Kari's Law & RAY BAUM's Act
9 Things You Need to Know About 9-1-1 Compliance

Giving everyone the ability to dial 9-1-1 directly are what Kari's Law and RAY BAUM's Act are all about. Makes sense, right? But it wasn't like that until 2020 and it took a tragedy to make it happen. Passed in 2018 and 2019 (respectively), both have staggered compliance deadlines that began in 2020. The last compliance deadline is January 6, 2022. Here's what you need to know about compliance.

1. What is Kari's Law?

Kari's Law can save lives by enabling you to call 9-1-1 directly without have to dial a prefix, such as 9, to get an outside line. Kari's Law ensures that in an emergency, anyone — children, guests, employees — not familiar with an organization's telephony system can pick up a phone and dial 9-1-1.

2. My System is Older. Do I Have to Comply?

Kari's Law applies to any mutiline telephone system (MTLS) that is manufactured, imported, offered for first sale or lease or installed after February 16, 2020. Even if you're MLTS is was installed prior to 2020, you may still need to comply. The law says "if the system is able to be configured to provide the notification without an improvement to the hardware or software of the system." Basically, this means that if you're phone system can be compliant, you need to enable that function. Not sure? Check with a tech and call your lawyer.

3. What is RAY BAUM'S Act?

This requires 9-1-1 calls to include dispatchable location information so first responders can find the caller. Section 506 mandates different deadlines depending on the type of device.

4. Define a Dispatchable Location?

A dispatchable location needs to contain "sufficient information to locate the caller adequately." (This definition has caused some to question what sufficient actually means regarding different phone systems and building configurations. Questions? The answer again is check with a tech and call your lawyer.)

The commonly accepted definition of a dispatchable location is a street address. But, it needs to be specific and provide section, floor, suite, room and office numbers, and even the exact phone extension location of the emergency caller, if available. An example may be NE corner, second floor, suite 2001, office 3, extension, 2013.

5. What Types of Phones Need to Comply?

There are two types of phones and two compliance dates.

Hard phones: January 6, 2021
Hard (static) phones include desktop phones and phones in conference rooms, lobbies, contact centers, etc. and devices used by the deaf or hard-of-hearing in a fixed MTLS.

Softphones: January 6, 2022
A softphone (nomadic or non-static) is basically any portable laptop, tablet, or smartphone that is on- or off-premise and requires dynamic location routing. That makes compliance more complex and requires softphone platforms, such as Microsoft® Teams, and network components, such as Wi-Fi access points, to be configured with a dispatchable location.

6. How Does Nomadic 9-1-1 Work?

Nomadic devices, such as a mobile phone, can access dispatchable information from network components like a Wi-Fi access point. The devices can capture the location of the access point and use that as a dispatchable location.

7. What about My Work-from-Home/Remote Employees?

WFH and remote employees may be off-site, but they are not out-of-mind or exempt when it to comes to 9-1-1 compliance. So how does that work in terms of dispatchable information?

Many MLTS platforms, such as Microsoft Teams, meet compliance requirements for dynamic, nomadic non-fixed VoIP systems. Traditional on-premise systems may be outfitted with solutions that enable off-premise users to enter the address of their current location. If no location is available, most 9-1-1 call centers will route the call to a nationwide call center to try to determine location.

8. I Have a Contact Center?

Contrary to what many believe, contact centers are not exempt and need to comply with RAY BAUM's Act. The Act applies to all interconnected VoIP services, including contact centers with hard phones. If contact center employees use softphones, such as a laptop, they must be compliant January 6, 2022.

9. Do Cloud Systems Have to Comply?

Good question. The simple answer is yes. If you're providing a phone system to your employees, no matter if it's on-premise or in the cloud, it needs to comply.

Who Needs to Comply?

Any enterprise, SMB, institution, non-profit, or other organization with a multi-line telephone system (MLTS) needs to comply.

In a nutshell, if you have to dial a 9 (or other prefix) to get an outside line, you need to be in compliance. MLTS are typically found in:

- Office buildings
- Campuses (business, education, medical, etc.)
- Businesses with branch offices and dispersed locations, such as retail, finance, etc.)
- Hospitals
- Hotels

Who/What Does 9-1-1 Compliance Cover?

- On-site employees
- Remote employees
- Contact centers
- Premise systems
- Cloud systems
- Fixed (desktop) and mobile (non-fixed) phones/devices

Are There Penalties?
The FCC imposes stiff penalties for "willful and knowing" non-compliance.

- Fines up to $10,000 as well as other penalties
- Daily fines for non-compliance
- Civil and litigation costs if you are found liable in an emergency.

Not Sure About Your Compliance?
Contact us. We'll assess your system and let you know if you are compliant or how to gain compliance.

Need Help? Call Us. No Need to Dial 9-1-1.
While the regulations may seem complicated, you have help. For more information about Kari's Law and RAY BAUM's Act and how to ensure your compliance, please call us at **855-324-9909** or email us at **contact@blackbox.com**.

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