

911

Outstanding Performance Award Criteria

The Outstanding Performance Awards honors professionals who have made outstanding contributions to public safety communications and demonstrated exceptional skills, passion and The nomination deadline is Monday, Feb. 9, 2026.

Outstanding Individual Performance in a Critical Incident

Nominees must have demonstrated an extraordinary performance beyond the average or normal activity level. (Two awards may be given; one for small PSAPs with 2-5 positions, and one for large PSAPs with 6 or more positions.)

1. Exceptional Performance Under Pressure

- Demonstrated calm, effective decision-making under extreme stress.
- Took decisive action despite uncertainty or rapidly evolving conditions.
- Took initiative without being directed.
- Mobilized or coordinated resources and/or personnel efficiently.

2. Rapid and Accurate Response

- Speed of dispatch: Quick recognition and mobilization of appropriate resources.
- Correct triage: Accurate assessment of call severity and proper resource allocation.
- Use of protocols: Adherence to emergency medical, fire, or law enforcement dispatch protocols.

3. Effective Communication

- Clear radio communications: Professional, concise, and timely exchanges between dispatchers, field units, and command.
- Agency coordination: Seamless collaboration within the department.
- Information relay: Crucial information passed without delay or distortion.

4. Use of Technology and Resources

- System proficiency: Mastery of CAD systems, radio channels and protocols, location technology, etc.
- Resource management: Optimal use of units, mutual aid, and equipment.
- Accurate and timely reporting: Timely distribution of critical information received from various sources to field responders, the calling party or command staff.

5. Professionalism and Integrity

- Maintained composure, ethics, and adherence to protocol.
- Represented their organization or agency in a highly honorable manner.

6. Duration and Intensity of Involvement

- Maintained high performance over an extended or especially intense incident.
- Showed stamina, endurance, and perseverance during crisis response.

7. Situational Complexity

- Effectively handled a multifaceted situation involving:
 - Multiple casualties or threats
 - Civilian panic or confusion
 - Media or public scrutiny
 - Inter-agency coordination

Outstanding Team Performance in a Critical Incident

Nominees must have demonstrated an extraordinary performance beyond the average or normal activity level. (Two awards may be given; one for small PSAPs with 2-5 positions, and one for large PSAPs with 6 or more positions.)

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7. Situational Complexity

- Effectively handled a multifaceted situation involving:
 - Multiple casualties or threats
 - Civilian panic or confusion
 - Media or public scrutiny
 - Inter-agency coordination

8. Cohesion and Collaboration

- Team synergy: All members working in unison, supporting each other's roles.
- Role flexibility: Willingness to step outside usual responsibilities for the good of the mission.
- Morale and resilience: Maintaining focus and professionalism under stress.

Outstanding PSAP Leader

Nominees must be responsible for the daily shift operations of a PSAP to include Supervisor, Manager, Director or Shift Lead. (a maximum of one will be awarded)

1. Operational Excellence

- Ensures readiness: Maintains full situational awareness of staffing, equipment, and operational capability.
- Policy adherence and improvement: Ensures policies are followed and actively seeks ways to refine procedures.
- Crisis management: Demonstrates calm, confident leadership during critical incidents or high-pressure events.

2. Effective Communication

- Transparent communicator: Keeps staff informed and fosters open lines of communication.

- Advocates for the team: Clearly communicates team needs and accomplishments to upper management, stakeholders, and partner agencies.
- Listens actively: Creates a safe space for feedback and addresses concerns respectfully and promptly.

3. Team Development & Mentorship

- Leads by example: Demonstrates professionalism, integrity, and accountability in daily operations.
- Coaches and mentors: Provides ongoing training, guidance, and career development for team members.
- Recognition and morale building: Publicly and privately acknowledges outstanding work; creates a positive, resilient culture.

4. Strategic Thinking & Innovation

- Problem-solving mindset: Identifies challenges and implements long-term solutions.
- Embraces technology: Champions the use of new tools (CAD, radio, NG911, QA systems) to improve service delivery.
- Forward planning: Prepares for future growth, regulatory changes, and evolving community needs.

5. Accountability and Ethics

- High ethical standards: Models integrity and holds team members to the same standard.
- Consistent and fair: Applies rules and discipline consistently, without favoritism.
- Owns decisions: Takes responsibility for both successes and shortcomings under their leadership.

