



## **Dallas Says T-Mobile Not at Fault for ‘Ghost’ 911 Calls: Officials say aging technology and staffing shortages contributed to problem**

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Dallas officials on Thursday walked back their claim that T-Mobile US Inc. was flooding the city’s 911 system with “ghost” calls, and pointed instead to aging technology and staffing shortages.

City officials said earlier this month that repeated hang-up calls from T-Mobile numbers were overwhelming operators, who are required to call back every number to ensure there isn’t an emergency. T-Mobile sent network engineers to Dallas on Wednesday to examine the issue.

In a statement, the city said meetings with T-Mobile over the past 24 hours revealed the issue was a backlog of legitimate 911 calls, not ghost calls, which aren’t initiated by a person.

The city’s system keeps a queue of all calls, including hang-ups. Callers were trying 911, hanging up after being put on hold and calling again, exacerbating the backlog as operators had to dial back each call, said Sana Syed, a spokeswoman for the city.

In some cases the operators weren’t able to reach the caller because he or she had called again and was on hold, Ms. Syed said.

A shortage of call-takers and a need for more advanced computer systems that can better sort through calls contributed to the problem, Ms. Syed said.

T-Mobile, according to the city’s statement, said it would keep staffers in Dallas for two weeks and make adjustments to “smooth the delivery of calls to 911.”

The city said it is adding an additional 12 workers to help manage the volume of calls and is pursuing technology upgrades.

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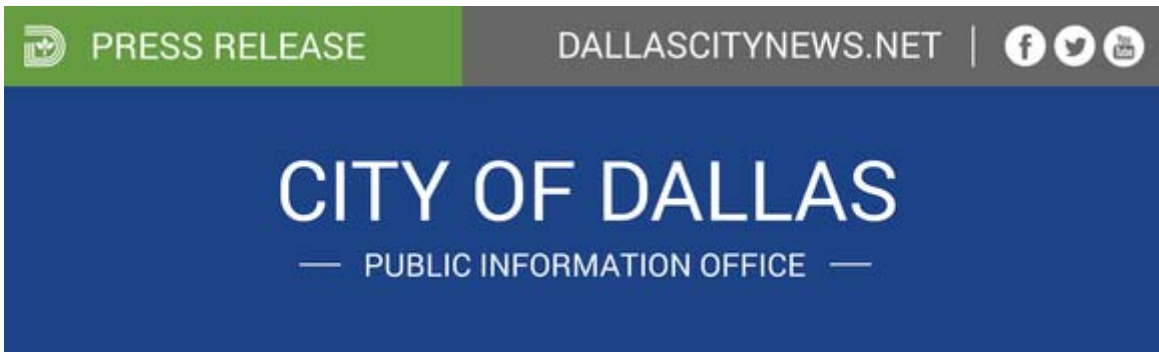
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# Update to 911 issue in Dallas

City of Dallas sent this bulletin at 03/16/2017 04:14 PM CDT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Update to 911 issue in Dallas

Since the press conference Wednesday, we are pleased to report that the team has been diligently working on the 911 issue for the past 24-hours and made some significant progress in identifying a combination of factors that contributed to the 911 issue.

T-Mobile has clarified that the calls that were gathering in the queue were not ghost calls, but abandoned calls. Ghost calls happen when a person's phone makes repeated calls to 911, unbeknownst to the person. Abandoned calls happen when a caller hangs up before reaching a 911 call taker.

To address this, beginning this weekend, the City is adding a dozen additional call takers per day to ensure an enhanced level of service until this issue is fully resolved. We are also pursuing technology upgrades. To further assist the call takers, T-Mobile has made adjustments in its network to smooth the delivery of calls to 911.

“T-Mobile committed resources in Dallas until we made progress, and they have kept their promise,” said City Manager T.C. Broadnax. “We want our citizens to know that their safety is our number one priority and they can count on us when they call 911.”

“I’m pleased that our staff and T-Mobile worked through the night and have determined some immediate technological upgrades that will better serve our citizens calling 911,” said Mayor Mike Rawlings. “I’m also encouraged that City Manager T.C. Broadnax has committed to increasing staffing and recommending any other budgetary enhancements to our 911 call center.”

T-Mobile has committed to having a team in the 911 call center for the next two weeks so that they can help monitor any potential issues that may surface in real time. The City’s third-party vendors that support the City’s public safety infrastructure will also be on hand.



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