

Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point Regional Dispatch Serving Grand Forks County and cities therein



2019

Annual Report

Becky Ault, Director

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Becky Ault, Director

Shannon LaHaise, Center Supervisor

Christy Senechal, Team Leader

Carly Luney, Team Leader

Nicole Weigel, Team Leader

Amanda Scheving, Training Coordinator

Debbie Hoverson, Administrative Specialist, Sr.

The Grand Forks PSAP is dedicated to provide the highest quality service in your time of need, and we have set our Mission, values, and goals to demonstrate our commitment:

Mission:

Deliver exceptional emergency communications to the public and first responders that helps save lives and protect property.

Values

Safety and service are the top priorities, and we are committed to preserve our vision by maintaining these core values that guide our work and decisions:

- **Integrity**
 - **Remain diligent in performance of occupational duties**
 - **Seek to maintain highest standard of personal practices and maintain the integrity of dispatch**
 - **Avoid any conduct that would put responders or public in harm's way**
- **Leadership**
 - **Continually seek to maintain and improve professional knowledge, skill and competency**
- **Teamwork**
 - **Maintain honorable working relations with peers and all agencies we serve**
- **Stewardship**
 - **Endeavor to put the needs and safety of the public above our own professional ambitions**
 - **Continue to look for ways to improve performance and services**

Governance Overview

Under a Joint Powers Agreement, the Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is governed by an Authority Board comprised of nine members representing the following:

- Member of the Grand Forks County Commission
- Member of the Grand Forks City Council
- Chief of Grand Forks Police Dept., Or designee
- Chief of Grand Forks Fire Dept., Or designee
- Chief of University of North Dakota Police Dept., Or designee
- Grand Forks County Sheriff, or designee
- Citizen of Grand Forks County to be appointed by the Grand Forks County Commission
- Director of Altru Hospital Ambulance Services, or designee, who serves as a non-voting member
- PSAP Director, who serves as a non-voting member

The Authority Board is organized to direct the operations of the Grand Forks PSAP and fulfill the purpose contained in the Joint Powers Agreement for dispatch services in Grand Forks County.

2019 Authority Board Members

GFPD Chief Mark Nelson, President	UNDPD Chief Eric Plummer
GFFD Chief Gary Lorenz, Vice President	Sheriff Andrew Schneider
Danny Weigel, Grand Forks City Council	Cynthia Pic, Grand Forks Co. Commissioner
Tom Murphy, Member at Large	Tim Nesdahl, Altru Hospital Ambulance
Becky Ault, PSAP Director	

PSAP Organization

The Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) began operations in 1986, and now provides service as a combined dispatch center for multiple emergency response agencies in Grand Forks County. The population served is 70,795 with square mile area of 1,436.

The service area include Grand Forks Police Dept., UND Police Dept. Grand Forks Sheriff's Office, 3 local city police departments, Grand Forks Fire Department, 17 volunteer fire departments, 2 rural EMS providers and Altru ambulance Services.

The Grand Forks PSAP serves as the primary communications network for citizens, as well as those that travel through, to obtain direct services for law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services county wide. We collaborate statewide to ensure needed emergency services are provided to our citizens. In addition, PSAP retains well trained and highly skilled Emergency Communication Team, which:

- Dispatch and protect over our LE, Fire, and EMS agencies
- Process and dispatch over 92,000 calls for service ranging from a barking dog to a robbery in progress; with an average yearly increase of 5-7%
- Serve as the central warning point for all of Grand Forks County during severe weather
- Central Point of coordination for all county emergency services

The PSAP Center works to build a team that is honest, responsible, accountable, ethical and driven to provide service to the community and safety to all we come in contact with.

Employment Activity

New Staff

With the growth in calls for service annually, part time contract personnel have been added to the staffing and organization. Part time personnel have aided in maintaining efficient and essential services during heavy workload and ensure a safe work life balance for staff.

