

# Joint Emergency Communications Services Association

## FY2023 Annual Report



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# Message from Executive Director

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January 22, 2024

Dear Policy Board and 28E member entities;

I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report of the Joint Emergency Communications Center. This report contains 12 months of statistics for fiscal year 2023.

Our public safety responders and the citizens of Johnson County continue to depend on our services and team as we continue to navigate the staffing challenges plaguing public safety today. The agency's top priority continues to be focusing on and ensuring reliable, accurate and timely emergency dispatch services.

As we look ahead into fiscal year 2024; we will be completing APCO Project RETAINS. APCO Project RETAINS provides information on staffing levels and takes a look at how our agency compares to agencies our size with retention. This report will guide us to make sure we are adequately staffed and provide insights into how we are doing compared to other 911 centers. The JECC will also be certifying a minimum of three new dispatchers as Certified Training Dispatchers to assist with training new hires. This will ensure trainers are staying current and fresh to aid in the process of reaching full strength.

In fiscal year 2023, our call volume numbers remained fairly consistent when compared to fiscal year 2022. There was an overall increase of 688 total emergency and non-emergency telephone calls received; which was approximately 5% over fiscal year 2022. We experienced a 5% increase in the number of calls for service created compared to fiscal year 2022. We saw NG911 (combined wireline and wireless 911) call volume increase by approximately 5% over fiscal year 2022. We experienced no change in Text to 911 messages compared to FY22. We experienced a 3% decrease in calls to the Alarm line and a 2% decrease in non-emergency call volume compared to fiscal year 2022.

In closing, we look forward to continuing to proudly serve our public safety partners, communities, visitors and residents of Johnson County.

Sincerely,

Tom Jones  
Executive Director

# Vision

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To serve and support the public safety communications needs of our customers in the most efficient and responsive manner possible.

# Mission Statement

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To provide all residents of Johnson County a single answering point for processing their calls for emergency and non-emergency assistance for police, fire, medical and general service responders. To provide primary communications for all public safety agencies responding within our jurisdictional boundaries through use of 2-way radios, telephones and/or teletype equipment. To maintain up-to-date and continuous training for all employees to insure prompt, professional and efficient services.

# Services Provided by the JECC

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- Enhanced Wireless and Wireline 911 services to all Citizens of Johnson County.
- Radio Communications/Computer Aided Dispatch to 5 Law Enforcement Agencies.
- Radio Communications/Paging Communications/Computer Aided Dispatch to 15 Fire Departments, Johnson County Ambulance Service and Johnson County HAZMAT team.
- Radio Communications only to the following:
  - University of Iowa Department of Public Safety
  - Iowa Department of Corrections High Risk Unit
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - Iowa DNR-Lake McBride and Conservation
  - Johnson County Conservation
  - UIHC
  - Mercy Hospital
  - VA Hospital
  - North Liberty Public Works
  - Coralville Public Works
  - Johnson County Secondary Roads
  - University of Iowa Parking and Transportation
- Activates and monitors the Johnson County Outdoor Warning Systems.
- Notification and monitoring point for Severe Weather activity for the National Weather Service-Quad Cities
- Alert Iowa

# Overview

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The Joint Emergency Communications Center of Johnson County (JECC) is the clearing house for all 9-1-1 calls and all Emergency Communications for Johnson County. With nearly 152,854 citizens (2020 US Census estimate), Johnson County is Iowa's fourth most populated county and covers 623 square miles.

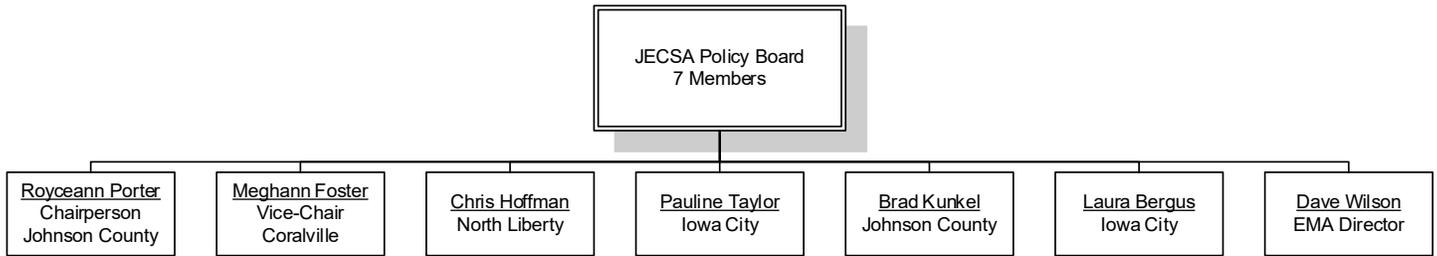
In 2009, Johnson County installed the first Harris P25 Trunked IP Linear Simulcast System in the State of Iowa. The seven (7) site radio system has approximately 967 Mobile and Portable Public Safety Radios in addition to approximately 500 non-public safety radios operating on its system throughout Johnson County. The JECC system shares radio communications resources with 17 counties in Central and Eastern Iowa along with connectivity to the Iowa Interoperable State-wide communications system (ISICS). Johnson County also houses three (3) Federal Interop repeated talkgroups for interoperable communications. The JECC serves as the epicenter for emergency communications for all citizens of Johnson County.

