

## WHEN TO CALL 911

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You may have questions about when to call 911 and when to call the Irvine Police Department's non-emergency dispatch line. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions.

**When should I call 911?** For emergencies – a fire, a medical emergency, a crime in progress, or any other life threatening circumstance that requires an immediate response.

**Why am I asked so many questions?** Dispatchers ask questions and collect as much information as possible for everyone's safety. The more detailed your answers to their questions, the better.

When you call 911, the dispatcher will ask you for the location of the emergency. Give an address or the *nearest* cross streets. If you call from a cell phone, the dispatcher won't know your exact location. In order to get a faster response, always start with the location of the problem and we can connect you to the proper agency.

Dispatchers often ask clarifying questions while first responders are on their way. Do not be concerned about the questions delaying someone's arrival. One dispatcher can talk to you while another dispatcher tells police officers or firefighters where to go and what to expect when they arrive. The dispatcher may ask for your name and phone number if they need more information or if an officer wants to give you an update on the situation.

**What do I do if I accidentally call 911?** If you call 911 in error, stay on the line and let us know. If you hang up, dispatchers will call you back to ensure there is no emergency. Please help us by staying on the line so dispatchers can confirm you do not need emergency assistance.

**Are there options other than calling 911?** Text to 911 connects those who cannot call 911 to emergency services. This should be treated like 911 and only used in the emergency situations described above. Remember – "Call if you can. Text if you can't."

**When should I call Irvine Police Department's non-emergency line at (949) 724-7200?**

Only use our non-emergency line to report less immediate concerns. When you call 911 for non-emergent situations, you are using resources that can be used to assist others who are experiencing emergencies that could be life threatening.

One of the most common calls our dispatchers receive are noise complaints, such as loud music, parties, or barking dogs. These situations are not emergencies. Please help us by calling the non-emergency number at 949-724-7200 in those situations.

**What if I speak another language?** Let the dispatcher know what language you prefer and they will get a translator on the line to assist.

**Should I call if I think someone else already called?** Emergencies and crimes can be large puzzles with hundreds of detailed pieces. Your information could be the missing piece that makes a difference! Please call to report a crime even if you think someone else has already reported.

You are the eyes and ears of the community! We appreciate your commitment and partnership in keeping Irvine safe.

For more information on crime prevention and personal safety, visit [www.irvinepd.org](http://www.irvinepd.org).