J) one municipal law enforcement officer appointed by the Vermont~~  
21 ~~Association of Chiefs of Police;~~

1           (K) one emergency medical technician or paramedic appointed by the  
2           Vermont State Ambulance Association; and

3           (L) two municipal officers appointed by the Executive Director of the  
4           Vermont League of Cities and Towns who shall represent different geographic  
5           regions of the State.

6           (2) Except for those members otherwise regularly employed by the  
7           State, the compensation of the Committee’s members is that provided in 32  
8           V.S.A. § 1010(a). All members, including members otherwise regularly  
9           employed by the State, shall receive their actual and necessary expenses when  
10          away from home or office upon their official duties under this section.

11          (3) The Board shall appoint a chair and vice chair. Meetings shall be  
12          held at the call of the Chair or at the request of two members. A majority of  
13          sitting members shall constitute a quorum, and action taken by the Committee  
14          under this section may be authorized by a majority of the members present and  
15          voting. ~~The Committee may meet up to six times a year. Additional meetings~~  
16          are subject to approval of the Board.

17          (4) The Advisory Committee shall cease to exist on July 1, 2027.

18          (d) *Transition process.* The transition to a statewide public safety  
19          communications system shall occur in essentially three phases as specified in  
20          this subsection; however, certain aspects of each phase may occur  
21          simultaneously as deemed appropriate by the Board.

1           (1) Data collection. The Board shall perform an analysis of existing  
2           dispatch services in the State, including how they are financed, and the  
3           technology used to support them. Accordingly, the Board shall:

4                   (A) conduct an inventory of all existing dispatch infrastructure and  
5                   equipment, including facilities, hardware, software, applications, and land  
6                   mobile radio systems, referring to and incorporating any existing relevant data  
7                   collected by a State or municipal entity;

8                   (B) determine the number of full-time and part-time personnel  
9                   currently performing dispatch services, taking into account personnel who  
10                  have other responsibilities in addition to providing dispatch services;

11                  (C) identify the person at each dispatch center who is responsible for  
12                  coordinating and overseeing dispatch services;

13                  (D) determine the current statewide budget for total spending on  
14                  dispatching services, taking into account all State and municipal appropriations  
15                  and fees;

16                  (E) map the wireless communications “dead zones” in the State,  
17                  taking into consideration all cell towers that are part of the FirstNet statewide  
18                  public safety radio access network; cellular mapping efforts conducted by the  
19                  Department of Public Service; and the results of any propagation studies  
20                  undertaken by the Board; and any existing, relevant mapping data collected by  
21                  a regional dispatch center or other entity; and

1           (F) conduct a community needs assessment with the assistance of the  
2           Vermont League of Cities and Towns to determine where and to what extent  
3           there are gaps in dispatch services or significant challenges to the delivery of  
4           dispatch services.

5           (2) Design. The Board shall design an equitably financed, regional  
6           dispatch system that is part of a broader statewide public safety  
7           communications system. Accordingly, the Board:

8           (A) shall establish technical and operational standards and protocols  
9           that ensure an interoperable and resilient statewide public safety  
10           communications system that incorporates computer-aided dispatch systems and  
11           land mobile radios;

12           (B) shall develop a technology lifecycle plan standards to ensure  
13           system and database upgrades are timely, sufficiently financed, and properly  
14           managed;

15           (C) shall establish system and database security and cybersecurity  
16           standards;

17           (D) shall develop a continuity of operations plan standards and best  
18           practices that encompasses failover procedures and other system redundancies  
19           to ensure the continuous performance of mission critical operations, and that  
20           requires testing of a regional dispatch center's continuity of operations plan at  
21           regular intervals;

1           (E) shall establish initial training and continuing education standards  
2           for emergency communications personnel, including recommended minimum  
3           staffing levels at dispatch centers and other measures designed to support the  
4           retention and wellbeing of dispatch personnel;

5           ~~(F) shall develop a funding model for dispatch services that includes~~  
6           ~~an equitable cost sharing formula that reflects a base rate and a rolling call~~  
7           ~~volume rate, as well as a process for collecting and distributing funds, subject~~  
8           ~~to approval by the General Assembly;~~

9           (F) shall develop a resource allocation plan that ensures dispatch  
10          services are available in all regions of the State, including the establishment of  
11          new dispatch centers or expanded capacity and capability of existing dispatch  
12          centers, if deemed appropriate by the Board;

13          (G) shall establish a process for annually reviewing the budgets of  
14          dispatch centers; and

15          (H) shall seek to establish on or before July 1, 2024 at least one new  
16          regional dispatch center that meets the design standards and protocols  
17          developed under this subsection and that provides service in areas of the State  
18          that presently face significant challenges with respect to reliably providing  
19          dispatch services

20          (3) *Implementation.* The Board shall seek to have a fully operational,  
21          integrated public safety communications system on or before July 1, 2026. As



1 part of the implementation phase, the Board shall test, inspect, and adjust the  
2 system to ensure it performs as required. Once the system is fully operational,  
3 the Board shall continue to monitor and evaluate systemwide performance and  
4 make improvements where needed.

