



NEWS RELEASE

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Kari's Law in Effect in El Paso County

Mandatory Compliance Begins September 1st, 2016

On May 19th, 2016, the El Paso County 911 District officially adopted the Commission on State Emergency Communication's (CSEC) Rule 251.16, Direct Access to 9-1-1 Service.

The purpose of this rule is to facilitate the implementation of Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 771A ("Kari's Law") requiring telephone systems that provide outbound dialing capacity to be configured to provide direct access to 9-1-1 service, without an additional code, digit, prefix, postfix, or trunk-access code. Kari's Law also requires notification of a 9-1-1 call to a central location on the site of the residential or business facility from which a 9-1-1 call is made using a telephone system. **Mandatory compliance with the law begins September 1st, 2016.**

Business service users who are unable to comply by the deadline must be granted a one-year waiver no later than September 1st. All non-compliant telephone handsets that provide outbound dialing capacity or access must have immediately adjacent to, and optionally on, the telephone the instructional sticker. Waivers, and more information about Kari's Law, can be found at <http://texas911.org/>.

BACKGROUND

Kari's Law is the result of a 2013 incident that occurred in Marshall, Texas when Kari Hunt's nine-year old daughter tried to call 9-1-1 from a hotel room because her mother was being attacked by her estranged husband. Tragically, the child did not know that she needed to dial '9' to get an outside line. Kari Hunt died before help could arrive.

On May 15, 2015, Governor Abbott signed SB 788 (Kari's Law). "There's a lesson virtually every parent teaches their child – if you face an emergency, call 9-1-1," Governor Abbott said. "I am signing Kari's Law to ensure that whenever

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there is an emergency, any child and any adult who dials 9-1-1 is going to be able to connect with emergency personnel to ensure they come to the rescue of those who need help the most.”

Kari’s Law passed in the US House of Representatives in May 2016, and has moved on to the Senate for direct 9-1-1 access in all multi-line phone systems across the country.

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The El Paso 911 District provides enhanced 911 service for the more than 700,000 citizens living and working in El Paso County. Created in 1987, the District has dedicated itself to deploying technology which provides our community with the critical infrastructure --equipment, connectivity, software, maintenance and support-- used by Public Safety entities to receive 911 calls and dispatch emergency responders.