The JECC serves the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year with specially trained dispatchers to answer all emergency calls for assistance. These operators receive and/or transmit emergency telephone, radio, alarm, and other types of data over multiple computer systems, then analyze it in a timely manner for the purpose of relaying the information between citizens and first responders during emergencies in order to preserve life and property.

Another important responsibility of Emergency Communications Personnel is the accurate entry and removal of wanted persons, articles and vehicles in NCIC. This includes providing, on demand, the results of NCIC queries made by field units.

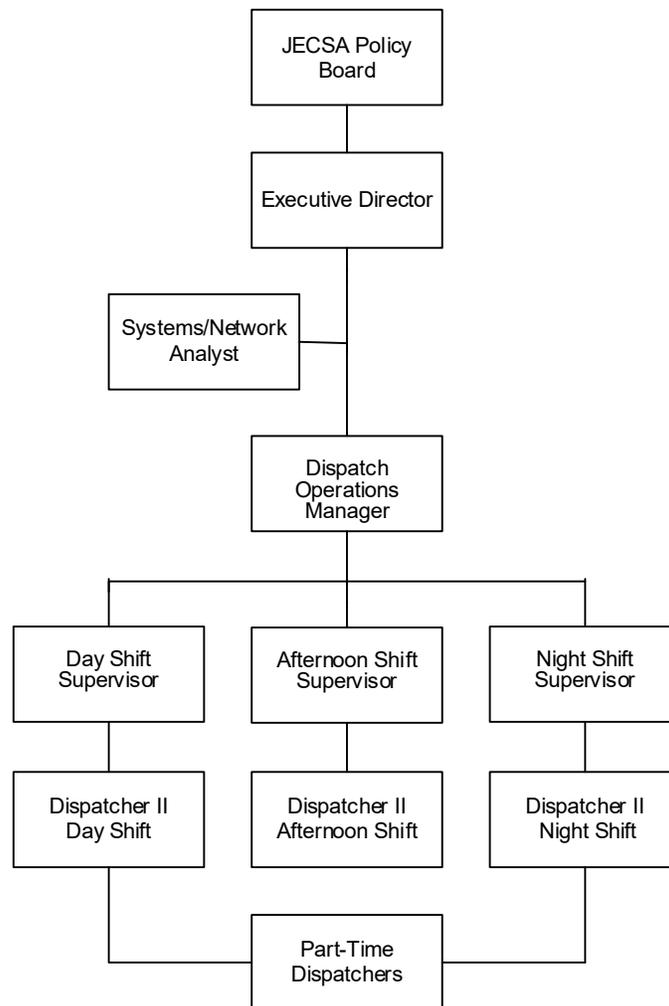
# Joint Emergency Communications Services Association Policy Board of Directors

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# Joint Emergency Communications Center (JECC) Organizational Chart

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# Personnel Allocation – FY2023

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<b><u>Job Title</u></b>	<b><u>Management</u></b>	<b><u>Administrative</u></b>	<b><u>Operations</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Executive Director	1			1
Dispatch Operations Manager	1			1
Evening Shift Supervisor	3			3
Systems/Network Analyst		1		1
Dispatcher II			27	27
			Total	33

# Training and Events

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**Our dedicated Staff continue to promote the 911 Center in a positive way through participation in a number of volunteer events:**

- UIHC Emergency Medicine Resident Training Program
- North Liberty Kids for Kites Event
- Johnson County Fair Kid's Day
- Partner in UIHC EMS Fellowship Program
- Iowa City Animal Shelter Holiday Giving