5 (e) *Interagency cooperation.* It is essential that all departments in State  
6 government with expertise in public safety and emergency management  
7 services; information technology; and communications networks provide  
8 timely and comprehensive data and assistance requested by the Board in  
9 furtherance of its objectives under this section.

10 (f) *Report.* On or before January 15, 2024, and annually thereafter for three  
11 consecutive years, the Board shall submit a status report to the General  
12 Assembly and the Governor. The report shall include a summary of the  
13 Board’s progress with the transition process described in this section and may  
14 include policy recommendations for improving and strengthening that process  
15 or, more broadly, with regard to the oversight and management of the public  
16 safety communications system established by this act. The initial report of the  
17 Board shall include: a recommended funding model for a statewide emergency  
18 dispatch system as well a recommended regional governance model applicable  
19 to all dispatch centers to support a coordinated, integrated statewide emergency  
20 communications system.

1           (1) a recommendation for collecting money from a municipality or  
2           agency that receives dispatch services from a State public safety answering  
3           point free of charge and for distributing such funds to the State public safety  
4           answering point, beginning on July 1, 2024; and

5           (2) any other recommendations related to Sec. 3 of this act that will  
6           better serve the act’s purposes.

7           (g) Any new training or continuing education or other requirements  
8           established by the Board that affect the terms or conditions of State  
9           employment shall be the subject of impact bargaining between the State and  
10           the collective bargaining representative for the employee’s bargaining unit to  
11           the extent required by any collective bargaining agreements between the  
12           parties.

13           Sec. 5. APPROPRIATION TRANSFER

14           Any unobligated funds remaining of the \$11,000,000.00 of one-time  
15           General Funds appropriated by the General Assembly to the Department of  
16           Public Safety for regional dispatch funding pursuant to 2022 Acts and  
17           Resolves No. 185, Sec. B.1100, subsection (b), shall be transferred to the  
18           Public Safety Communications Transition Fund established in Sec. 4 of this act  
19           and used for the purposes of that Fund.

20           Sec. 6. GRANT ADMINISTRATION REDESIGNATION

1        (a) Unless prohibited under federal law, the E-911 Board shall be  
2        redesignated as the responsible entity for administering the \$9,000,000.00 in  
3        Congressionally Directed Spending appropriated under the federal  
4        Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, Public Law No. 117-328, to support  
5        Vermont’s transition to a modernized, regional communications network.

6        (b) If federal law prohibits the redesignation specified in subsection (a) of  
7        this section, then the Commissioner of Public Safety shall consult with the  
8        Board on all grant disbursements.

9        Sec. 7. POSITIONS; APPROPRIATION

10       (a) The Executive Director of the E-911 Board is authorized to establish  
11       Eight permanent classified positions are created to assist with the transition to  
12       and continued management and oversight of the statewide public safety  
13       communications system established by this act.

14       (b) The E-911 Board is authorized to review and adjust the compensation  
15       of the Executive Director to adequately reflect the additional responsibilities  
16       established by this act.

17       (c) There is appropriated to the E-911 Board from the General Fund in  
18       fiscal year 2024 the sum of \$1,000,000.00.

19       Sec. 8. 30 V.S.A. § 7501(b)(7) is amended to read:

20                (7) “Service location” means a business or residential geographic point  
21        of contact of a telecommunications service for purposes of the Enhanced 911

1 network. The number of service locations in each exchange shall be  
2 determined by the Department of Public Service in periodic updates to the  
3 State Telecommunications Plan based on analysis of the locations in the  
4 database of the Vermont ~~Enhanced 911~~ **Public Safety** Communications Board.

5 Sec. 9. 30 V.S.A. § 7511(a)(1)(D) is amended to read: [**Remove if no change**]

6 (D) to support **Enhanced 911 emergency communications** services in  
7 the manner provided by section 7514 of this title; and

8 Sec. 10. 30 V.S.A. § 7514 is amended to read: [**Remove if no change**]

9 § 7514. **ENHANCED 911 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

10 The fiscal agent shall make distributions to the State Treasurer, for deposit  
11 into the **Enhanced 911 special fund** ~~Emergency Communications Fund~~, as  
12 annually directed by the General Assembly.

13 Sec. 11. CONFORMING REVISIONS

14 When preparing the Vermont Statutes Annotated for publication, the Office  
15 of Legislative Council shall make the following revisions throughout the  
16 statutes as needed for consistency with Sec. 3 of this act (establishing the  
17 Vermont **Public Safety** Communications Board), provided the revisions have  
18 no other effect on the meaning of the affected statutes:

19 (1) replace “Enhanced 911 Board” or “E-911 Board” with “**Public**  
20 **Safety** Communications Board;”

1           (2) replace “Vermont Enhanced 911 Board” or “Vermont E-911 Board”  
2           with “Vermont **Public Safety** Communications Board;”

3           (3) revisions that are substantially similar to those described in  
4           subdivisions (1) and (2) of this section.

5           Sec. 12. EFFECTIVE DATES

6           This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 3 (establishing the  
7           Vermont Public Safety Communications Board); **Secs. 8-10** (conforming  
8           revisions related to the Vermont Universal Service Fund); and Sec. 11  
9           (authority to make conforming statutory revisions) shall take effect on July 1,  
10          ~~2026~~ 2024.