6. Advocacy

- Strong partner relationships: Collaborates effectively with law, fire, EMS and neighboring jurisdictions.
- Promotes wellness and support: Encourages mental health awareness and provides resources for stress and trauma.
- Public trust: Maintains the confidence of community leaders, the public, and field responders.

7. Results and Impact

- Improves performance metrics: Reduced call answer times, enhanced QA scores, better staffing retention.
- Crisis leadership success: Handled major incidents or staffing crises with poise and effective decision-making.
- Team growth: Fosters a culture of improvement, leading to promotions, certifications, and professional development.

Everyday Hero

Nominees demonstrate exceptional dedication, skill and impact in their day-to-day work. (a maximum of one will be awarded)

1. Consistent Excellence in Performance

- Reliability: Shows up every day ready to work and provides quality service consistently and without bias.
- Accuracy and attention to detail: Routinely delivers high-quality call handling/dispatching and documentation.
- Situational awareness: Quickly understands evolving emergencies and dispatches effectively.

2. Calm Under Pressure

- Maintains composure: Handles high-stress or emotionally charged calls with professionalism and control.
- Guides callers with empathy: Uses calm, clear language to assist those in distress, helping them feel heard and supported.
- Supports responders: Remains focused and effective, even during chaotic or dangerous field situations.

3. Exceptional Team Player

- Supports coworkers: Always willing to help others, cover shifts, or offer a listening ear.
- Positive attitude: Contributes to a supportive, team-first culture.
- Trusted colleague: Dependable, respected by peers and supervisors alike.
- Acts as a role model: Sets the standard for how others want to serve.

4. Impactful Call Handling

- Life-saving actions: May have provided CPR instructions, helped deliver a baby, or stayed on the line to calm a caller in danger.
- Critical thinking: Recognized subtle cues or escalated situations that could have been overlooked.
- Voice of comfort: Made a lasting emotional impact on a caller or responder through compassion and professionalism.

5. Dedication to the Mission

- Embodies the 911 mission: Genuinely cares about public safety and service.
- Quiet heroism: Doesn't seek the spotlight but consistently performs with integrity and heart.
- Resilient and selfless: Keeps showing up, even through personal or professional challenges.

6. Community and Peer Recognition

- Praised by callers, responders, or peers.
- Recognized informally: Someone others turn to for guidance or support.

- Community: Demonstrates knowledge of the community and the role the PSAP has in delivering service to it.

Outstanding 911 Training Performance

Nominees must have demonstrated consistent skill, ability, and willingness to train 911 personnel to perform their job in an exceptional manner. Nominees must be or have been a calltaker/dispatcher themselves, but not necessarily a trainer in any official capacity. (a maximum of one will be awarded)

1. Excellence in Instruction and Knowledge

- Mastery of protocols and procedures: Demonstrates deep knowledge of call-taking, dispatching, CAD systems, radio operations, and agency policies.
- Effective teaching skills: Breaks down complex tasks into understandable steps; uses real-world examples to reinforce learning.
- Standards-based approach: Aligns training with local, state, and national standards (e.g., APCO, NENA, CALEA).

2. Commitment to Trainee Success

- Adaptability: Adjusts training style to meet different learning needs and speeds.
- Positive reinforcement: Builds trainee confidence while providing constructive feedback.
- High expectations, high support: Maintains rigorous standards while offering encouragement and mentorship.

3. Leadership and Professionalism

- Role model: Exemplifies the qualities of a top-tier telecommunicator—integrity, calm under pressure, and accountability.
- Peer leadership: Respected by colleagues for their professionalism, work ethic, and communication.
- Crisis coaching: Guides trainees effectively during live, high-pressure calls.

4. Mentorship and Development

- Invests in people: Genuinely cares about trainee growth, both technically and emotionally.
- Long-term impact: Trainees go on to become successful team members or leaders themselves.
- Follow-up support: Continues offering help and encouragement after the formal training period ends.

5. Innovation and Improvement

- Develops training materials: Creates or improves SOPs, training guides, checklists, or simulations.
- Seeks feedback: Actively gathers and applies feedback from trainees and peers to refine training.
- Stays current: Keeps up with industry changes (NG911, EMD updates, technology) and integrates them into training.

6. Team Collaboration and Influence

- Works with supervisors and QA staff: Ensures training aligns with agency goals and standards.
- Supports a positive training culture: Promotes professionalism, patience, and teamwork within the training unit.
- Trusted advisor: Others seek their input on training strategies, difficult trainee cases, or operational procedures.

