



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873
Email: fiscal.bureau@legis.wisconsin.gov • Website: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb>

June, 2021

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #416

Next Generation 911 (Military Affairs)

[LFB 2021-23 Budget Summary: Page 410, #6, Page 410, #7, and Page 411, #8]

CURRENT LAW

Under current law, 911 is established as the statewide emergency services telephone number. Basic 911 service was first established in the 1960s as a voice-only service, meaning that the caller had to provide location and callback information verbally in order to receive assistance. The system was last updated in the 1990s to "Wireless Enhanced 911," which provides a mobile caller's number and approximate location. The system consists of separate networks maintained by telephone service providers through contractual relationships with local governments.

In general, 911 services are funded and administered on the local level. The state has over 100 public safety answering points (PSAPs), locally-administered call centers that answer and process 911 calls. Wisconsin PSAPs employ 2,115 public safety personnel, serve 2,288 first responder agencies, and handle approximately three million 911 calls each year. The current 911 system is supported through three fees: (a) a landline fee assessed per county based on population, collected by carriers; (b) a monthly fee of \$0.75 on each assigned telephone number, deposited to the police and fire protection (PFP) fund; and (c) a \$0.38 fee per transaction on all prepaid wireless services, deposited to the PFP fund.

To create an interoperable 911 system that is compatible with current and emerging digital technologies, emergency response agencies nationwide are upgrading to the "Next Generation 911" system. Under current law, the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is responsible for supporting the development of NG911 in Wisconsin.

A statewide NG911 system would resolve current infrastructure limitations among PSAPs by creating a shared statewide network; provide the ability to re-route 911 calls during crises, periods of high call volume, and service outages; improve resiliency and reduce system downtime; provide an increase in situational awareness through data sharing with first responders; deliver

increased location accuracy for all calls; provide equal access for callers, including the deaf and hard-of-hearing; support a variety of consumer devices as technology evolves; and support the ability to change or add connections during emergencies. In addition to voice capabilities, NG911 will enable the public to transmit text, images, video, and data to 911.

The ability of 911 callers to communicate silently through text message could increase the caller's safety; for example, during a home invasion, a caller could request a police response without alerting the intruder to his or her presence. Next Generation 911 can also facilitate continuity of operations in the event of a natural disaster by allowing affected PSAPs to re-route calls to other answering centers. For example, in 2011 during Hurricane Irene, Vermont's second largest PSAP had to evacuate. Because Vermont had implemented NG911 prior to the hurricane, callers were able to be re-rerouted to other PSAPs and to receive assistance without delay.

The NG911 system consists of three key components: (a) the Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network (ESInet), a statewide internet-based network shared by all public safety agencies; (b) Geographical Information System (GIS) data, which routes calls and messages to the correct PSAP and provides locational information to first responders; and (c) PSAP equipment, which facilitates the transmission of information between callers and emergency responders. Once NG911 is implemented, the system's network will be operated on the state-level, while local units of government will retain fiscal and administrative responsibility for PSAP operations. Local entities will also need to upgrade answering equipment to ensure that 911 calls can be processed under the new system.

Much of the decision-making related to public safety has been delegated to the local level in Wisconsin. According to DMA, the NG911 program will be administered on a state-guided, local control basis. For example, while the statewide ESInet will create the capacity to connect PSAPs, participation in the network will be voluntary. Further, while consolidating PSAPs could increase efficiencies by requiring fewer call centers to purchase new equipment, current law does not allow the state to require consolidation.

Under 2017 Act 59, a NG911 appropriation was created under DMA and provided \$6.7 million SEG from the PFP fund in 2018-19. However, due to the timing of system development, DMA only spent \$280,200 SEG in 2018-19 and unspent amounts were returned to the PFP fund. Under 2019 Act 9, one-time funding of \$19.7 million SEG was provided and the NG911 appropriation was modified from an annual to biennial appropriation. (A biennial appropriation allows funds to be expended over the two-year period of a biennium, rather than on a one-year basis.) As of May 20, 2021, DMA has spent or encumbered \$842,500 SEG to develop the request for proposal (RFP) for the ESInet and to conduct a GIS analysis. Any funds allocated under Act 9 that are not spent by June 30, 2021, will lapse to the PFP fund. Next Generation 911 is not provided base funding for the 2021-23 biennium.

