
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2019 Wisconsin Act 26
[2019 Assembly Bill 471]

Grants for Next Generation 911

BACKGROUND

Generally, every municipal and state agency that provides (or is statutorily authorized to provide) fire fighting, law enforcement, ambulance, medical, or other emergency services may establish a “basic” or “sophisticated” 911 call answering system. The 2017-19 Biennial Budget Act (2017 Wisconsin Act 59) required the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) to invite bids and contract for the creation, operation, and maintenance of a statewide emergency services IP network to provide all public safety answering points¹ with the network necessary to implement next generation 911. 2017 Wisconsin Act 59 also created a 911 subcommittee to, among other responsibilities, advise DMA regarding Next Generation 911. [s. 256.35 (2) and (3s), Stats.]

2019 WISCONSIN ACT 26

2019 Wisconsin Act 26 directs DMA to award grants to 911 public safety answering points. The act requires DMA to promulgate rules to identify appropriate purposes and establish eligibility criteria for the grants, based on the 911 subcommittee’s recommendations. The act specifies that appropriate grant purposes may include: advanced training of telecommunicators; equipment or software expenses; and incentives to consolidate some or all of the functions of two or more public safety answering points. The act prohibits DMA from awarding such a grant to more than one public safety answering point within each county.

In addition, the act refines the 911 subcommittee’s charge to include advising DMA regarding the grant program created under the act.

Effective date: November 21, 2019

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¹ A “public safety answer point” is a facility to which a call on a basic or sophisticated system is initially routed for response, and on which a public agency directly dispatches the appropriate emergency service provider, relays a message of the appropriate emergency service provider, or transfers the call to the appropriate emergency service provider. [s. 256.35 (1) (gm), Stats.]