



What is the issue?

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) estimates that 70 percent of 911 calls are placed from wireless phones and the industry estimates that at least 50 percent of these wireless 911 calls originate indoors.

Yet location information for wireless calls to 911 placed from many indoor locations (office and commercial buildings, parking garages and apartments) or densely populated urban settings is often unreliable, failing to provide accurate information about the caller's location – vital information in life-and-death situations where every second counts.

GPS, the preferred E-911 location technology of wireless carriers, works well when dialing from outdoors in unobstructed spaces where handsets have clear views of GPS satellites, but is not reliable or accurate in many indoor locations like office buildings, hotels and parking garages or other locations where the view of GPS satellites is obstructed.

Despite the fact that the majority of calls to 911 originate from mobile phones, there is no FCC location requirement for mobile calls placed indoors. Outdoors, yes. Indoors, no.

Why is this important?

In emergency situations, every second counts. When someone calls an emergency number, often the person does not know exactly where they are, may not speak the predominant language, may not be able to communicate clearly or at all. Providing first responders with accurate location information can save time when every second is critical.

Isn't accurate location required for indoor calls with Enhanced 911?

No. The FCC E-911 (cell phone) location accuracy requirements currently in force apply to calls originating outdoors, but not to calls originating indoors.

What needs to be done to ensure all who dial 911 from a wireless phone are protected?

Regulations governing the E-911 system need to be updated to accommodate today's use of wireless technology. For example, the FCC E-911 (cell phone) location accuracy requirements currently in force apply to calls originating outdoors but not calls originating indoors, and therefore do not uniformly protect these "cell phone only" households or anyone placing a 911 call from indoors.

How many calls are placed to 911 from wireless phones, and who is most adversely impacted?

The volume of calls from wireless phones to 911 is mammoth. Consider these facts:

- The FCC estimates that of the roughly 240 million 911 calls placed each year, 70 percent are now placed from wireless phones.
- At least 50 percent of all wireless 911 calls originate indoors, according to industry estimates.
- Nearly one-third of households in the United States are wireless-only, with no landline, making them totally reliant on wireless phones during emergencies.

Anyone who dials 911 from a wireless phone could be adversely impacted. People living in multi-story, densely populated areas and anyone who lives or works in buildings with dense materials like brick, metal, or stone is disproportionately adversely impacted by the limitations of existing E-911 location accuracy requirements. It also applies to people walking or driving in “urban canyons” between these large buildings.

Those most adversely impacted:

- Adults living in poverty (51.4 percent) were far more likely than adults who were not poor (28.9 percent) to be living in wireless-only households.¹
- Hispanic adults (43.3 percent) were more likely than non-Hispanic white adults (29 percent) or non-Hispanic black adults (36.8 percent) to be living in households with only wireless phones.²

What is Find Me 911?

A wide range of emergency responders, 911 dispatchers and others interested in helping first responders find people facing emergencies have joined together, determined to ensure that the 911 emergency location function works in today’s wireless age.

[Find me 911](#) is an effort supported by more than [100,000 individuals](#) and a growing number of local and national organizations representing a broad range of 911 operators and first responders – emergency medical services personnel, fire fighters and police – as well as members of the general public. They all recognize the critically important public safety need to ensure that 911 works in today’s wireless age.

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201206.pdf>

² <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201206.pdf>

What can I do?

There will be specific actions to take in coming weeks and months, as we seek to ensure that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) move forward quickly to establish a reasonable, measurable level of location accuracy for emergency calls made indoors, enabling first responders to locate emergency calls from wireless phones from all locations rapidly and efficiently. For now, please keep up-to-date by joining at www.findme911.org and following the effort on [Facebook](#).