DISCUSSION POINTS

System Implementation

1. The first step to implement NG911 is to create the ESInet, an internet-based network to connect PSAPs across the state. The ESInet will provide for broadband speed transmissions and facilitate the delivery of messages and data that public safety agencies use for field operations. The Department solicited bids for the ESInet through a RFP in 2020 and is currently finalizing negotiations. It is anticipated that the contract to design and build the ESInet will be finalized by June, 2021, after which the implementation process will take twelve months. Local agencies plan to transition to the network in 2022.

2. Building the ESInet is expected to cost \$17.1 million during the 2021-23 biennium for: (a) call access services, including equipment and circuits required by carriers to send data and calls to PSAPs; (b) core connections, including the design of data centers to facilitate call routing and data transmission; and (c) PSAP connections, including the software needed to allow PSAPs to receive 911 calls. In addition, the ESInet is expected to incur ongoing costs of \$9.4 million annually for system operations, maintenance, and security audits. Ongoing maintenance is needed to ensure that PSAPs can process data from callers and connect with first responders. These costs are based on current contract negotiations and do not reflect the amounts under Assembly Bill 68/Senate Bill 111 (which estimated the cost of developing the ESInet at \$11.5 million during the 2021-23 biennium).

3. The second step to implement NG911 is to create a statewide GIS database, which is used to route 911 callers to the correct answering center and to provide first responders with detailed information on where to respond. In the current 911 system, the caller's location is determined after the call is answered by a PSAP, at which point the call may be transferred to a more appropriate PSAP. In the case of a wireless caller, the address is often approximate. To decrease call transfers and response times, NG911 uses GIS data to determine the caller's location before the call is answered to immediately route the call to the correct PSAP. Geographic information also helps increase the situational awareness of first responders. Associated data elements include street centerlines, address points, road networks, PSAP boundaries, and emergency service zone boundaries.

4. Wisconsin does not currently have a statewide GIS dataset capable of supporting NG911. Therefore, DMA is developing a plan to create a statewide GIS dataset for NG911 based on a model designed by the National Emergency Number Association. The statewide GIS database is expected to cost \$2.2 million during the 2021-23 biennium (\$500,000 to build in 2021-22 and \$1,700,000 to maintain in 2022-23). Maintenance will be needed to ensure that the dataset contains accurate and secure information regarding caller locations. It should be noted that these updated amounts are lower than the amounts provided under AB 68/SB 111 (which estimated GIS dataset costs at \$3.1 million during the 2021-23 biennium).

5. The Department currently has one position assigned to the NG911 program and indicates that additional staff are needed to manage NG911 implementation. DMA has identified the need for two additional positions, a GIS specialist and a grants specialist. The GIS specialist would help oversee data preparation, upgrade the database, and work with local governments to collect and use data. The grants specialist would manage the GIS and PSAP grant programs described below,

including processing applications, administering awards, and monitoring compliance with program requirements. Compensation for the two requested positions would be \$167,100 SEG in 2021-22 and \$216,100 SEG in 2022-23. Assembly Bill 68/Senate Bill 111 does not provide additional position authority.

6. The Department also requested that the Next Generation 911 SEG appropriation be modified from a biennial to a continuing appropriation. Under a continuing appropriation, an agency may spend appropriated amounts at any time until the funds are exhausted or the appropriation is repealed. The request is intended to provide administrative flexibility and ensure that funds remain available for system implementation. Given that funds appropriated for NG911 have lapsed in the prior two biennia due to delays in system development, it could be appropriate to modify the appropriation such that funds would not lapse. However, if the Committee wishes to ensure that NG911 is implemented during the 2021-23 biennium, retaining the appropriation structure as biennial could encourage faster development. Assembly Bill 68/Senate Bill 111 would not modify the appropriation structure.

7. The table below summarizes the amounts requested by DMA for system implementation. Under both the agency and the administration's budget proposals, NG911 would continue to be funded by the police and fire protection fund. This fund receives revenues from phone service surcharges, supports state programs, and provides assistance to local governments through the shared revenue program. The shared revenue program is also funded by a capped, sum-sufficient GPR appropriation, such that any PFP funds allocated for state programs are offset by an equal increase in GPR. In 2019-20, \$753.0 million was distributed to local governments through the shared revenue program (of which \$39.2 million was from the PFP fund). Local entities have discretion in allocating shared revenues, and a portion may be used to offset local costs of providing 911 services. It should be noted that \$18.9 million from the NG911 appropriation is expected to lapse to the PFP fund on June 30, 2021. Therefore, appropriating \$19.7 million for NG911 implementation in the 2021-23 biennium would result in a net decrease to the PFP fund of \$800,000.

