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911 Phone Call Template

This guide provides a simple, supportive template to help you prepare for and confidently make a 911 emergency call. It outlines the key information to gather, offers a sample script to guide the conversation, highlights tips and next steps for effective communication and prepares you for additional questions a 911 operator may ask.

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Introduction

“911, what’s your emergency?” is a phrase we hope never to hear. The reality is that emergencies happen. As a child care provider, you may need to call 911 at some point in your child care career. When you are better prepared, the unthinkable is more manageable. This resource can support you with the process, from gathering needed information to following a simple script to preparing for next steps and more.

For additional information and support, contact your local 911 dispatch center, generally run by county government. They can help you schedule a walk through, advise safety recommendations and connect you to your non-emergency phone line.

Needed Information:

- Emergency Description:
What is happening? Share simple, short details for now – just the critical information.
- Location:
 - Name of child care program:
 - Address:
 - Location of emergency (classroom name and directions, playground, etc.):
- Contact Information:
 - The phone number you’re calling from:
 - Note: If the number you’re calling from goes to an automated answering service, offer your direct phone number, too.
 - Your name:
- Who needs help?
- Who else is with you?

Script:

- This is an emergency.
- I’m at [Name of child care program] at [Address] in [Location of emergency] .
- I’m calling from [phone number] . My name is .
- The emergency is .
- I’m with [two infants and a preschooler / five other children / etc.] .
- We are [safe / unsafe] .

Example:

- This is an emergency.
- I am at Teddy Bear Child Care at 123 Main St. I'm in the toddler classroom on the first floor near Door 5, East side of the building
- I'm calling from 317.555.7651. My name is Taylor.
- One of my 2-year-olds is having trouble breathing. Her name is Shaniqua.
- I'm in a room with four other 2-year-olds. They are all safe.

Next Steps:

- Listen and answer questions.
- Follow instructions. You may be asked to move yourself and the children to a safer location, give first aid, perform CPR, etc.
- Stay on the line. If it is unsafe to talk, do not hang up the phone. Leave the call open and find a place to hide.
- If possible, ask an available adult to meet first responders at the front door and direct them to the location of the emergency.

Tips:

- Take deep breaths. Remain calm.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Location is the most important detail you can give. If Emergency Medical Services (EMS) does not know where the emergency is or where to enter the program, they cannot send help.
- Every situation is different, and so is every 911 call.
- Practice emergency phone calls before they happen so you feel more confident.

Possible 911 Operator Questions:

General:

- 911, what is your emergency?
- What is the address of the emergency?
- What phone number are you calling from?
- What is your name?
- Will you be standing by?

Medical:

- How old is the patient?
- Is he having trouble breathing?
- Is he injured or bleeding? If so, where?
- Who is with you?
- Do you need an ambulance?

Intruder:

- What is the suspect's name? (if known)
- What is the suspect's date of birth or approximate age? (if known)
- What does the suspect look like?
 - Race (white, Black, Latino, etc.)
 - Sex (male / female / other)
 - Height (if needed, use your own height as a guide)
 - Weight (if needed, use your own weight as a guide or describe in terms of thin, medium or heavyset)
 - Hair color and length, facial hair, etc.
 - Distinguishing features (glasses, tattoos, limp, etc.)
 - Clothing (jacket, shirt, pants, shoes, etc.)
 - Weapon

Natural disaster:

- Fire:
 - What is on fire?
 - Have you seen flames or just smoke?
 - What color is the smoke?
 - Are there flammable items nearby (trees, dry grass, buildings, etc.)?
 - Is anyone trapped due to the fire?
- Flood:
 - Is anyone trapped in a car or building or surrounded by rising water?
 - Has anyone been injured in the flood?
 - Do you see power lines in the water or collapsed roads or bridges due to the flood?
 - How deep is the water?
 - Is the water stationary or moving?
- Tornado:
 - Has anyone been injured in the tornado?
 - Is anyone trapped?
 - Do you see power lines down as a result of the tornado?
 - What structures have been damaged?
- Earthquake:
 - Is anyone trapped?
 - Is there structural damage to the building such as cracks, leaning or collapse?
 - Has anyone been injured in the earthquake?