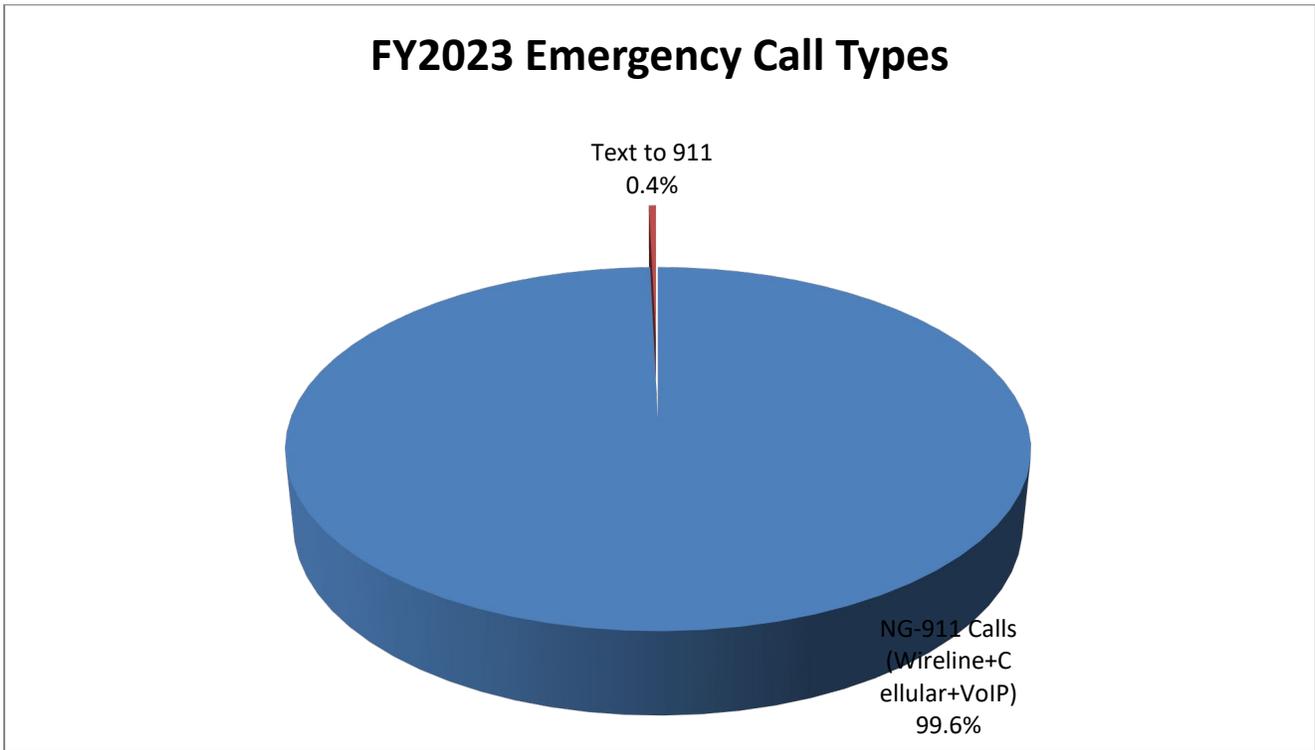
**The Staff took advantage of a number of training opportunities in fiscal year 2023 including:**

- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) Training
- Post Traumatic Purpose Training
- CommUnity 988/911 Training
- APCO/NENA Spring Conference
- APCO/NENA Fall Conference
- CJIS Training
- Police Legal Sciences
- Emergency Medical Dispatch Certification Class
- State of Iowa—TAC Class
- State of Iowa—Iowa System Guide
- State of Iowa—40-hour Dispatch Class
- State of Iowa—Criminal History and Re-Dissemination
- APCO—Center Supervisor Program
- Homeland Security—Communications Unit Leader Course
- CPR Recertification
- ProQA Training
- IAED College Course—"Why People Die in Fires"
- EMD CDE—Animal Bites/Attacks
- EMD CDE—Sudden Arrest Reset and Complete Obstruction Tools
- EMD CDE—Disability Awareness for Dispatchers
- EMD CDE—Active Assailant
- EMD CDE—Overcoming CPR Barriers
- EMD CDE—Convulsions/Seizures Lesson
- EMD CDE—Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort Protocol
- EMD CDE—Burns/Explosion Protocol
- EMD CDE—Determining Status of Breathing on Case Entry
- EMD CDE—Pregnancy/Childbirth and Miscarriage Protocol
- EMD CDE—Echo Determinant Practice
- EMD CDE—Falls Protocol
- EMD Journal—"Cardiac/Respiratory Arrest or Death"
- EMD Journal—"Inappropriate Clarifiers"
- EMD Journal—"Feeling Faint?"
- EMD Journal—"Taking a Tumble"
- EMD Journal—"To Use or Not to Use?"
- EMD Journal—"Completely Alert?"
- EMD Journal—"Unusual Bleeding Calls"
- EMD Journal—"Adrenal Insufficiency"
- EMD Journal—"Dispatch Danger Jones"
- APCO Journal—"Swatting: A Deadly Trend"
- NENA Journal—"What is Tactical About Self-Care?"
- NENA Journal—"Bracing for Impact"
- NENA Journal—"Trauma Transference"

# Statistics – FY2023

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This summary shows the total of Emergency 911 calls received in fiscal year 2023.