Cost to Implement Next Generation 911, as of May 27, 2021

	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>Total</u>
Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network	\$7,379,600	\$9,708,600	\$17,088,200
Geographical Information System Database	500,000	1,700,000	2,200,000
Program Administration	<u>167,100</u>	<u>216,100</u>	<u>383,200</u>
Total	\$8,046,700	\$11,624,700	\$19,671,400

8. Given that NG911 would increase public safety by facilitating timely, accurate, and secure connections between 911 callers and first responders, the Committee could authorize sufficient funding to implement the system in 2021-23. The Committee could therefore provide \$8.1 million SEG in 2021-22, \$11.6 million SEG in 2022-23, and 2.0 SEG positions annually. The program would continue to be supported by the police and fire protection fund. A corresponding decrease in SEG funding and increase in GPR funding under Shared Revenue and Tax Relief would occur. [Alternative A1]

9. It should be noted that, AB 68/SB 111 does not include position authority. The administration indicates that it did not include a position because of an attempt to limit the number of new positions added in the budget, when possible. If new positions are not authorized, the current NG911 manager would be responsible for helping to oversee the GIS database and NG911 grant programs. The Committee could therefore approve the amounts needed for the ESInet and GIS database without providing additional position authority. [Alternative A2] As discussed above, the Committee could also modify the NG911 appropriation from biennial to continuing to allow for administrative flexibility. [Alternative A3] If the Committee takes no action with regard to NG911 system implementation, DMA would not finalize the contract to build the ESInet and the transition to NG911 would be placed on hold pending future authorization of funds. [Alternative A4]

Public Safety Answering Point Grants

10. Local governments are responsible for PSAP operations, including costs associated with personnel compensation, workspace requirements, dispatch radio systems, computer aided dispatch systems, and 911 call answering equipment. To receive and process 911 calls through the NG911 system, call centers must have answering equipment compatible with NG911 technology. As of 2019, 49 out of 98 Wisconsin call centers (50 percent) already owned NG911 compatible equipment. An additional 29 call centers (30 percent) had plans to purchase such equipment. The remaining 20 call centers (20 percent) did not have compatible equipment nor plans to purchase such equipment. The Department notes that equipment replacement cycles are generally every five to seven years.

11. State and federal support has been made available to help PSAPs transition to NG911. Under 2019 Act 26, a competitive state grant program was created to help PSAPs train staff, purchase compatible equipment, and upgrade software. Act 26 authorized DMA to promulgate rules to administer the grant program and specified that only one PSAP per county may receive a grant. To date, funds have not been allocated for the state grant program. However, DMA has awarded \$2.7 million in federal grant funds to 36 local agencies to assist with equipment upgrades. Priority was given to agencies that did not have NG911 compatible equipment, and recipients were required to provide at least a 40% match (local contributions totaled \$1.8 million). The Department indicates that 51 agencies applied for the federal grant program and requested assistance totaling \$5.1 million. Federal grant recipients are shown in the Attachment.

12. In its 2021-23 agency budget request, DMA asked that the state grant program be provided \$2.5 million SEG annually starting in 2021-22, based on participation in the federal grant program. Under this alternative, grants would average approximately \$35,000 per year for each county. Given that over half of Wisconsin PSAPs already have equipment compatible with NG911 and that agencies may wish to purchase equipment in 2021-22, the Committee could authorize grants as requested by DMA. Grants would be funded from the NG911 appropriation and supported by the police and fire protection fund. A corresponding decrease in SEG funding and increase in GPR funding under Shared Revenue and Tax Relief would occur. [Alternative B1a]

13. Under AB 68/SB 111, the state grant program would instead be provided \$7.5 million SEG per year starting in 2022-23. The provision is intended to facilitate a quicker adoption of NG911 and to coincide with the transition of PSAPs to the ESInet. To provide average annual PSAP grants of \$100,000 per county, the Committee could instead provide \$7.5 million SEG in 2022-23. A

corresponding decrease in SEG funding and increase in GPR funding under Shared Revenue and Tax Relief would occur. [Alternative B1b]