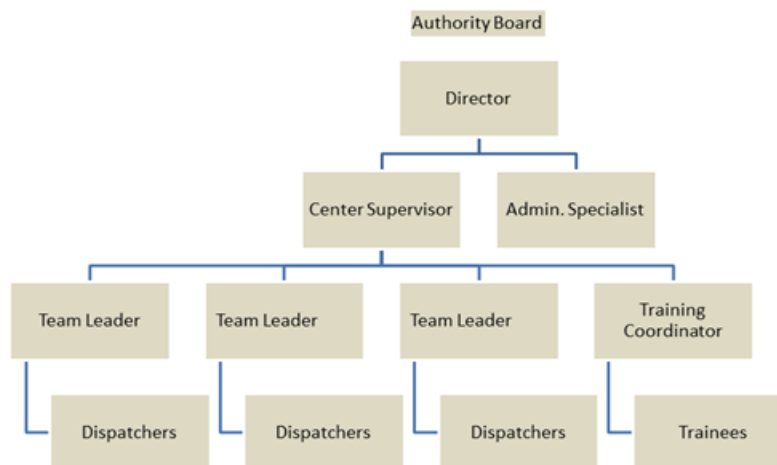
PSAP Personnel

Maintaining staffing levels is a critical component of emergency dispatch operations and ensures services are readily provided to responders and citizens in need. The recruitment process for emergency dispatchers is more extensive than most classified positions. In addition to the standard vetting process involving online applications and interviews, mandatory skill-specific testing identify the relative applicants armed with the aptitude and skills for the pressure and tasks associated with the job.

Technology is leveraged for all aspects of the call-taking and dispatching functions to improve efficiency, situational awareness, communication, and safety. While leveraging the various technologies has improved work flows, Dispatchers are a vital asset, and necessary to coordinate emergency responses. Staffing analyses will be completed routinely to ensure adequate staffing according to NENA and APCO Standards.

Currently, the PSAP consists of the following positions when fully staffed:

- 1 Director
- 1 Administrative Specialist, Senior
- 1 PSAP Supervisor
- 3 Team Leaders
- 1 Training Coordinator
- 13 Dispatchers
- 3 Part-time Dispatcher



Hiring, Training and Quality Assurance

HIRING

The recruiting and hiring process for Dispatchers continues to require additional vetting to inform applicants of the challenging and rewarding position as an Emergency Dispatcher. The improved hiring process from the previous year continued with the new testing process.

The successful combination has aided the applications in a fuller understanding of the career as well as provides a focused testing procedure on the necessary skills for the many roles and responsibilities of the position.

Training – APCO Fire

The Grand Forks PSAP provides Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) instructions for all medical calls for service. To improve consistencies in the process, the APCO Fire Guide-cards were implemented to compliment the EMD guide cards already in place.

A Taskforce consisting PSAP, agencies served by PSAP, worked with APCO to develop a guide-card system that provided a standard method for dispatchers to effectively evaluate the situation and also provide pre-arrival instructions. The core component was to develop a set of protocols that allowed for timely deliverance of obtaining necessary information in a minimal amount of time to dispatch responders quickly and efficiently, in effort to get the help that is necessary, as quickly as possible.

Quality Assurance

Providing quality to callers and responders is at the forefront of all aspects of what we do in PSAP. To provide continuous feedback to staff and quality assurance, the Grand Forks PSAP teamed up with Moetivations to implement a quality assurance program utilizing national standards and best practices.

Moetivations has provided multiple aspects of quality assurance including consistent level of quality review of calls for service, coaching recommendations for improvement, and on-site training.

Since the implementation, the overall performance of staff has seen a marked improvement and steady performance, with positive feedback from staff. The yearly averages for each discipline rates at 96.54% for law enforcement, 96.22 % for Fire, and 96.75% for EMS calls for service.

Expenditure projection: \$1,653,458.

Actual Expenditures: \$1,618,559 (-34,899)

Expenditures consist of such operational costs as salaries, fringe benefits, materials and supplies (i.e. office supplies, janitorial supplies), some contract services for advertising and print, Maintenance of buildings and grounds, general office equipment, and other basic operational costs such as postage, dues, and travel. This fund was affected by employee turn-over. No capital improvement projects come out of this budget.

Cash Carry Over to go into 2020: 473,193

Budget 2105 (Infrastructure cost budget):

Revenue projection: \$. \$1,400,785

Actual Revenue: \$ \$ 1,483,479 (+82,694)

Revenues in this budget consist of city and county land line fees and wireless phone fees at \$1.50 plus .50 (SIRN fee that goes to state) per month per phone, as well as interest earned and Cash Carry-over.

Note: Recall that we had a vote in 2016 that was in effect in 2017, increasing our local revenue by \$.50 per line.

