

MAYOR HAHN UNVEILS BREAKTHROUGH SYSTEM TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY TO CITY SERVICES

3-1-1 "One Call to City Hall" Provides LA Residents, Businesses and Visitors with Quick Access to 1,400 Non-Emergency City Services

LOS ANGELES - Los Angeles' 1,400 City services have a new number: 3-1-1. To help create a more user-friendly government for Angelenos and dramatically improve accessibility to City services, Mayor Jim Hahn today announced that Los Angeles residents, businesses and visitors can now call 3-1-1 for help with City services.

The new 3-1-1 system allows residents to make "One Call to City Hall" for information and any non-emergency service. Instead of sorting through more than 800 listings in the phone book or having to know which City departments handles a service, residents and businesses now have one easy-to-remember number to access City services.

"Today, Los Angeles is taking a major step toward providing Nordstrom's-style customer service to Angelenos," said Mayor Hahn. "We want to make our top-quality services as accessible as possible to all our residents, businesses and visitors."

In this initial phase, the people of the City of Los Angeles can call 3-1-1 from wired telephones, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Los Angeles customers of Cingular Wireless will soon be able to use their mobile phone to dial 3-1-1 for City services information from anywhere within the City.

Calls are answered 24 hours a day by 3-1-1 Ambassadors who are trained to provide information or refer calls for service to the correct City agency - the first time. However, referrals for specific City services are primarily available during regular business hours when the various departments are staffed to handle the call. City Ambassadors are trained to answer questions in English and Spanish, and 3-1-1 is accessible in more than 150 other languages through the use of language translation services. Additionally, the 3-1-1 Call Center is also equipped to serve the hearing impaired.

When referring a call to a City Department, 3-1-1 Ambassadors connect the majority of callers to a person - not a voicemail box. These City Ambassadors are assisted by a Citywide Services Directory database that helps identify answers to callers' questions. For those residents and businesses preferring self-service, the Citywide Services Directory is available on-line at the City's Web site at www.lacity.org.

Those calling from a non Cingular Wireless mobile phone, a pay phone, or callers outside the City of Los Angeles but within the Counties of Los Angeles, Ventura, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange can call toll free 1-866-4LACITY to reach the 3-1-1 Center. To contact the 3-1-1 Center from outside of the above five county area, callers can dial 213-978-3231.

According to Chief Information Officer Liza Lowery, "Los Angeles is the largest city in America and the first in Southern California to implement 3-1-1. The City has worked with SBC Pacific Bell and Verizon Communications to ensure all homes and businesses have toll free 3-1-1 access. Our 3-1-1 Call Center commitment is to provide quality service on each and every call, even when research is required. The

3-1-1 Ambassador is your personal guide to City services. They will call someone back if necessary to ensure customer satisfaction."

Both William J. Bratton, L.A.'s Chief of Police, and William Bamattre, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Los Angeles City Fire Department agree: 3-1-1 is an important step in helping relieve 9-1-1 of non-emergency inquiries.

"In some markets that have implemented 3-1-1, non-emergency requests to 9-1-1 have decreased substantially. Over time, we expect 3-1-1 will help offload the 9-1-1 system and enable emergency services to better respond to critical requests for help," said Chief Bratton.

"Within California, more than 40 percent of 9-1-1 calls are not urgent needs. For every non-emergency call made to 3-1-1, someone with a truly urgent situation has an improved chance of being helped," said Chief Bamattre.

The City of Los Angeles has a five-year agreement with SBC Pacific Bell and Verizon Communications for 3-1-1 network connectivity. The 3-1-1 project - from development to maintenance - is expected to cost \$5 million.

"With the rollout of 3-1-1, SBC Pacific Bell continues its ongoing commitment to the City of Los Angeles to provide the highest service quality possible," said Dave Nichols, president - Los Angeles, SBC Pacific Bell. "The Los Angeles 3-1-1 system is the most sophisticated and intelligent network available to any municipality across the country. We are confident the system will help improve accessibility to City services."

Future plans for the 3-1-1 include the implementation of a Citywide Service Request System. When implemented, requests for service can be handled directly by the 3-1-1 Agent 24 hours per day, 365 days a year.

For more information on Los Angeles's 311 system, please visit www.lacity.org/call311.

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