14. In an October, 2020, joint letter to the Governor, the Wisconsin Counties Association, Wisconsin Sheriffs' and Deputy Sheriffs' Association, the Badger State Sheriffs' Association, and the Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association requested that the state grant program be provided \$15 million SEG annually starting in 2022-23. As an example of local need, the letter stated that Price County planned to spend approximately \$150,000 to purchase new equipment and \$200,000 over 10 years for maintenance. Given the program demand demonstrated by the associations, the Committee could provide \$15 million SEG in 2022-23 for PSAP grants, sufficient for an average annual award of \$200,000 per county. A corresponding decrease in SEG funding and increase in GPR funding under Shared Revenue and Tax Relief would occur. [Alternative B1c] If the Committee instead takes no action with regard to PSAP grants, local governments would be responsible for the full cost of procuring compatible equipment. [Alternative B2]

Geographic Information Systems Grants

15. According to DMA, the development of GIS data for use by NG911 has a significant impact on the capacity of local agencies to implement NG911. The ability to visualize data on a map through GIS allows first responders to rapidly assess situations and make informed decisions critical to ensuring public safety. In addition, GIS data helps connect callers to the correct PSAP to decrease call transfers and response times. Prior to implementing NG911, GIS data needs to be prepared at the local level and collected into a statewide database. In an August, 2020, report, the Wisconsin Land Information Association concluded that the NG911 system's stringent data requirements and the precision needed to facilitate emergency response will place financial demands on local governments.

16. To help local governments prepare the data needed to enable NG911, DMA requested the creation of a GIS grant program in its 2021-23 agency budget request. Based on the Wisconsin Land Information Association's report, the agency requested funding of \$3 million SEG per year, supported by the police and fire protection fund. Grants would be awarded starting in 2022-23 to ensure that guidance and administrative processes are fully developed prior to initiating the program.

17. The agency's request was incorporated into AB 68/SB 111. The bill would also specify that DMA may only award one grant per county in each fiscal year. The program would support average annual awards of \$40,000. In addition, the bill would require DMA to coordinate with the land information program under the Department of Administration to administer the program and to develop policies for eligibility criteria based on recommendations from the 911 Subcommittee of the Interoperability Council. Grants would be funded from the NG911 appropriation and supported by the police and fire protection fund. The program would be scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2025.

18. Given the need to help counties compile geographic information systems data for NG911, the Committee could incorporate the provisions of AB 68/SB 111 to create a state grant program, provide \$3 million SEG in 2022-23 and sunset the program after three years. [Alternative C1a.] Alternatively, given that the program is new and exact local costs are not yet known, \$1.5 million SEG in 2022-23 could instead be provided for GIS grants. If applications exceed amounts appropriated, the agency could request additional funds during the 2023-25 budget process.

[Alternative C1b] Under either alternative, a corresponding decrease in SEG funding and increase in GPR funding under Shared Revenue and Tax Relief would occur.

19. Alternatively, the Committee could create the GIS grant program without specifying program requirements under statute. The Department could determine eligibility criteria and eligible grant purposes administratively, and could request that the program sunset in a future biennia based on a continued assessment of local need. In addition, DMA does not require statutory approval to partner with DOA. This alternative could be funded either \$3 million in 2022-23 or \$1.5 million SEG in 2022-23. [Alternatives C2a or b] Under either alternative, a corresponding decrease in SEG funding and increase in GPR funding under Shared Revenue and Tax Relief would occur. If, instead, no funding is provided for the GIS grant program, local units of government would be responsible for coordinating with DMA using existing resources to compile GIS information. [Alternative C3]

ALTERNATIVES

A. System Implementation

1. From the police and fire protection fund, provide \$8,046,700 SEG in 2021-22 and \$11,624,700 SEG in 2022-23 to develop the NG911 Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network and Geographical Information System database. In addition, provide 2.0 SEG positions annually to manage the GIS database and NG911 grant programs.

ALT A1	Change to Base	
	Funding	Positions
DMA		
SEG	\$19,671,400	2.00
Shared Revenue		
GPR	\$19,671,400	
SEG	<u>- 19,671,400</u>	
Total	\$0	

2. From the police and fire protection fund, provide \$7,879,600 SEG in 2021-22 and \$11,408,600 SEG in 2022-23 to develop the NG911 Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network and Geographical Information System database.

