



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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Governor Shapiro Highlights Commitment to Making Communities Safer, Investments in 9-1-1 Dispatch, Fire, and EMS Services in Visit to Montgomery County 9-1-1 Center

Governor Shapiro's commonsense budget proposal includes over \$50 million for 9-1-1 dispatch systems and \$36 million for equipment and training for firefighters and EMS providers.



Eagleville, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** highlighted his plans to create safer communities by investing in Pennsylvania's 9-1-1 emergency dispatch system, firefighters, and emergency medical services (EMS) providers during a visit to the Montgomery County 9-1-1 Center in Eagleville. Governor Shapiro's budget would invest over \$50 million in county 9-1-1 systems and devote \$36 million for equipment, training, and staffing needs for firefighters and EMS providers.

Governor Shapiro's first [budget](#) – a commonsense set of solutions to the most pressing issues Pennsylvanians face – places a comprehensive focus on creating safer communities through investments in law enforcement officers and first responders. Investing in county public safety networks is a top priority for the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, and their President, Venango County Commissioner Chip Abramovich, praised the Governor's proposed investments at the press conference today.

"I know firsthand how our local municipal and county governments are on the frontlines of keeping their communities safe, and they need our support now more than ever. My budget will ensure we do more to empower those on the frontlines overseeing our emergency response efforts," **said Governor Josh Shapiro**. "My Administration's top priority is keeping people safe

– and my budget's \$50 million investment in our 9-1-1 dispatch system and \$36 million for firefighters will help ensure that police, first responders, firefighters, and EMS providers have the resources they need to serve the good people of Pennsylvania. This is an issue that Democrats and Republicans support – because it's commonsense."

"Our number one priority as county commissioners and all 67 counties across this Commonwealth is 9-1-1 funding. That's bipartisan, apolitical, and is one of the key things that we need. This is critical to every single resident in our Commonwealth to get that funding," **said County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania President and Venango County Commissioner Chip Abramovic**. "When you call 9-1-1, they don't ask if you're Republican or Democrat – they ask what your emergency is. First responders do not care what political parties we are. What we need is to have the funding to help give them the tools, the opportunities, and the responsibility so we can be better, and we can help individuals in a time of crisis."

"Welcome home, Governor Shapiro, and thank you for bringing attention to the important topic of 9-1-1 funding in Pennsylvania," **said Deputy Director of Emergency Communications for Montgomery County Jennifer Cass**. "The heart of our 9-1-1 system is composed of county based 9-1-1 centers and their highly trained staff of telecommunicators. Pennsylvania's public safety answering points processed more than 15 million requests for service in 2021. The 9-1-1 fee is the primary funding source for our critical 9-1-1 systems and personnel that provide lifesaving services every day. Governor Shapiro's budget recognizes the challenges counties and 9-1-1 dispatchers face and invests over \$50 million in that system and ties that funding to the cost of living, so we'll keep up with rising costs."

Across the Commonwealth, counties and local governments are facing shortages among the critical frontline workers and first responders who help keep our communities safe. Statewide, 20 percent of full-time 9-1-1 dispatch jobs are currently unfilled. In 2018, there were 22,000 fewer volunteer firefighters than Pennsylvania had in the early 2000s and at least 6,000 fewer emergency medical technicians compared to 2012 – putting a strain on the departments Pennsylvanians rely on to help keep them safe.

Governor Shapiro's budget invests in the law enforcement officers, firefighters, and first responders who play a vital role in keeping our communities safe. The Governor's budget also recognizes the challenges that counties face as those on the frontlines by:

- Investing over **\$50 million** in 9-1-1 dispatch systems and ties that funding to the cost of living so it keeps up with rising costs.
- Allocating a **\$36 million** increase for critical resources for EMS and fire services – including equipment, training, and salaries – to support and grow our ranks of first responders.
- Investing **\$1.5 million** – a **266 percent** increase – in the Municipal Assistance Program to support local governments and help counties share emergency resources to implement emergency support services and lead community revitalization efforts.
- Creating the **Public Safety and Protection Fund** to sustainably fund the Pennsylvania State Police. The Governor knows that creating safer communities starts with making sure local law enforcement are well-staffed, well-funded, and well-trained – and his budget provides a tax credit of up to **\$2,500** for new officers to help communities hire police officers at every level.

Learn more about Governor Shapiro's comprehensive approach to building safer communities here: <http://shapirobudget.pa.gov>.

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