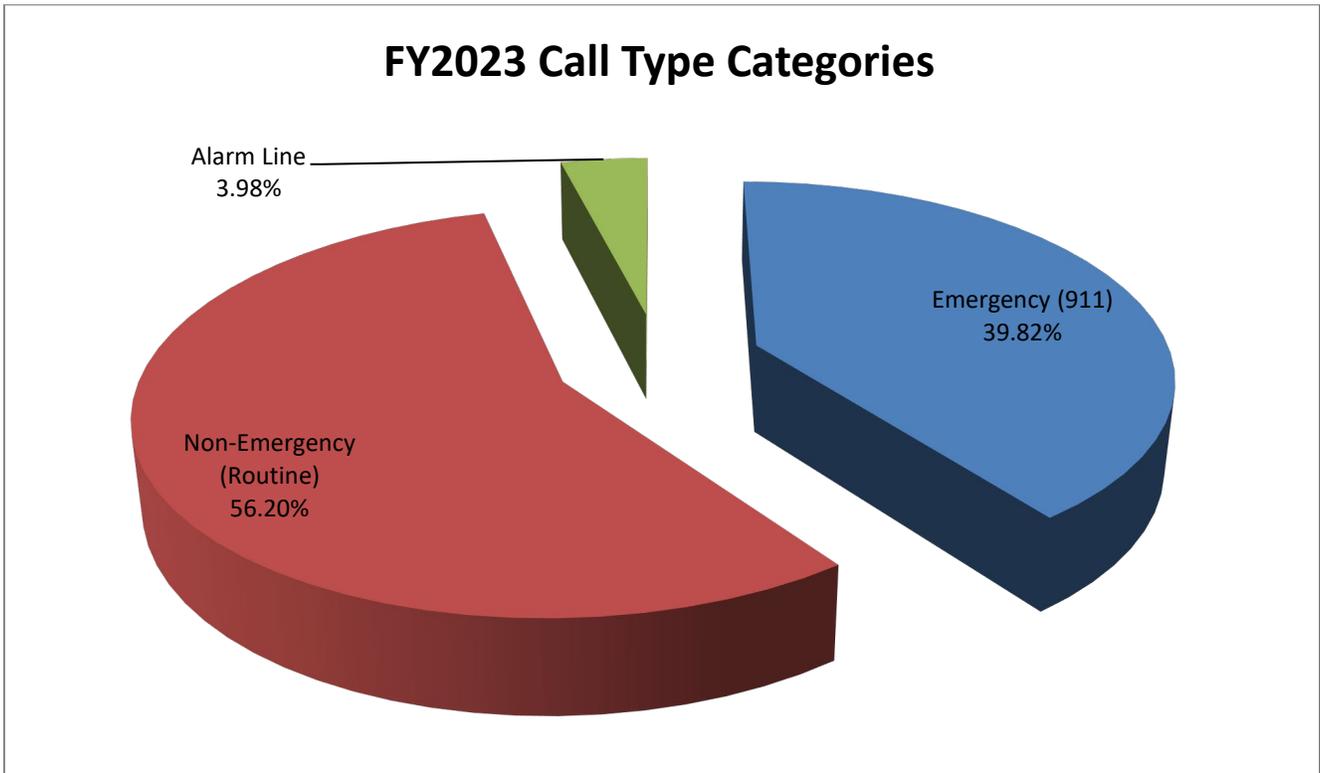


Call Type	Total	Percent
NG-911 Calls (Wireline+Cellular+VoIP Combined)	52,651	99.6%
Text to 911	201	0.4%
Total	52,852	100%

This summary shows the overall total of emergency call types received. In FY23 there was a 5% increase in the total number of emergency call types received over FY22.

# Statistics – FY2023

This summary shows the total call volume for all call types received in fiscal year 2023.