Expenditure projection: \$ 1,377,905

Actual Expenditures: \$ 1,372,522 (-5,383)

Expenditures consist of hardware and software relating to operational PSAP duties, utilities for PSAP, communication tower costs, consultant fees, equipment maintenance agreements, JPA costs for EsiNet, and SIRN fees. Computer Aided Dispatch costs, and other direct 911 operational equipment costs. Also included is education and training and associated travel, as well as insurance costs.

Expenditures also include transfers out to other accounts – the Communication Center fee into 2104, IS Services, and the water fund payback loan for the building project. We utilized partnerships with the ND Association of Counties consortium statewide for cost savings on reoccurring trunk charges. SIRN costs for the upgrade occurred this year, with the remainder to be paid in 2020. Finally, expenditures from this budget include capital outlay.

Cash Carryover to go into 2020: \$1,328,898

- **Please note that within the expenditure guidelines, Jurisdictions are directed to perform long range planning and retention of appropriate funds for future investment and emergency repairs or replacement should be planned for.**

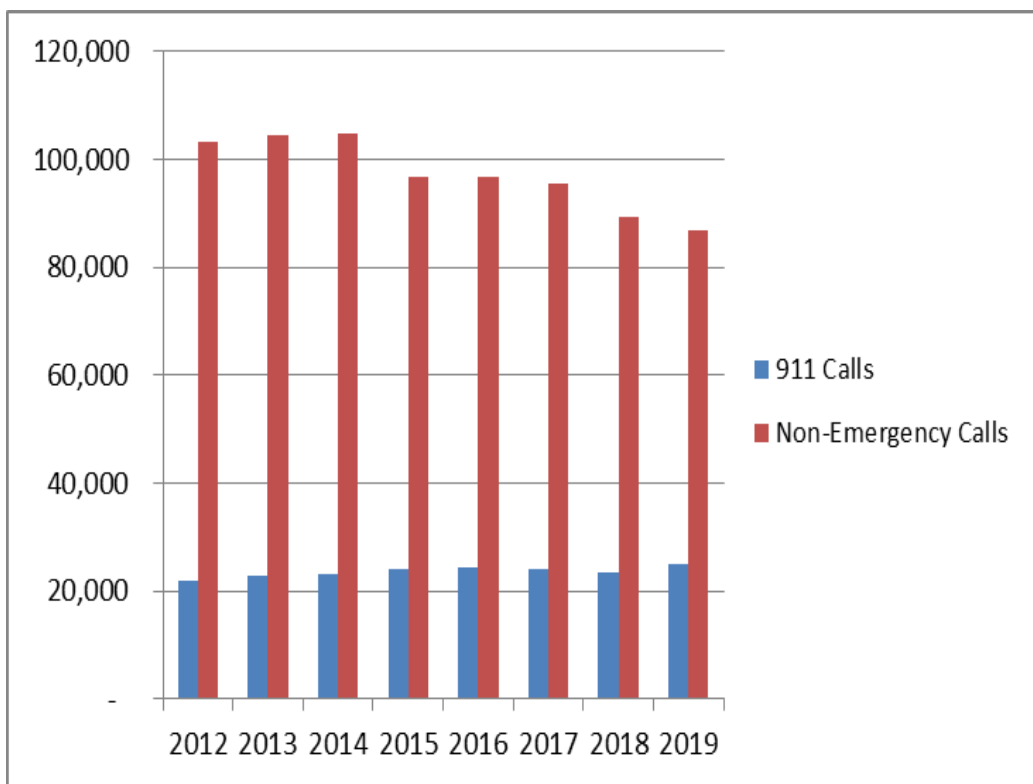
2019 Operations Review

Calls Received

Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point receives both emergency and non-emergency telephone calls for police, fire, and ambulance requests as well as calls from citizens requesting information and other agency requests.

