Emergency Calling and 911- VoIP Business Lines

Has your business switched to a VoIP/Cloud-Internet based Phone System? If so, we want to make sure that you are aware of important differences with how 911 calls are received and handled compared with a traditional telephone service.

- With traditional phone service, your 911 call is sent directly to the nearest response centre.
- With some VoIP service for business, your 911 call may be forwarded to a third-party service provider that will manually route your call to the emergency response centre.

Remember to provide the location of each extension to your service provider

- With VoIP, you must associate each extension to a user at a physical location- including the specific office location (i.e. 123 Main St Suite 203 or 123 Main St- 2nd floor reception). While users *can* move VoIP phones from one location to another, this is not recommended, as the location information will no longer be accurate and emergency services may not be able to locate the user associated to the line.
- If each VoIP line within the business is not associated to a user at a physical location, the default information received by emergency services will be for the main office location. In the event you are unable to speak when calling 911, this could cause significant delay in emergency response.

When placing a 911 call from your VoIP phone, immediately confirm the following to the emergency operator:

- Your location, address and unit #
- Your name
- Your contact information

If you have dialed 911 in error, do NOT hang up.

- Stay on the line and confirm with the emergency operator there is no emergency.
- If you do disconnect prior to speaking to the emergency operator, emergency services will be dispatched to the location where the VoIP phone is registered, which can tie up emergency resources unnecessarily.

Be prepared for service interruption

- VoIP service depends on internet connectivity and power to function. In the event of power, network or internet outages (including congestion), you may experience a failure, disruption or delay in your 911 service.

Inform other users

- Notify those in your organization and other potential users of your VoIP phone service of the nature and limitations of 911 emergency calls.