

Intro. Res. No. 1325-2014  
Introduced by Legislators Trotta, Stern, Muratore and Hahn

Laid on Table 4/29/2014

**RESOLUTION NO. 618 -2014, ADOPTING LOCAL LAW  
NO. 21 -2014, A LOCAL LAW TO ENSURE ACCESS TO  
EMERGENCY SERVICES VIA TELEPHONE**

**WHEREAS**, there was duly presented and introduced to this County Legislature at a meeting held on April 29, 2014, a proposed local law entitled, "**A LOCAL LAW TO ENSURE ACCESS TO EMERGENCY SERVICES VIA TELEPHONE**"; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that said local law be enacted in form as follows:

**LOCAL LAW NO. 21 -2014, SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK**

**A LOCAL LAW TO ENSURE ACCESS TO EMERGENCY SERVICES VIA  
TELEPHONE**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF THE COUNTY OF  
SUFFOLK**, as follows:

**Section 1. Legislative Intent.**

This Legislature hereby finds and determines that the County of Suffolk strives to protect the health and safety of County residents and visitors to the County.

This Legislature further finds and determines that 911 is the United States' universal emergency assistance line.

This Legislature finds that many telephone systems for hotels, motels and businesses require that a user dial an additional number to obtain an outside line.

This Legislature determines that persons unfamiliar with such a telephone system will be unable to reach emergency services in a crisis, which can lead to disastrous results.

This Legislature also finds that, on December 1, 2013, Kari Hunt was fatally attacked in a Texas hotel by her estranged husband.

This Legislature further finds that Kari's 9 year old daughter tried calling 911 during the struggle, but was unable to make a connection because she didn't realize she needed to first dial 9 for an outside line.

This Legislature also determines that tragic stories like Kari's illustrate the necessity of having multi-line telephone systems that directly dial 911 without delay.

This Legislature further determines that experts on multi-line telephone systems state that direct dial 911 service can be provided in most systems through updating of software.

This Legislature further finds that the County should ensure that hotels, motels and businesses that are open to the general public allow for direct dialing of 911.

This Legislature also finds that all businesses and schools should be encouraged to update their multi-line telephone systems to allow direct dialing of 911 to protect the health and safety of their employees.

Therefore, the purpose of this law is to require all multi-line telephone systems operated by a hotel, motel or covered business that is open to the general public within Suffolk County directly dial 911 without the use of access codes.

## **Section 2. Definitions.**

As used in this law, the following terms shall have the meaning indicated:

“COVERED BUSINESS” shall mean any partnership, joint venture, club, corporation or other form of business organization which opens its facilities to the general public for the sale and purchase of goods or services.

“HOTEL OR MOTEL” shall mean an establishment which is regularly used and kept open as such in a bonafide manner for the feeding and lodging of guests, where all who conduct themselves properly and who are able and ready to pay for such services are received if there are accommodations for them. This term shall include a tourist cabin, camp, resort, tavern, inn, boarding house, lodging house or any other establishment comparable or equivalent to any of those previously mentioned.

“MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM” shall mean any system comprised of common control unit(s), telephone sets, control hardware and software, and adjunct systems which enables users to make and receive telephone calls using shared resources such as telephone network trunks or data link bandwidth. This term includes, but is not limited to, network-based and premises-based systems such as Centrex service, premises-based, hosted and cloud-based VoIP, as well as PBX, Hybrid and Key Telephone Systems, as classified by the FCC under Part 68 of its rules.

## **Section 3. Requirements.**

A. All hotels, motels and covered businesses which operate a multi-line telephone system in the County of Suffolk shall configure said system to allow any call to 911 on the system to be directly connected to a public safety answering point without the use of an access code.

B. All hotels, motels and covered businesses which operate a multi-line telephone system in the County of Suffolk shall ensure that the configuration of said system will also allow any call made on their system where the system's existing access code is dialed prior to dialing 911 be directly connected to a public safety answering point.

C. When feasible, without improving system hardware, all hotels, motels and covered businesses shall configure their multi-line telephone system to provide notification of any 911 call made on its system to a centralized location on the same site as the system.

## **Section 4. Exemptions.**

The requirements set forth in Section 3 of this law shall not apply to any hotel, motel or covered business that would be required to upgrade the hardware of its telephone network to

meet said requirements. However, these exempted entities shall be required to place an instructional sticker on or immediately adjacent to each telephone informing users of the phone's inability to directly dial 911 and the procedures to follow in case of an emergency. Each instructional sticker shall be printed in bold, easy to read font in a contrasting color with a minimum print size of 16 point font.

#### **Section 5. Enforcement.**

The Department of Labor, Licensing and Consumer Affairs is hereby authorized to enforce this law.

#### **Section 6. Penalties.**

A. Violation of this local law shall be punishable by a fine of \$250 for an initial offense, with a fine of \$500 for any second or subsequent offenses. Each violation shall be a separate and distinct offense.

B. No fine shall be imposed until after a hearing is held by the Commissioner of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Consumer Affairs where the alleged violator shall have the opportunity to be heard.

#### **Section 7. Applicability.**

This law shall apply to all actions occurring on or after the effective date of this law.

#### **Section 8. Severability.**

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this law or the application thereof to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this law, or in its application to the person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such order or judgment shall be rendered.

#### **Section 9. SEQRA Determination.**

This Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this law constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(20), (21), and/or (27) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW as a promulgation of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, and legislative decisions in connection with continuing agency administration, management and information collection. The Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this law.

**Section 10 Effective Date.**

This law shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth (180) day immediately subsequent to filing in the Office of the Secretary of State.

DATED: July 29, 2014

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone  
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: August 12, 2014

After a public hearing duly held on August 11, 2014  
Filed with the Secretary of State on September 16, 2014