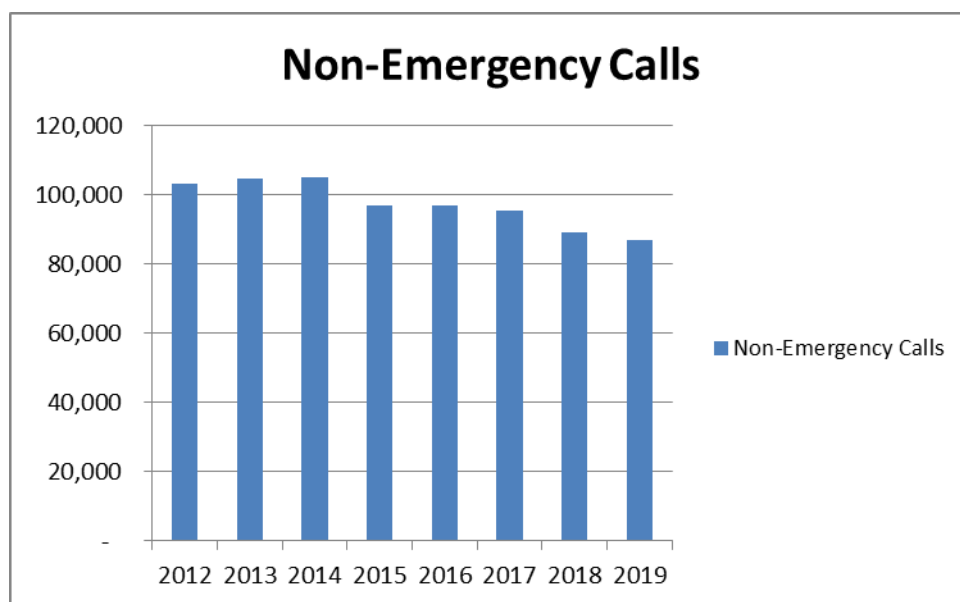
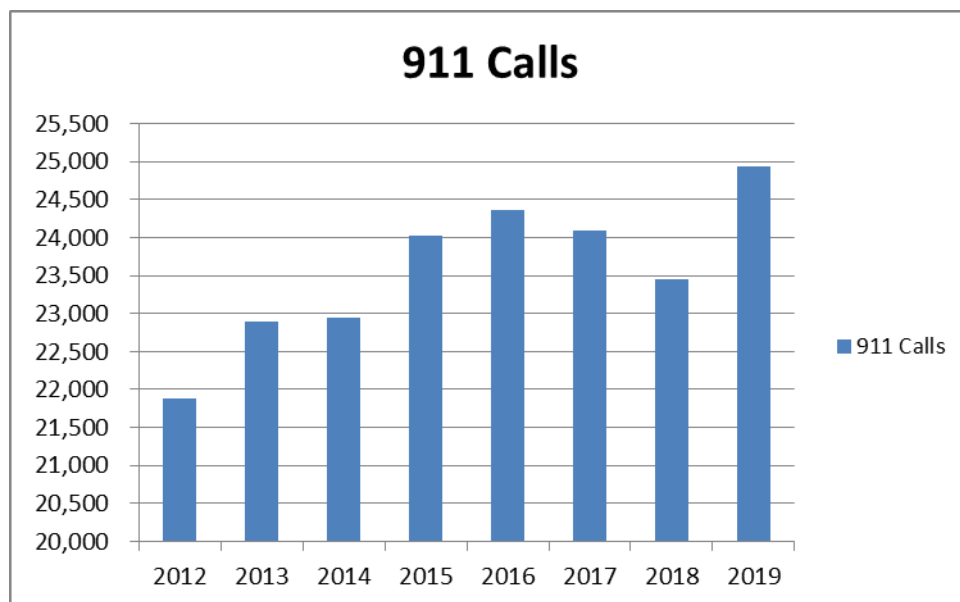
In 2019, Grand Forks PSAP processed 111,783 telephone calls. The total 911 calls went from 23,447 to 24,939; and the non-emergency from 89,287 to 86,844. The drop can be contributed to a combination of reporting tools used by the agencies we serve such as online reporting, social media tools, and other self-initiated activity.

Grand Forks PSAP also receives 911 calls via Text to 911. In total, 57 calls were received via text to 911.