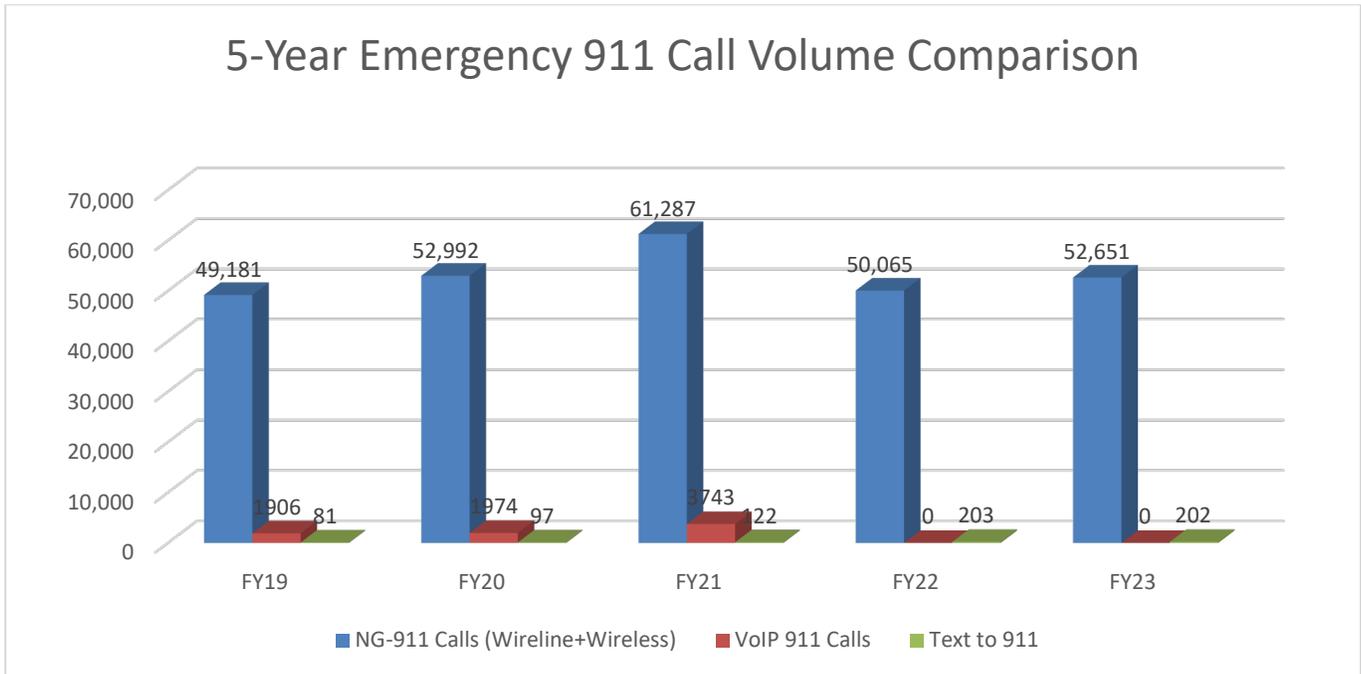


Categories	Volume	Percent
Emergency (911 & Text-911)	52,852	39.82%
Non-Emergency (Routine)	74,302	56.20%
Alarm Line	5,264	3.98%
<b>Total</b>	<b>132,216</b>	<b>100%</b>

This summary shows the overall total volume and percentage of call types received in fiscal year 2023. There was less than 1% increase in total calls received over Fiscal Year 2022.

# Statistics – FY2023

This chart shows a comparison of 911 call volume for the past 5 years.



Call Type	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>
NG-911 (Wireline+Cellular)*	49,181	52,992	61,287	50,065	52,651
VoIP 911 Calls	1,906	1,974	3,743	N/A	N/A
Text to 911	81	97	122	203	201
<b>Totals</b>	<b>51,088</b>	<b>55,063</b>	<b>65,152</b>	<b>50,268</b>	<b>52,852</b>

\*VoIP 911 calls are now included in NG911 statistics.

We experienced an approximate 5% increase in overall 911 call volume compared to fiscal year 2022. There was an approximate 0% increase (1 message over FY22) in text to 911 messages received over fiscal year 2022.

Throughout the year, the JECC continued to receive its highest volume of phone calls between the hours of 1000 and 1800. The 1500 hour (3:00 p.m.) continues to be the peak hour of the day for the most calls per hour.

# Call Taking Standards

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A ringing 9-1-1 line is considered the highest priority until proven otherwise. Quick reaction and answer time is essential.

In FY2022, the call answering standards were adjusted to the below recommendations. We continue to meet the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) Call Answering Standard Recommendation of:

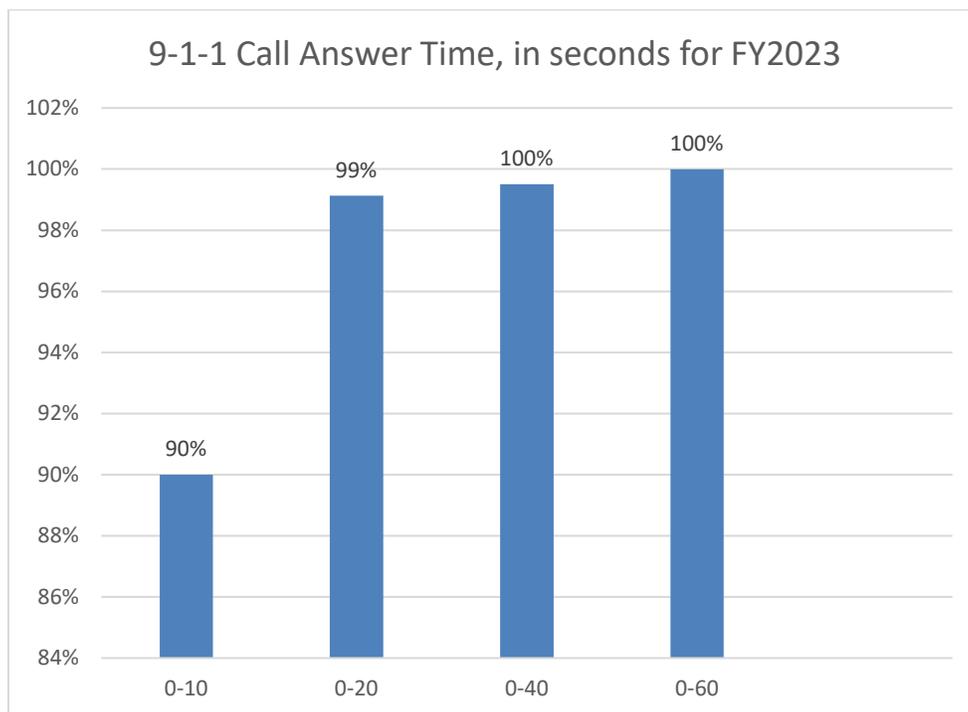
- 90% of all 9-1-1 calls shall be answered within fifteen (15) seconds.
- 95% of all 9-1-1 calls shall be answered within twenty (20) seconds.

