

# Arkansas 911 Board Service Area Policy

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Adopted by the Arkansas 911 Board, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**GUIDANCE:** Provide direction to the GIS Office on how to document and adjudicate 911 service areas on behalf of the Arkansas 911 Board.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** *A.C.A. § 12-10-305 Arkansas 911 Board*

*(2) Within one (1) year of July 24, 2019, promulgating rules necessary to:*

*(A) Establish guidelines for Arkansas public safety answering points in accordance with the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International, Inc. and the National Emergency Number Association;*

*(B) Create standards for public safety answering point interoperability between counties and states; and*

*(C) Assist all public safety answering points in implementing a next generation 911 system in the State of Arkansas;*

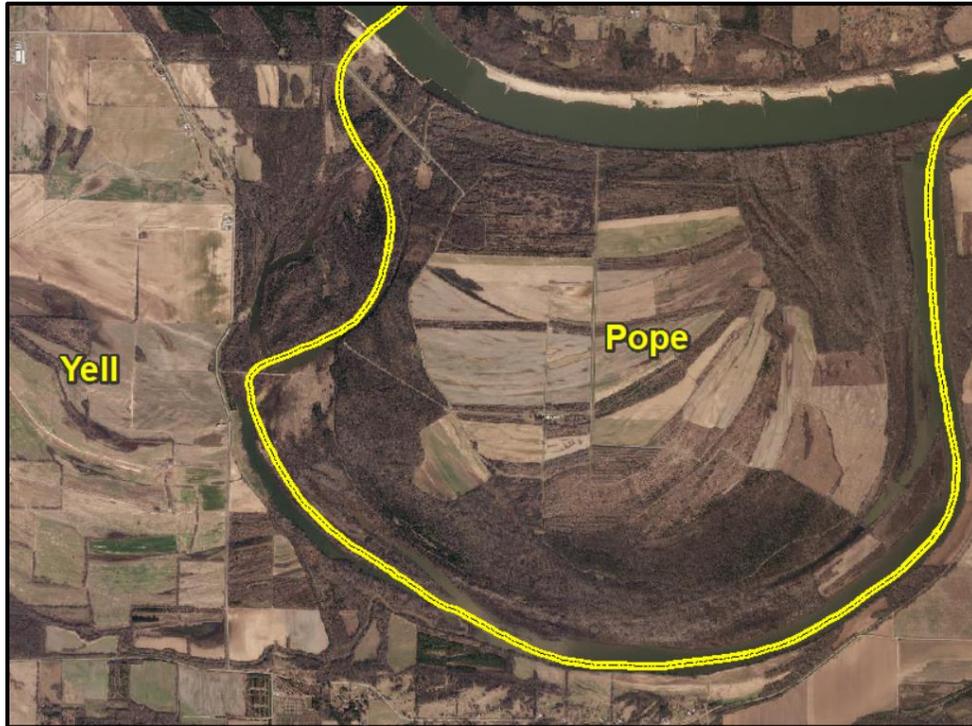
**ISSUE:** The Arkansas GIS Office is preparing to initiate work on developing the 911 service area territories for Emergency Medical Service (EMS), Fire, Law Enforcement and PSAP delineation. The GIS layers for these service areas will govern future NG911 call routing and response. Historically, public safety officials have viewed and understood these as jurisdictional areas of control and specific to a license boundary, taxable area or funding area. The jurisdictional boundaries are governed by other statutory and regulatory processes and in some cases have exceptions by mutual aid agreements. Service area exceptions are areas of the state that by geographic necessity must be drawn to reflect the most operationally efficient and logical service area, or include areas where mutual aid agreements are not mapped and not integrated in PSAP operations.

In the NG911 context we must transition to thinking of these as actual service areas or territories that reflect the ability to provide emergency response in the least amount of time. The 911 Board has contracted with the GIS Office to provide NG911 required GIS layers of the emergency response zones of the various services. These service areas must be delineated so the NG911 platform will route to the most appropriate response agency.

The GIS Office is requested the Board's direction on the processes and authority to delineate these service areas.

**EXAMPLE:** A classic example that illustrates a service area exception is Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge. Holla Bend is situated alongside the Arkansas River and is physically located on the south side of the river. Jurisdictionally, it is in Pope County. Practically and logically, if an emergency response service is needed in that area it must come through or from Yell County. It is an area of Pope County for which the Pope County services cannot be immediately provided.

This means the PSAP, EMS, Fire and Law service territories should be mapped so the area is associated with service provision from Yell County. Cases like these are often managed on a handshake, or otherwise undocumented agreement or mutual aid agreement with no map. In an NG911 environment, these kinds of scenarios need to be formalized and mapped to ensure proper routing.



The National Emergency Numbering Association (NENA) GIS Data Stewardship document provides the following guidance.

