

Introduced November 2, 2020
Public Hearing November 16, 2020
Council Action December 7, 2020
Executive Action December 10, 2020
Effective Date February 9, 2021

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 November 2, 2020. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order Diane Schwartz Jones
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 November 16, 2020.

By order Diane Schwartz Jones
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on December 7, 2020 and Passed , Passed with amendments , Failed .

By order Diane Schwartz Jones
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 8th day of December, 2020 at 2 a.m./p.m.

By order Diane Schwartz Jones
Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive December 10, 2020

Calvin Ball
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.
30

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.**

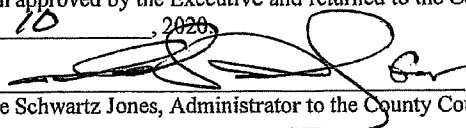
10 (A) *FAILURE TO COMPLY.* A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SUBTITLE IS SUBJECT TO A FINE OF \$100
11 FOR A FIRST OFFENSE AND A FINE OF \$200 FOR A SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE. EACH DAY
12 THAT A VIOLATION EXISTS IS A SEPARATE OFFENSE.

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.***

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, stands enacted on December 10, 2020.



Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been passed by the yeas and nays of two-thirds of the members of the Council notwithstanding the objections of the Executive, stands enacted on _____, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having received neither the approval nor the disapproval of the Executive within ten days of its presentation, stands enacted on _____, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, not having been considered on final reading within the time required by Charter, stands failed for want of consideration on _____, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been disapproved by the Executive and having failed on passage upon consideration by the Council stands failed on _____, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, the withdrawal of which received a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council, is withdrawn from further consideration on _____, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

CALVIN BALL
County Executive



LISA D. MYERS
Chief of Police

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

DATE: October 21, 2020

FROM: Lisa Myers *AM*
Chief of Police

TO: Lonnie Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Kari's Law Testimony

Please accept this as my testimony in support of Council Bill 2020-XX.

As you likely know, on December 1, 2013, Kari Hunt was fatally attacked in a Texas hotel by her estranged husband. Kari's nine-year-old daughter tried calling 911 during the struggle but was unable to make a connection because the phone system required a caller to first dial 9 for an outside line. Her tragic death led to national legislation on direct access dialing for 911 calls.

Many telephone systems for hotels, motels, schools and businesses still require that a user dial an additional number to obtain an outside line. Persons unfamiliar with such a requirement may still be unable to reach emergency services in a crisis, which can lead to similar disastrous results.

The Howard County Police Department fully supports the required local legislation that brings us into compliance with Maryland General Assembly 2020 amendment to Section 1.314 of the Public Safety Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to ensure that local jurisdictions require direct 911 access. The Police Department is working closely with the Fire Department to launch a public awareness campaign and have existing fire code inspectors check for compliance during standard visits.

Our compliance is also mandatory to continue to receive funding from the 9-1-1 Trust Fund. In accordance with subtitle 1-309, future requests for disbursements from the fund must include a certification of appropriate actions taken by the County under Chapter 376, 2020. For reference, Howard County has received \$2,835,022.41 so far, through the third quarter of fiscal year 2020.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions regarding this legislation.

(410) 313-2203
(410) 313-2272 FAX
WWW.HCPD.ORG
HCPD@HOWARDCOUNTYMD.GOV

Nationally Accredited Since 1990