*JECC dispatchers answered 90% percent of 9-1-1 calls within ten (10) seconds.*

*JECC dispatchers answered 99% percent of 9-1-1 calls within twenty (20) seconds.*

*The average call answer time was six (6) seconds for all 911 calls answered.*

From time to time there are situations that are out of our control that can affect our call answering time. These situations include times where simultaneous emergency lines ring into the center and there are more lines ringing than there are staff to answer them. This is very common when accidents along the interstate occur and during severe weather events.

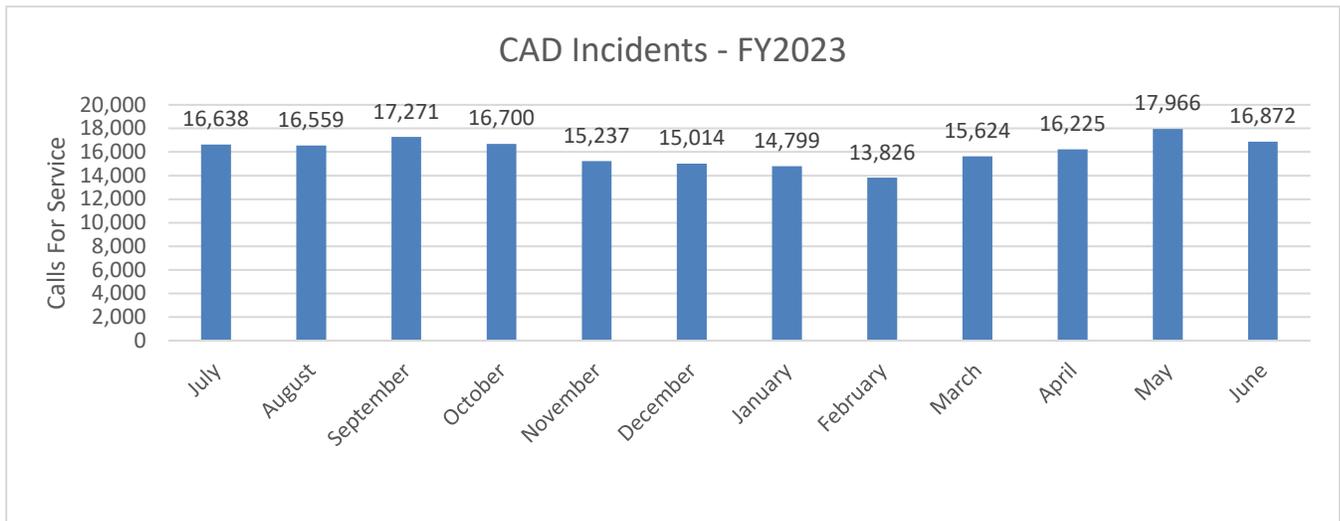


\*In FY23 the average time length of a 911 call was 2 minutes and 8 seconds and a non-emergency call was 1 minute and 44 seconds.

# Statistics – Calls for Service/Dispatch Actions

In the same way that the JECC tracks the number of calls received during the fiscal year, dispatch actions in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system are also tracked. These actions include those initiated by dispatchers who communicate directly with officers in the field, traffic stops, officer-initiated on-view incidents and both routine and emergency calls into the communications center.

This activity resulted in the creation of 192,731 Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) incidents processed by JECC staff in fiscal year 2023. This was an approximate 5% increase in the number of calls for service that were created in fiscal year 2022. The Joint Emergency Communications Center professionally handles calls for 21 Public Safety Agencies throughout Johnson County and surrounding counties.



	LAW ENFORCEMENT		FIRE/MEDICAL		COMBINED ACTIVITY	
	Monthly	Cumulative	Monthly	Cumulative	Monthly	Cumulative Total
July	13,696	13,696	2,942	2,942	16,638	16,638
August	13,837	27,533	2,722	5,664	16,559	33,197
September	14,430	41,963	2,841	8,505	17,271	50,468
October	13,788	55,751	2,912	11,417	16,700	67,168
November	12,453	68,204	2,784	14,201	15,237	82,405
December	12,070	80,274	2,944	17,145	15,014	97,419
January	12,114	92,388	2,685	19,830	14,799	112,218
February	11,384	103,772	2,442	22,272	13,826	126,044
March	12,822	116,594	2,802	25,074	15,624	141,668
April	13,460	130,054	2,765	27,839	16,225	157,893
May	14,996	145,050	2,970	30,809	17,966	175,859
June	14,149	159,199	2,723	33,532	16,872	192,731
TOTAL	159,199	159,199	33,532	33,532	192,731	192,731

\*The number of calls for service processed are not a direct result of the number of telephone calls that we receive.

