

SENATE BILL 664

By Gardenhire

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4;  
Title 7; Title 8; Title 29; Title 39; Title 58 and Title  
63, relative to emergency responses.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 29-34-203(a), is amended by deleting the language "emergency services personnel" and substituting instead the language "emergency call taker or public safety dispatcher, emergency services personnel,".

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-27-404(a)(2), is amended by adding the language "emergency services personnel, emergency call takers or public safety dispatchers," after the language "law enforcement officers,".

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-27-210(a), is amended by adding the language ", emergency services personnel, emergency call takers or public safety dispatchers," after the language "law enforcement officers".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 7-86-107(a), is amended by deleting subdivision (1) and substituting instead the following:

(1)

(A) Prior to January 1, 2024, the board of directors of the district shall create an emergency communications service designed to have the capability for each primary public safety answering point within their emergency communications district to have the capability of direct dispatching emergency 911 calls and utilizing at least one (1) of the following three (3) methods in response to non-emergency calls:

(i) Direct dispatch method;

(ii) Relay method; or

(iii) Transfer method.

(B) This subdivision (a)(1) does not apply to an emergency communications district where the total number of dispatchers employed by all public safety answering points in the emergency communications district total more than three hundred (300) employees until July 1, 2025.

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 7-86-107(b), is amended by deleting the language "the right to dispatch its own services" and substituting instead the language "the right to dispatch its own non-emergency services".

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 7-86-107(f), is amended by deleting the language "911 service" and substituting instead the language "911 non-emergency service".

SECTION 7. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 7-86-107, is amended by adding the following new subsections:

(g) Emergency 911 calls must be dispatched by the initial public service answering point without being transferred.

(h) Non-emergency calls may be transferred at the discretion of the dispatcher via attended transfer.

(i) Notwithstanding subsection (g), misrouted 911 emergency calls may be transferred via attended transfer.

(j) This section does not apply to calls received through a dispatch system within the department of safety.

(k) After the emergency call is direct dispatched, the emergency call may be transferred via attended transfer.

(l) Districts and public safety answering points that do not dispatch ambulances may direct dispatch another medical first responder to respond and stand by until an ambulance arrives on scene.

(m) As used in this section:

(1) "Attended transfer" means the transfer of a telephone call received by a dispatcher where, before actually transferring the call to the end destination or third party for further assistance, the call is not put on hold and another call is initiated by the dispatcher to confirm that the end destination or third party is prepared to take the call so that the two (2) calls can be merged together;

(2) "Direct dispatching" means the performance of 911 call answering and dispatching by personnel at the primary public safety answering point; and

(3) "Misrouted" means a call that originated outside of a public safety answering point emergency service zone's area of responsibility.

SECTION 8. This act takes effect July 1, 2023, the public welfare requiring it.