

Introduced _____
Public Hearing _____
Council Action _____
Executive Action _____
Effective Date _____

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2020 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 15

Bill No. 59 -2020

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

AN ACT requiring that all multiple-line telephone systems allow for the direct dial of 9-1-1; defining certain terms; authorizing certain inspections; providing for certain civil penalties; and generally relating to Telephone Access to the County's 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System.

Introduced and read first time _____, 2020. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order _____
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on _____, 2020.

By order _____
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on _____, 2020 and Passed ____, Passed with amendments _____, Failed _____.

By order _____
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this ___ day of _____, 2020 at ___ a.m./p.m.

By order _____
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive _____, 2020

Calvin Ball, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1 **WHEREAS**, Howard County strives to protect the health and safety of County residents and
2 visitors to the County and recognizes that “911” is the United States' universal emergency
3 assistance line; and

4
5 **WHEREAS**, many telephone systems for hotels, motels, schools and businesses require that a
6 user dial an additional number to obtain an outside line; and

7
8 **WHEREAS**, persons unfamiliar with such a telephone system will be unable to reach
9 emergency services in a crisis, which can lead to disastrous results; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, on December 1, 2013, Kari Hunt was fatally attacked in a Texas hotel by her
12 estranged husband and, while Kari's nine-year-old daughter tried calling 9-1-1 during the
13 struggle, her daughter was unable to make a connection because she did not realize she
14 needed to first dial 9 for an outside line; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, tragic stories like Kari's illustrate the necessity of having multi-line telephone
17 systems that directly dial 911 without delay or the necessity of dialing another number;
18 and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, experts on multi-line telephone systems state that direct-dial 9-1-1 service can be
21 provided in most systems through updating of software; and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, Howard County shall take steps to ensure that any multiple-line telephone system
24 that is accessible to the general public must allow for direct dialing of 9-1-1 to protect the
25 health and safety of all parties; and

26
27 **WHEREAS**, the Maryland General Assembly has amended Section 1-314 of the Public Safety
28 Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to ensure that local jurisdictions enforce the
29 requirement.

1 **Section 1. Be It Enacted** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that the Howard
2 County Code is amended as follows:

3 By adding:

4 *Title 17. Public Protection Services.*

5 *Subtitle 13. Telephone access to the County's 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System.*

6

7 **Title 17. Public Protection Services.**

8 **SUBTITLE 13. TELEPHONE ACCESS TO THE COUNTY'S 9-1-1 EMERGENCY**

9 **TELEPHONE SYSTEM.**

10

11 **SECTION 17.1300. PURPOSE; APPLICABILITY.**

12 (A) *PURPOSE.* IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE, THE PURPOSE OF
13 THIS SUBTITLE IS TO ENSURE THAT ANY PERSON USING A MULTIPLE-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM CAN
14 DIRECT DIAL 9-1-1 WITHOUT HAVING TO DIAL ANOTHER NUMBER FIRST.

15 (B) *APPLICABILITY.* THIS SUBTITLE APPLIES TO ANY PERSON WHO INSTALLS OR OPERATES A
16 MULTIPLE-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM.

17

18 **SECTION 17.1301. DEFINITIONS.**

19 IN THIS SUBTITLE, THE FOLLOWING TERMS SHALL HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED:

20 (A) *MULTIPLE-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM* SHALL HAVE THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 1-314
21 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND AND INCLUDES,
22 WITHOUT LIMITATION, NETWORK-BASED AND PREMISES-BASED SYSTEMS SUCH AS CENTREX
23 SERVICE, PREMISES-BASED, HOSTED AND CLOUD-BASED VOIP, AS WELL AS PBX, HYBRID AND KEY
24 TELEPHONE SYSTEMS, AS CLASSIFIED BY THE FCC UNDER PART 68 OF ITS RULES.

25 (B) *PERSON* SHALL HAVE THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 1-101 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY
26 ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND.

27

28 **SECTION 17.1302. REQUIREMENTS, AUTHORITY TO INSPECT.**

29 (A) *GENERALLY.* PURSUANT TO SECTION 1-314 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE OF THE
30 ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, A PERSON WHO INSTALLS OR OPERATES A MULTIPLE-LINE
31 TELEPHONE SYSTEM SHALL ENSURE THAT THE SYSTEM IS CONNECTED TO THE PUBLIC SWITCHED

1 TELEPHONE NETWORK IN SUCH A WAY THAT WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL USING THE SYSTEM DIALS 9-1-1,
2 THE CALL CONNECTS TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT WITHOUT REQUIRING THE USER TO
3 DIAL ANY OTHER NUMBER OR SET OF NUMBERS.

4 (B) *AUTHORITY TO INSPECT.* THE DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES SHALL INSPECT THE
5 INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF A MULTIPLE-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM AND ENFORCE
6 COMPLIANCE WITH THIS SUBTITLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH TITLE 24 OF THE HOWARD COUNTY
7 CODE.

8

9 **SECTION 17.1303. FINES.**

10 (A) *FAILURE TO COMPLY.* A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SUBTITLE IS SUBJECT TO A FINE OF \$100
11 FOR A FIRST OFFENSE AND A FINE OF \$200 FOR A SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE. EACH DAY
12 THAT A VIOLATION EXISTS IS A SEPARATE OFFENSE.

13

14 ***Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland,***
15 ***that this Act shall become effective 61 days after its enactment.***