#### *2.2.3.2 9 1 1 Authority*

*A 9 1 1 Authority is a State, County, Regional, Tribal or other governmental entity responsible for 9 1 1 service operations in a given area. A 9 1 1 Authority may be composed of one or more PSAPs. The 9 1 1 Authority may assume the role of GIS Data Provider for the service area boundary, or it may delegate that function to another entity. Similarly, for civic location data, the 9 1 1 Authority may work with multiple GIS data sources within its service area to create and maintain civic location layers, or it may designate one or more GIS Data Providers and specify the provisioning area for which each is responsible.*

*In situations where there are multiple GIS Data Providers, as for example where local data are aggregated to a regional or statewide service area, the 9 1 1 Authority needs to specify exactly how and by whom local data will be reviewed and edge matched. Additionally, they will need to specify how boundary issues are resolved and how final quality control measures are performed before the data are provided to the Spatial Interface. For example, the 9 1 1 Authority may*

*determine that data must be returned to the original GIS Data Provider for review and correction if edits are needed, or the 9 1 1 Authority may assign the responsibility for reviewing data and making corrections over the entire service area to one of several GIS Data Providers.*

*In all cases where multiple datasets are being aggregated by a higher level agency or a third party, there should be a clear understanding between the GIS Data Providers and the 9 1 1 Authority on who is empowered to edit the GIS data and what sorts of changes they can make. All discrepancy reports resulting from NG9 1 1 system operations should be communicated by the system operator to the entity designated by the 9 1 1 Authority to resolve discrepancies for a given provisioning area or service area. Best practice requires that any edits made by a higher-level agency or a third party are done in consultation with, and transmitted back to, the GIS Data Provider.*

## **911 SERVICE AREA GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are effectively adopting the NENA recommendations from above.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE GUIDELINE**

The GIS Office will invoke map changes that do not require any review by the 911 Board arising from administrative procedures. Example revisions include but may not be limited to:

- Changes arising from County Court Orders creating, abolishing or reallocating fire service areas.
- Municipal annexation procedures whereby EMS, fire or police services are extended OR retracted by municipal ordinance of annexation, de-annexation, consolidation or dissolution of municipal corporations.
- Municipal incorporation procedures whereby new city EMS, fire or police services become available within a municipal area.
- Administrative actions of the Arkansas Department of Health, EMS licensure procedures.

### **MUTUAL CONSENT GUIDELINE**

1) The GIS Office will coordinate with PSAPs to obtain their GIS service area layers. For PSAPs that do not have GIS service area layers the GIS Office will develop them in coordination with local authorities.

2) The GIS Office will analyze and identify service area exceptions against the following standards:

- a. Leaving the area unchanged will cause a decrease in the reliability of call routing and expeditious delivery of emergency services to residents, structures, or property; and
- b. A change will eliminate existing or potential duplication of service; or
- c. A gap in between service areas is discovered.

3) The GIS Office will coordinate with the appropriate service providers adjoining the service area exception (EMS, Fire, Law and PSAP). The GIS Office will facilitate documentation and concurrence by mutual consent with the highest-level official representing the service providers in the adjoining the area.

4) The GIS Office will provide a service area change report to the 911 Board each month for Board review. The subject areas of the report will also be published on an interactive map.

5) Following the Board review the service area exception will then be mapped and included in the area that will allow the most expeditious delivery of emergency services.

6) The GIS file will then be incorporated into the NG 911 GIS Core Service layers and provided / returned to the PSAP.

#### **DISPUTED AREA GUIDELINE**

1) The GIS Office will coordinate with PSAPs to obtain their GIS data of service areas. For PSAPs that do not have GIS data of service areas the GIS Office will develop them in coordination with local authorities.

2) The GIS Office will analyze and identify service area exceptions against the following standard:

- a. Leaving the area unchanged, will cause a decrease in the reliability of call routing and expeditious delivery of emergency services to residents, structures or property; and
- b. A change will eliminate existing or potential duplication of service.
- c. A gap in between service areas is discovered.

3) The GIS Office will coordinate with the appropriate service providers adjoining the service area exception (EMS, Fire, Law and PSAP). IF after a reasonable time-period the highest-level officials representing the service providers in the adjoining the area do not agree on the exception the Office will prepare a dispute report for the 911 Board. The report will include the following information about the area:

- Brief description of the applicable boundary, or geographic barrier such as mountainous terrain, rivers, lakes, railroads or other circumstance which hampers expeditious delivery of service.

- Estimated number of 911 addresses affected
- Names and estimated mileage of roads affected
- Estimated number of tax parcels affected
- Estimated acreage of the area

4) The highest-level officials will be notified of the 911 Board's intent to review a disputed area at a regular Board meeting. The officials will be notified of the meeting, invited to attend and provided an opportunity to furnish additional information to the 911 Board on the matter.

5) Following the 911 Board's review the Board will direct the GIS Office to change or not change the service area exception. If applicable, any outcome will then be mapped and included in the area that will allow the most expeditious delivery of emergency services.

6) The GIS file will then be incorporated into the NG 911 GIS Core Service layers and provided / returned to the PSAP.

Upon review and final direction from the 911 Board these guidelines will be published at <https://911board.arkansas.gov/> for the public and 911 stakeholders to review. The 911 Board may institute future changes to these guidelines where necessary in order to meet its statutory objectives.