COUNTY OF OAKLAND
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

MICHAEL J. BOUCHARD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FULLY LAUNCHES
TEXT TO 911 SERVICE

February 4, 2015 (Oakland County, Mich.) - In 2014, Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard directed his Operations Center to ensure equal access to 911 services was provided throughout Oakland County for those in the hearing and speech impaired communities, or for those who are in a situation that does not allow them to safely dial 911. With the emergence of new technologies including SMS messaging or "texting", traditional 911 services need to continually be updated and integrated with the digital capabilities of smart phones.

On February 1, 2015, Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard implemented a new Text to 911 fully implemented program at the Oakland County Sheriff's Office's Operations Center. The Sheriff's Office deployed the technology throughout Oakland County to all residents, business owners, and visitors to the county. Local Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's) will be provided with caller information to coordinate police, medical, and fire services.

"We are encouraging residents to call when they can and text when they can't," said Sheriff Michael Bouchard. "With the rapidly changing technology on the market, we want to ensure that Oakland County has the capabilities to offer the most current service to keep our communities safe, especially in cases where it may be prohibitive to dial 911."

Dispatchers need valuable information, most importantly, a person's location, as texting does not currently have the ability to accurately identify a person's location through texting. At this time only Verizon Wireless, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint customers can text to 911. Additionally, only cellular phones with data plans that allow for texting can use this service. Once Next Generation 911 (NG 911) is fully implemented in two (2) to three (3) years Text to 911 will be able to be directed to all local PSAP's in Oakland County.

Text to 911 should only be used for emergencies.

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