

2019 Maryland Next Generation 911 (NG911)

Staffing Study

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

City of Baltimore - On behalf of all Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Maryland



CORE COMPETENCIES

- Confidential Interviews
- Best Practices Review
- Data Gathering
- Recommendations Development
- Transition Planning

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Emergency Communications Committee (ECC), through the City of Baltimore (City), identified the need assist all 24 counties in Maryland with staffing challenges as the State transitions to Next Generation 911 (NG911). NG911 is an IP-based 911 system which allows callers to share voice, photo, video, and data information to emergency call takers. This additional data will improve first responders' ability to save lives, ensure first responder safety, and protect public and private property.

PROJECT DETAILS

The ECC contracted with Mission Critical Partners and subconsultant Vision Planning and Consulting to assist with critical initiatives that included: reviewing training, quality assurance, and staffing for the day-to-day operations of the PSAPs as it relates to the enhanced capabilities of NG911 and the forthcoming regional shared services environment.

VPC conducted one-on-one interviews with 911 call takers at PSAPs throughout the State to gain their perspectives on department recruiting, hiring processes, compensation packages, classroom and on-the-job training, day-to-day operations, and continuing education.

Informal individual and group conversations were held on the PSAP floor to gather thoughts and comments from calltakers who did not participate in the confidential interviews. Many calltakers preferred this informal discussion to the interviews and provided additional candid feedback through this avenue.

VPC researched best practices and recommendations by organizations such as Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and incorporated findings into the final report.

The final report contains: recommendations on staffing numbers; required skills; certifications; and other considerations to prepare the PSAP for NG911 transition. Additionally, the report contains recommendations to improve hiring, training, and retention of employees, for both present and in the future. These recommendations were developed based on findings from the interviews, guidance from various agencies, and best practices from other states and PSAPs.