

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ED FLYNN, ERIN MURPHY,
BREADON, FITZGERALD, LOUIJEUNE, MEJIA,
SANTANA, AND WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS APPROPRIATE USES OF BOSTON 311 AND 9-1-1 EMERGENCY

- WHEREAS:** With deteriorating conditions at Mass and Cass, the opioid crisis continuing to impact neighborhoods across the city, and other various quality of life issues in our communities, such as noise disturbances at all hours - residents have called attention to the oftentimes blurred line of when it is appropriate to contact Boston 311 and when to call 9-1-1, traditionally reserved for emergencies; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Boston 311 is the city's non-emergency information and service line. Boston 311 addresses various quality of life concerns, including broken sidewalks, overflowing trash, damaged signs, and potholes. The service also provides information such as neighborhood trash days, scheduling mattress pickup, and back to school information; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Additionally, Boston 311 has a "health hazards" category when entering a service request, which includes issues like encampments and needle pickup. When residents come across an encampment or discarded needles, they may be in a situation that requires them to call 9-1-1 if there is an emergency that requires immediate attention; *and*
- WHEREAS:** 9-1-1 is designated as the "Universal Emergency Number" for the United States. The Boston Police Department received all 9-1-1 calls made from landlines, which are then transferred to the State Police, Boston EMS, or the Boston Fire Department as appropriate; *and*
- WHEREAS:** 9-1-1 should be called to report police, medical, or fire emergencies that need a timely response. The Boston Police Department has noted that residents can call the Captain's Office, Detectives, or Community Service Office at your local police district, however, non-emergency inquiries should be reported to Boston 311. At the same time, since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Boston Police have also encouraged residents to call 911 for disturbances coming from late parties; *and*
- WHEREAS:** With escalating open air drug dealing, public drug use, discarded needles in neighborhoods abutting Mass and Cass, as well as various public safety, public health, and quality of life issues in the city - it is important for residents to know when to call 9-1-1 or contact Boston 311; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss the use of Boston 311 of 9-1-1. Representatives from the Boston Police Department, Boston 311, and other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to testify.

Filed on: August 27, 2025