



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Texas Multi-line Telephone Systems Required to Provide Direct Access to 9-1-1 Simple Programming Change Can Save Lives

Texas multiline telephone systems that allow outbound calling are now required to provide direct-dial access to 9-1-1. Senate Bill 788, also known as Kari's Law, was signed by Governor Greg Abbott on May 15, 2015. Providers of multiline systems have until September 1st, 2016 to comply.

The new law means that phone systems which may previously have required the caller to dial "9" (or other digits) to access an outside line must now allow a user to directly dial 9-1-1, without any extra digits. And, if the multi-line system is provided for residential or business facilities, **such as schools, hotels, hospitals**, etc., they may also be required notify a central location on-site that a 9-1-1 call was placed.

Kari's Law is the result of a 2013 incident that occurred in Marshall, Texas, when Kari Hunt's nine-year old daughter tried to call 9-1-1 from a hotel room because her mother was being attacked by her estranged husband. Tragically, the child did not know to dial '9' to get an outside line. Kari Hunt died before help could arrive. Since Kari's death her family has made it their mission to educate the public and elected officials across the country about the need to change multiline phone systems so that 9-1-1 may be dialed directly. In many cases, this change can be done by simple reprogramming.

Many 9-1-1 entities across the state of Texas and the Texas Legislature played an active part to see this law become a reality, so that something like the tragedy in Marshall never happens again. Beginning as children, we are educated to dial three simple numbers in an emergency, and that is all anyone should have to remember.

9-1-1 entities across the state of Texas will be monitoring the implementation of Kari's law.

Texas is now the third state to enact a "Kari's Law." The states of Illinois and Maryland have passed similar legislation. To read SB 788, go to: <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/84R/billtext/pdf/SB00788F.pdf#navpanes=0>. For more information on Kari's Law, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/changeitforkari>.

For additional information on implementing Kari's law, contact the El Paso County 911 District at info@elpasocounty911.org, or see our website at www.elpaso911.org.

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