7. Resilience and Emotional Intelligence

- Manages tough training situations with grace: Knows when to challenge, when to support, and when to step back.
- Empathetic but firm: Understands the emotional demands of the job while preparing trainees for real-world stress.
- Builds morale: Encourages others—even outside the training role.

Support Services Excellence Award

This award honors a professional whose outstanding contributions in a support role have significantly enhanced the operations, performance, or resilience of a PSAP. Though not serving on the dispatch floor, these individuals demonstrate excellence, innovation, and dedication that directly impact the success of 911 services. Eligible candidates include non-dispatch personnel who work at and support PSAP operations in areas such as:

- Technical Support (IT, Radio, CAD, GIS, systems administration)
- Administrative Support or Records
- Facilities/Maintenance Services
- Public Education or Outreach (a maximum of one will be awarded)
 - (a maximum of one will be awarded)

1. Demonstrate Exceptional Support

- Provides critical, consistent, and effective support that enhances PSAP operations.
- Understands the mission of emergency communications and actively works to advance it.

2. Showcase Innovation or Problem-Solving

- Identifies and implements creative solutions to improve systems, processes, or team effectiveness.
- Proactively addresses challenges that impact frontline performance or public safety outcomes.

3. Exhibit Professionalism and Dedication

- Maintains a high level of professionalism, responsiveness, and collaboration with 911 personnel.
- Is dependable, knowledgeable, and known for going above and beyond the basic job requirements.

4. Impact on Agency and Community

- Plays an essential role in projects, upgrades,

transitions, or daily operations that improve agency service delivery.

- Contributes to the overall success, morale, or image of the PSAP and public safety communications.

5. Promote a Positive Work Environment

- Demonstrates a strong work ethic, respect for colleagues, and a willingness to assist others.
- Contributes to a culture of teamwork, inclusion, and mutual support across roles and departments.

Lifetime Achievement Award

The 911 Lifetime Achievement Award honors individuals who have made outstanding, long-term contributions to the 911 profession or public safety communications. All nominees must still be employed by the agency or another agency in the MARC region or must have retired/resigned in good standing. Nominations may be submitted by internal or external PSAP personnel but must be approved by the nominee's head of the agency. (A maximum of two awards will be given, with no more than one per PSAP.)

1. Length of Service

- 20+ years of dedicated service in public safety emergency communications.
- Demonstrated commitment to excellence throughout their career.

2. Impact on the Profession

- Significant contributions to the advancement of 911 services (e.g., technology, training, policy, leadership).
- Helped shape standards, implement programs, or improve processes that benefit the 911 community.

3. Leadership and Mentorship

- Shown outstanding leadership in the field, even if not a supervisor, manager, director.
- Serves as a role model to other 911 professionals.
- Actively mentored others, promoting professional growth and excellence.

4. Advocacy and Public Education

- Engaged in public outreach or other efforts to support the 911 system.
- Worked to educate the public or officials on 911 services and importance.

5. Professional Integrity and Dedication

- Recognized for high ethical standards, dedication to duty, and resilience in a high-stress profession.
- Exemplifies the core values of public safety: service, integrity, and professionalism.

6. Recognition by Peers

- Recognized by colleagues or professional organizations.
- Respected by peers across multiple agencies or jurisdictions.

Multi-Agency Performance in a Critical Incident

Nominees must include two or more PSAPs that performed exceptionally during a critical incident impacting the safety of the region. (a maximum of one will be awarded)

1. Seamless Interagency Communication

- Real-time information sharing: Accurate, timely, and consistent communication between agencies and dispatch centers.
- Cross-agency radio coordination: Effective management of interoperability channels or tactical frequencies.
- Information relay: Crucial information passed without delay or distortion.
- Adaptability: Demonstrated flexibility as the incident evolved.

2. Operational Coordination and Execution

- Strategic deployment of resources: Personnel and equipment from multiple agencies were efficiently used.
- Tactical collaboration: Agencies worked side-by-side to achieve incident goals (e.g., evacuation, triage, threat neutralization).
- Problem-solving under pressure: Agencies adapted quickly to shifting priorities or unexpected challenges.

3. Dispatcher and PSAP Integration

- Cross-center coordination: 911 centers worked together smoothly.
- Supportive dispatching: Dispatchers remained calm, prioritized needs, and supported field units with accurate updates.
- Knowledge: Demonstrated knowledge of the incident and the resources needed to successfully resolve it.



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