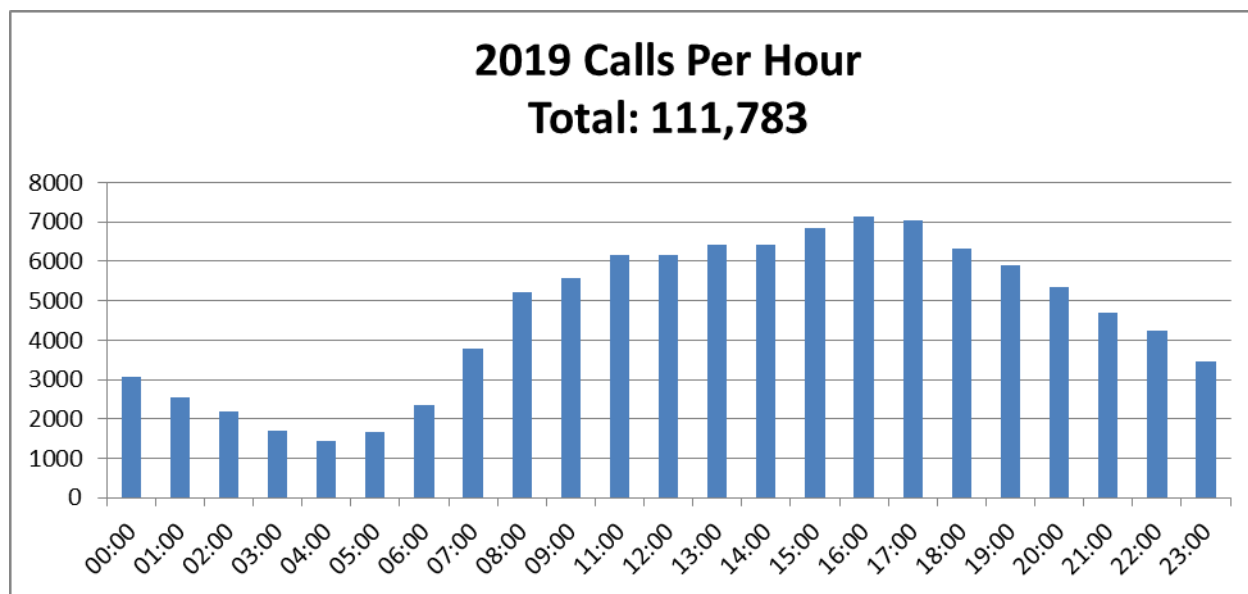


Total Calls 911 vs. Non-Emergency

Employees of the Grand Forks PSAP processed 111,783 calls. Of that total, 24,939 were through 911, and on non-emergency lines 86,844 were received.



Monthly Average Received Per Hour of the Day

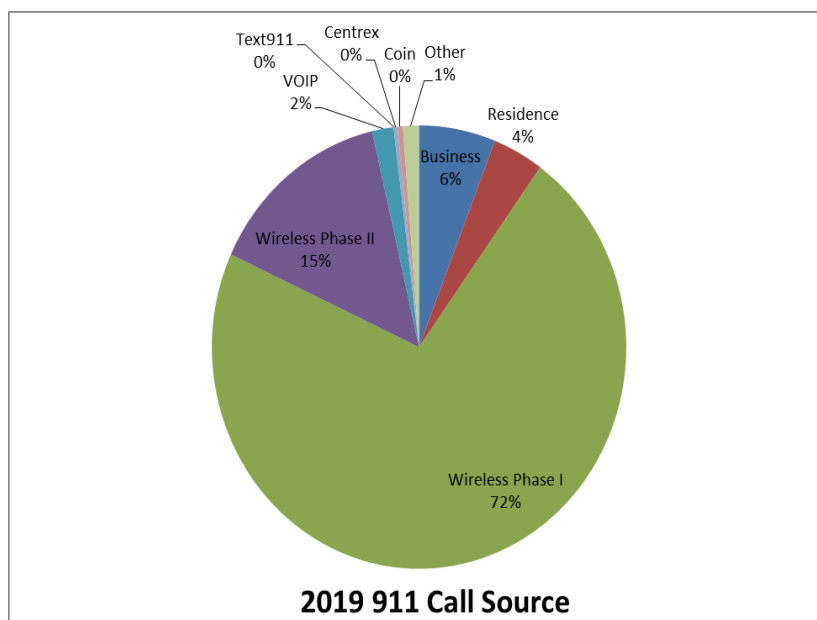


Grand Forks PSAP processes calls 24 hours per day. During certain times, however, a greater number of incoming calls can be anticipated. This information is used to maintain sufficient staffing levels throughout the 24 hour period. For a number of years, the peak time has consistently been shown to land between the hours of 3:00-5:00PM. As can be seen above, this remains the peak time, but it has widened to a larger time span, requiring more staff to process and dispatching incoming calls for service.

Scheduled events typically create more calls for service, which can increase minimum staffing. Unplanned events such as severe weather or large fires can sometimes create an overwhelming amount of 911 calls for staff; during these events supervisors make an effort to call additional personnel in to assist.

911 Call Source

As technology advances, the ability for citizens to contact the Grand Forks PSAP via 911 changes as well. A growing number of incoming calls is through wireless phones. Statistically, 87% of the 911 calls received were from cell phones. Grand Forks PSAP also receives 911 calls via Text to 911. In total, 81 calls were received via text to 911, with 24 used for training and testing.