# Telecommunications

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The heaviest volume of calls that we receive continue to come in on the non-emergency number (319) 356-6800. Please remember that 911 should only be used for true emergencies. 911 lines are dedicated telephone lines that provide emergency dispatchers with the ability to see phone numbers, addresses, and names to assist them in pinpointing a caller's location. This is called Automatic Location Identification or ALI. We also continue to explore new technologies and Next Generation 911 (NG911) services such as receiving text messages to keep up with the technological advances in the field of 911 communications.



## Callers with Language Barriers

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The Joint Emergency Communications Center utilizes Language Line Services to assist dispatchers with over-the-phone translation services in over 200 different languages for non-English speaking callers. Our call takers conference in the caller with a translator to assist them with information gathering from the caller to determine what type of emergency they are reporting. This service is accessed by calling an

<u>Language</u>	<u># of Calls</u>	<u>Total Minutes</u>
Spanish	148	1,105
French	52	387
Arabic	17	123
Swahili	9	85
Mandarin	3	13
Kinyarwanda	1	16
Cantonese	1	7
Lingala	1	5
Haitian Creole	1	3
Sudanese Arabic	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>1,746</b>

800 number with the caller on the line and you are connected to a translator within minutes. In fiscal year 2023, we had 234 total calls to the Language Line utilizing ten (10) different languages for a total of 1,746 minutes. We also saw the total minutes increase from 983 in FY22 to 1,746 in FY23; which was a 78% increase. The total number of calls in FY23 increased by 75% over FY22.

## Communications with Impaired Callers

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The Joint Emergency Communications Center personnel are trained to answer and process calls from TTY users. Deaf, hearing and/or speech impaired callers receive the same level of service from our telecommunicators. Personnel use a TTY system that is integrated into the phone system to process these calls and then relay the information to the appropriate agency for the emergency type and location. Text to 911 is also supported at the JECC and is a great resource for the hearing impaired when reporting emergencies.

# Emergency Medical Dispatch

The Joint Emergency Communications Center (JECC) utilizes the Priority Dispatch Emergency Medical Dispatch Program (EMD) to handle requests for emergency medical assistance. All of our dispatchers are EMD certified. The EMD program directs the dispatcher to ask the caller a series of questions based on the nature of the medical emergency. This enables the dispatcher to determine the most appropriate medical response priority. EMD also provides written Post-Dispatch and Pre-Arrival instructions to give to callers when appropriate and possible.

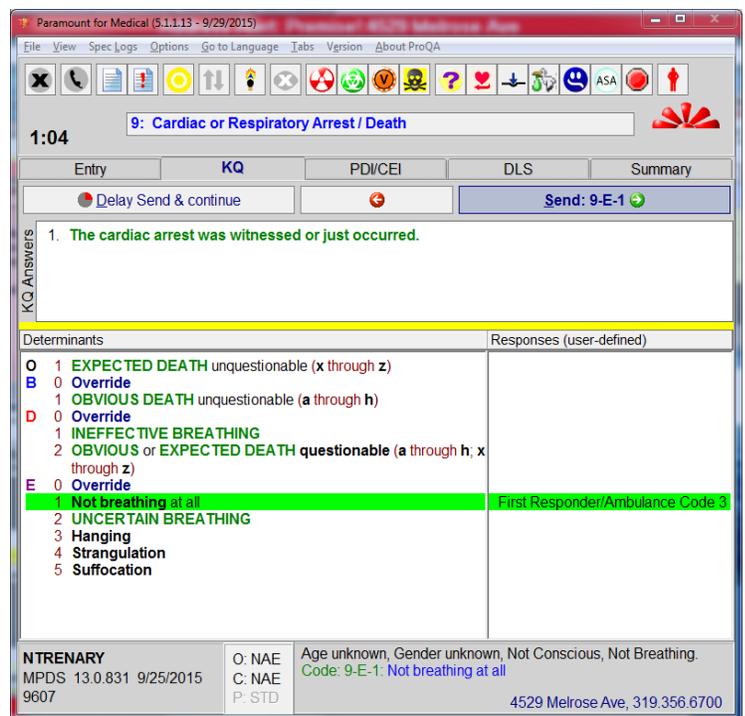
Since 2015, the JECC has used ProQA, which is the computerized version of the Emergency Medical Dispatch protocols. ProQA helps emergency dispatchers move smoothly through the protocols and assists in quickly identifying the appropriate response code for each case. It also guides dispatchers in providing all relevant Post-Dispatch and Pre-Arrival Instructions, as well as important case completion information.

In conjunction with ProQA we also use the AQUA Quality Assurance/Improvement program. All certified EMD dispatchers receive ongoing feedback on their performance based on guidelines established by the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch and EMS, Inc. The purpose of Quality Assurance is to provide a non-punitive means of assisting staff in maintaining a high level of performance.

