

Creation of a Regional Emergency Communications District

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a regional emergency communication district?

A regional emergency communication district is composed of counties and municipalities that operate a 9-1-1 system solely through a council of governments/regional planning commission.

What is required to start the process of creating a regional emergency communication district?

Each county and municipality currently provided 9-1-1 services by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) must pass a resolution calling for the creation of a district.

How is a governing board formed?

Once all resolutions have been submitted, a meeting will be called and a representative from each county and municipality will be invited to attend for the purpose of determining the appropriate size of a governing board and the qualifications of its members. (At least 2/3 of these representatives must be elected officials.)

What are the responsibilities and powers of the governing board?

- To set policies for the district.
- Adopt an annual budget.
- Adopt bylaws, rules and procedures governing operation of the district.

How is the district staffed?

NCTCOG remains responsible for the day to day administration and operations of the district with services to be provided by its professional 9-1-1 staff.

Does the creation of a district create another level of government with taxing power?

- No, NCTCOG is already providing 9-1-1 support services to the same counties and municipalities that would be members of the district.
- No, the district by state law is prohibited from levying and collecting a tax.

How would the district be funded?

The district would be funded by a maximum fee of \$.50 on telephone bills. All revenue would be remitted to the district.

How does this differ from the current funding method?

- The \$.50 fee remains the same.
- The difference is all of the revenues would come directly to the district for 9-1-1 services.
- Currently, the revenues are sent to the State Comptroller and remain there until the Legislature appropriates them to the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) for disbursement to Councils of Governments across the state.
- The problem is the Legislature often does not appropriate all of the monies that have been collected from across the state, in fact, the state is holding approximately \$150 million dollars which could be used for 9-1-1 purposes as it is intended.

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What are the benefits of being a district?

- Local elected officials would have the authority and responsibility of determining the highest and best use of the revenue to best serve 9-1-1 needs.
- Local elected officials would establish the policies and rules for delivery of 9-1-1 services in the region rather than a state commission, CSEC.
- Better predictability of the amount of funds that will be available in future years, enables local officials to develop a longer range financial plan for capital expenditures which will bring about greater efficiency in the use of the revenue.
- Ability to enter into cooperative agreement with other 9-1-1 entities.

Are there any negative impacts that a district would have on public safety providers as a result of not being state controlled?

No, the same services will continue as they have in the past. Call routing will remain the same as it now exists. After hours support and maintenance will continue to be provided by the highly trained and dedicated technical professionals on a 24 x 7 x 365 basis.

Are there any limitations on the ability for a district to be created?

- The combined population of the entities to be served cannot exceed 1.5 million as of September 2015.
- The Texas State Demographer's population estimates, which are the official numbers used by CSEC, were presented to the Legislature at the time the enabling legislation was passed and confirmed that the 1.5 million population provision was met by NCTCOG.