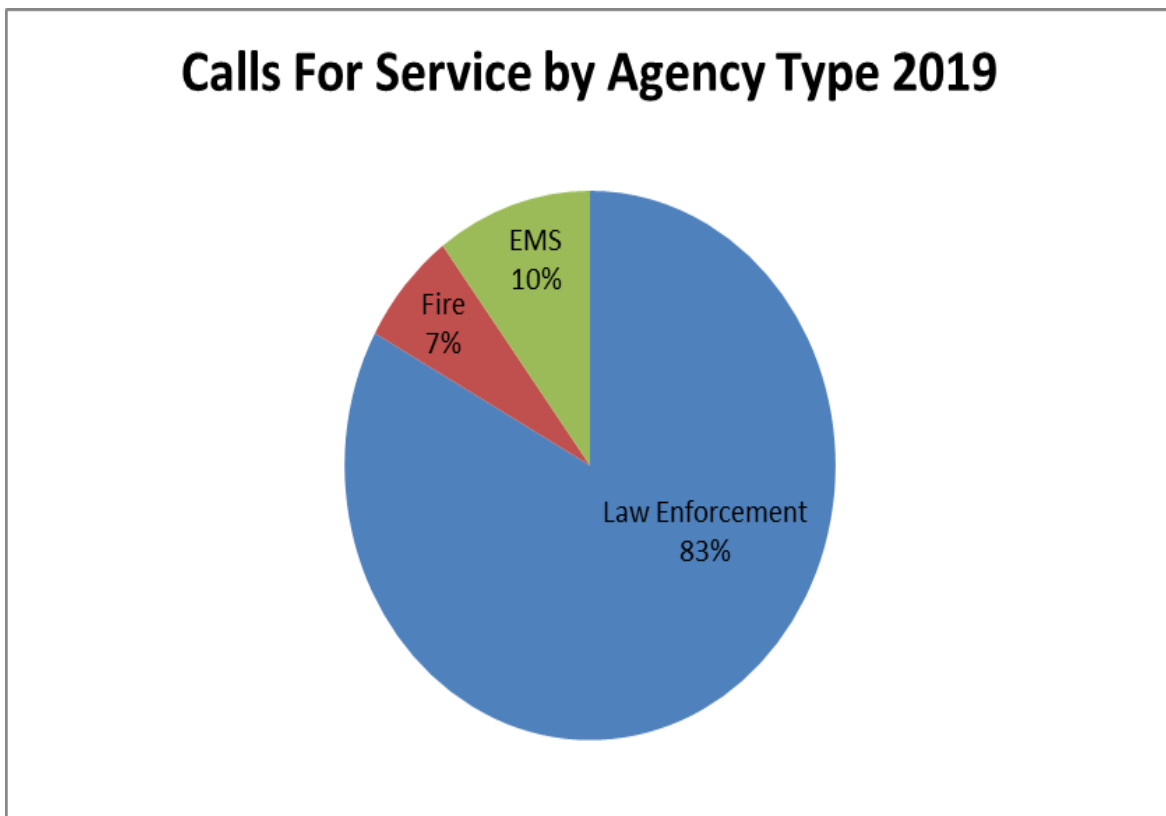


Other incoming 911 calls were received from various sources:

- Business lines – 6%
- Residence – 4%
- Voice over internet (VOIP) – 2%
- Source/No Record Found (NRF) – 2%
- Coin – less than 1%
- Centrex (central exchange) – less than 1%
- Text to 911 - less than 1%

Calls for Service – LE, Fire, EMS

Calls for service can be initiated via phone calls, radio communications, or other forms of reporting methods such as online reporting tools. Those that require response by Law Enforcement, Fire, or EMS are entered into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and responders are dispatched. The following data depicts the number of responses per discipline.



5 Year Calls for Service Totals

Over the past 5 years, responses to calls for service has increased at a steady rate for all disciplines, as can be seen below.