AQUA automates the entire emergency dispatch case review process and assists in data entry, compliance scoring, record keeping and reporting. With AQUA, we can measure and document the quality of service that our call takers are providing to callers while also evaluating our level of compliance to International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) standards.

Since our migration to ProQA and the use of AQUA, we have seen the compliance level for the Center rise to 89% as of June of 2022. Our goal is to attain a compliance level of 90% in order to achieve accreditation through IAED. An accreditation through the Academy would show that the JECC meets and exceeds the highest national standards for Emergency Medical Dispatch. It also shows that the JECC will provide the highest level of care and professionalism to the communities we serve.

Our staff receives individual and group training and education throughout the year based on the overall findings of these reviews. All staff also has access to a variety of self-education tools to help them maintain their skills. In order to maintain their certification with the EMD program, all staff is required to recertify every two years. This includes the successful completion of a written examination, twenty-four (24) hours of training and CPR certification.



# Frequently Asked Questions

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Why am I asked so many questions?

Once a citizen is connected to 9-1-1, the Telecommunicator follows a standard set of questions. If the caller is requesting an ambulance or the fire department, protocols are used that are based on a system that is used by many centers worldwide. This is a state-of-the art emergency dispatch protocol that meets or exceeds all standards established by the US Department of Transportation and International Academies of Emergency Dispatch. It includes the following:

- What is the address of the emergency?
- What is the phone number you are calling from?
- Okay, tell me exactly what happened.
- What is your name and address?

The protocol also provides instructions to relay to the caller in life threatening situations, such as CPR or how to control bleeding.

Are these questions delaying help being sent?

No, the questions ensure the appropriate response is sent and provides critical information to the responders. Often police and/or fire/EMS department personnel are dispatched after obtaining the location & problem, and the call-taker will continue to ask questions or provide instructions while the responders are en route.

What should I do if I call 9-1-1 by accident?

Please, stay on the line and inform the Telecommunicator that you misdialed. When you hang up, it creates additional work for the Telecommunicator. The Telecommunicator will have to call back to determine if there is a problem and even potentially send out police, fire, or EMS responders. Letting the Telecommunicator know it was a misdial saves time and resources.

Can I text to 9-1-1?

The JECC accepts text to 9-1-1. In the event text to 9-1-1 is not available you will receive a bounce back message indicating to make a voice call. You should only text to 9-1-1 if you are unable to make a voice call. If you do not receive a response for a text to 9-1-1 call, make a voice call.

General Information

- 9-1-1 should not be used to report utility outages (power, gas, cable, etc), contact your provider.
- When Outdoor Warning Sirens are activated, seek shelter immediately. There is no “All Clear” siren or signal. In a weather event when a watch/warning expires, you must determine based on observations and information if it is safe to leave your place of shelter. Please do not call 9-1-1 unless you are reporting a life threatening situation or hazardous conditions. As a reminder, sirens are tested the first Wednesday of the month at 10am.

# 911 or 988 - Mental Health and Addiction Emergency or Crisis?

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## **Mental Health and Addiction EMERGENCY - 911**

A mental health and/or addiction emergency is a life-threatening situation. An immediate response from law enforcement or medics is needed. A person may be actively trying to harm themselves or someone else. In other situations, a person may be out of touch with reality, be unable to function properly, or may be out of control.

Examples of mental health and addiction emergencies are:

- Active suicide threat.
- Threatening harm to self or others.
- Self-injury that needs medical attention.
- Severe intoxication.
- Inability to care for oneself.
- Apparent drug overdose.

If someone is having a mental health and/or addiction emergency, CALL 911.

What to expect when you call 911:

- A dispatcher will answer your call and ask about your emergency.
- Local law enforcement or paramedics will be sent to your location.
- In some cases, a crisis intervention team will accompany law enforcement.
- You will get help dispatched immediately.
- You may be transferred to 988, if appropriate.

## **Mental Health and Addiction CRISIS – 988**

A mental health and/or addiction crisis is not a life-threatening situation. Intervention may be possible without an immediate response by law enforcement or medics. A person may be thinking about hurting themselves or someone else or may be extremely emotionally upset or distressed.

Examples of a mental health and addiction crises are:

- Talking about suicide or planning to harm oneself.
- Talking about harm to self or others.
- Self-injury that doesn't need immediate medical attention.
- Overuse of alcohol or other drugs.
- Extreme depression, anxiety, or other mental illness symptoms.

If someone is having a mental health and/or addiction crisis, CALL 988.

What to expect when you call 988:

- A trained professional will answer your call.
- The professional will ask you to describe your crisis.
- In many cases, the professional will assist you over the phone and link you to additional care as necessary.
- In some cases, a mobile team will be sent to your location.
- If necessary, the person experiencing a crisis will be taken to a stabilization facility.
- You may be transferred to 911, if needed.

# Budget Summary - FY2023

The total approved operating budget for Fiscal Year 2023 was \$4,301,372.00