ALT A2	Change to Base	
DMA		
SEG	\$19,288,200	
Shared Revenue		
GPR	\$19,288,200	
SEG	<u>- 19,288,200</u>	
Total	\$0	

3. Modify the Next Generation 911 appropriation under DMA from biennial to continuing [20.465(3)(qm)]. [This alternative may be selected in addition to either Alternative A1 or A2.]

4. Take no action with regard to funding the NG911 Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network or Geographical Information System database.

B. Public Safety Answering Point Grants

1. Provide police and fire protection SEG funds for the PSAP grant program in the amount of: (a) \$2.5 million annually; (b) \$7.5 million in 2022-23; or (c) \$15.0 million in 2022-23.

ALT B1a. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$5,000,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$5,000,000
SEG	<u>- 5,000,000</u>
Total	\$0

ALT B1b. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$7,500,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$7,500,000
SEG	<u>- 7,500,000</u>
Total	\$0

ALT B1c. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$15,000,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$15,000,000
SEG	<u>- 15,000,000</u>
Total	\$0

2. Take no action with regard to the PSAP state grant program.

C. Geographical Information System Grants

1. Create a grant program and provide police and fire protection SEG funds for counties compile GIS data for NG911. Provide: (a) \$3.0 million in 2022-23; or (b) \$1.5 million in 2022-23. Specify that DMA may only award one grant per county in each fiscal year. Require DMA to coordinate with the land information program under DOA to administer the program and to develop policies for eligibility criteria based on recommendations from the 911 Subcommittee of the Interoperability Council. Sunset the grant program to on June 30, 2025. Specify that eligible expenses include data preparation, data gathering, data creation, GIS staffing, data preparation and collection

contracts, and training, if conducted to enable NG911. Further specify that funds could not be used for county overhead or to provide emergency services or emergency services equipment.

ALT C1a. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$3,000,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$3,000,000
SEG	<u>-3,000,000</u>
Total	\$0

ALT C1b. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$1,500,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$1,500,000
SEG	<u>-1,500,000</u>
Total	\$0

2. Provide police and fire protection SEG funds for grants to help counties compile GIS data for NG911 in the amount of: (a) \$3.0 million in 2022-23; or (b) \$1.5 million in 2022-23. Funds would be provided to the NG911 appropriation. Specify that DMA may promulgate administrative rules for program implementation.

ALT C2a. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$3,000,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$3,000,000
SEG	<u>-3,000,000</u>
Total	\$0

ALT C2b. Change to Base	
DMA	
SEG	\$1,500,000
Shared Revenue	
GPR	\$1,500,000
SEG	<u>-1,500,000</u>
Total	\$0

3. Take no action with regard to creating a GIS grant program for NG911.

Prepared by: Angela Miller
Attachment

ATTACHMENT

PSAP Federal Grant Recipients

<u>Award Agency</u>	<u>Federal Grant Amount</u>
Barron County Sheriff's Department	\$76,200
Bayfield County Sheriff's Office	81,600
Bayside Communications Center	100,600
Cedarburg Police Department	59,200
Clark County Sheriff's Office	57,700
Crawford County Communications Center	86,300
Dodge County Sheriff's Office	109,800
Eau Claire Communication Center	276,500
Florence County Sheriff's Office	11,100
Franklin Police Department	81,800
Green Lake County Sheriff's Office	31,200
Greenfield Police Department	65,900
Hartford Police Department	5,800
Iron County Sheriff's Department	93,000
Juneau County Sheriff's Office	107,500
Kewaunee County Sheriff's Department	125,300
Lafayette County Sheriff's Office	105,300
Langlade County Sheriff's Office	9,700
Manitowoc County	104,900
Marinette County Dispatch	70,200
Menominee County Sheriff's Office	79,900
Minocqua Police Department	65,200
Muskego Police Department	12,600
Oconto County Sheriff's Office	79,700
Portage County Sheriff's Office	198,400
Richland County Sheriff's Department	14,900
Rock County Communications Center	48,900
Sauk County	134,000
Sawyer County Sheriff's Office	12,700
UW – Madison Police Department	12,800
Watertown Police Department	12,100
Waukesha County Communications	122,300
Waushara County Sheriff's Office	15,000
Winnebago County Sheriff's Office	129,300
Wisconsin Dells Police Department	<u>72,900</u>
Total	\$2,670,300