Agency	Dec-15	Dec-16	Dec-17	Dec-18	Dec-19
Grand Forks Police Dept.	40,901	46,307	46,887	49,147	47,401
Grand Forks Sheriff's Office	11,375	12,498	17,605	19,232	18,175
UND Police Dept.	8,088	7,080	7,021	8,419	10,189
Emerado Police Dept.	367	539	562	510	371
Larimore Police Dept.	-	-	-	-	-
Northwood Police Dept.	94	116	160	225	535
Thompson Police Dept.	202	365	389	356	229
Altru Ambulance	7,798	8,400	8,607	8,521	9,084
Larimore Ambulance	192	227	247	257	231
Northwood Ambulance	183	187	165	149	178
Grand Forks AFB	9	9	6	5	4
Emerado Fire Dept..	116	94	118	114	77
Fordville Fire Dept.	-	3	2	1	1
Grand Forks Fire Dept.	4,597	5,131	5,239	5,170	5,660
Hatton Fire Dept.	2	2	1	5	3
Inkster Fire Dept.	10	4	14	8	6
Gilby Fire Dept.	40	24	35	29	26
Michigan Ambulance	-	-	-	-	-
Larimore Fire Dept.	81	88	151	178	157
Manvel Fire Dept.	69	66	86	69	46
Northwood Fire Dept.	58	76	78	74	92
Oslo Fire Dept.	3	-	-	2	1
GF Airport Fire Dept.	32	52	52	49	58
Reynolds Fire Dept.	13	14	29	29	11
Thompson Fire Dept.	138	136	113	142	109
Niagara Fire Dept.	7	20	18	19	14
Dahlen Fire Dept.	-	-	-	2	1
Aneta Fire Dept.	-	-	1	3	2
Aneta Quick Response	-	-	1	1	-
Michigan Fire Dept.	-	-	-	4	-
	74,375	81,438	87,587	92,720	92,661

Law Enforcement Responses

Law Enforcement Agency Response 2019														
Agency	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	PERCENT
Grand Forks Police Dept.	3,389	3,069	3,758	4,138	4,131	4,237	4,676	3,999	4,148	3,934	3,972	3,950	47,401	51.155%
Grand Forks Sheriff's Office	1,232	1,100	1,458	1,498	1,565	1,580	1,973	1,869	1,562	1,487	1,415	1,436	18,175	19.615%
UND Police Dept.	992	872	793	785	809	599	795	961	1,136	905	865	677	10,189	10.996%
Emerado Police Dept.	26	28	41	39	45	39	21	23	28	17	32	32	371	0.400%
Northwood Police Dept.	36	16	29	34	32	27	20	8	119	74	75	65	535	0.577%
Thompson Police Dept.	12	18	26	23	29	5	24	20	19	14	18	21	229	0.247%
Totals	5,687	5,103	6,105	6,517	6,611	6,487	7,509	6,880	7,012	6,431	6,377	6,181	76,900	82.990%

Fire and EMS Responses

Fire and EMS Agency Response 2019														
Agency	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	PERCENT
Altru Ambulance	756	726	720	692	734	755	761	773	842	790	767	768	9,084	9.800%
Larimore Ambulance	13	18	20	11	28	30	23	15	12	17	22	22	231	0.249%
Northwood Ambulance	13	7	14	19	9	19	18	10	25	18	17	9	178	0.192%
Grand Forks AFB	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	0.004%
Emerado Fire Dept.	7	6	11	6	8	5	12	3	6	4	5	4	77	0.083%
Fordville Fire Dept.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.001%
Grand Forks Fire Dept.	485	507	483	435	454	414	482	441	514	493	425	527	5,660	6.108%
Hatton Fire Dept.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3	0.003%
Inkster Fire Dept.	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	6	0.006%
Gilby Fire Dept.	3	1	-	2	1	4	3	3	2	-	5	2	26	0.028%
Michigan Ambulance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.000%
Larimore Fire Dept.	7	11	12	12	20	15	19	8	4	17	16	16	157	0.169%
Manvel Fire Dept.	4	3	4	3	7	6	3	1	3	3	4	5	46	0.050%
Northwood Fire Dept.	5	3	8	9	4	8	13	3	13	11	8	7	92	0.099%
Oslo Fire Dept.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.001%
GF Airport Fire Dept.	6	5	4	5	5	6	2	7	6	4	3	5	58	0.063%
Reynolds Fire Dept.	2	2	1	1	1	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	11	0.012%
Thompson Fire Dept.	7	7	5	13	11	7	12	8	7	8	16	8	109	0.118%
Niagara Fire Dept.	-	-	-	1	-	4	3	1	2	1	1	1	14	0.015%
Dahlen Fire Dept.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	0.001%
Aneta Fire Dept.	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.002%
Aneta Quick Response	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.000%
Michigan Fire Dept.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.000%
Totals	1,312	1,298	1,282	1,212	1,284	1,273	1,351	1,277	1,440	1,368	1,290	1,375	15,761	17.004%

In closing, the Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point continues to see a growth in calls for service, and an expanded role in public safety as our roles and responsibilities continue to grow and support those in need.

2020 Mission, Values, and Goals

PSAP Mission

“To provide excellent customer service through 9-1-1 and emergency communications to the citizens and visitors of Grand Forks County and the cities therein for immediate and direct access to Fire, Police, and Medical Services. “

PSAP Vision

“When situations are at their worst, we strive to do our best for the safety of the community and agencies we serve. “

PSAP Values

Safety and service are our top priorities, and we are committed to preserve our Mission and Vision by maintaining these core values that guide our work and decisions:

Integrity

- ≈ Remain diligent in performance of occupational duties
- ≈ Seek to maintain highest standard of personal practices and maintain the integrity of dispatch
- ≈ Avoid any conduct that would put responders or public in harm's way

Leadership

- ≈ Continually seek to maintain and improve professional knowledge, skill, and competence

Teamwork

- ≈ Maintain honorable working relations with peers and all agencies we serve

Stewardship

- ≈ Endeavor to put the needs and safety of the public above our own professional ambitions
- ≈ Continue to look for ways to improve performance and services

We are committed to meeting Today's Public Safety Information Needs and Planning for Tomorrow's Challenges!

PSAP Goals

Our goal is to provide exceptional service in a manner that fosters working relationships, builds trust, and meets our expectations and as a strong pillar of the Emergency Response Team. We will try to exceed the expectations of our community and agencies we serve by cultivating and accomplishing the following:

Personnel

- Recruit, hire, and retain qualified personnel while maintaining efficient personnel management practices
- Ensure staffing levels meet department requirements during regular and critical times
- With this in mind, outgoing years we are looking at 1 dispatcher per year over the next 3 years, depending on continued calls for service volumes.
- Add a Regional Radio Systems Coordinator to manage transition as well as ongoing system maintenance.

Excellence

- Provide reliable, timely, accurate information and services

Community & Public Relations

- Enhance and maintain communications with all response agencies and the public

Advanced Technology and Future Development

- Enhance and maintain system operations, including evolving technology
 - Statewide Interoperable Radio Network (SIRN) implementation
 - Radio Console Upgrade
 - Conversion from VHF to 800 MHZ statewide platform
 - Work with Fire for Station Alerting migration
 - Work with responders throughout the county for a migration plan to new system
 - Radio Systems Coordinator could be instrumental with the heavy workload a major communications project entails.
 - GIS Improvements
 - State GIS Integration
 - Master Street Address Guide Integration
 - Map Validation Improvement via CAD/MSAG Alarm Response Enhancement – automation of alarm notification directly into CAD – (ASAP to PSAP) – target 2021
 -
- Training & Public Education
 - Host Training for Personnel and the Region
 - Develop Continuing Education Program for Personnel
 - Continue QA/QC on APCO Card system for LE, Fire, EMS Questioning Protocols
 - Gain Accreditation through APCO – target 2021
 - Migrate to a database version of APC Protocols (Intellicom) – 2020 or 2021
 - Provide ongoing information to the communities about our profession and our industry
 - Work towards adoption of federal policy with OMB re-classification for dispatch staff.
- Continue prudent fiscal policies for efficient use of resources balanced with growing needs
- Comply with federal, state, and local requirements

Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point Contact Information:

122 South 5th St, Grand Forks, ND 58201

24-hour Non-Emergency Number: 701-746-2542

- Becky Ault, Director

bault@grandforksgov.com

701-787-8042

- Shannon LaHaise, Center Supervisor

slahaise@grandforksgov.com

701-787-8040

- Debbie Hoverson, Administrative Specialist, Senior

dhoverson@grandforksgov.com

701-787-8039

Grand Forks Public Safety Answering Point Web Link:

<http://www.grandforksgov.com/government/city-departments/public-safety-answering-point-psap-808>

Additional Web Links:

National Emergency Number Association (NENA) Standards:

<https://www.nena.org/page/Standards>

NDCC 57-40.6-10 <http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t57c40-6.pdf>

North Dakota Statewide Interoperable Radio Network: <https://www.nd.gov/itd/statewide-alliances/siec/sirn-2020>