

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
BROOKE PINTO, CHAIR

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON

**Operations of the Office of Unified Communications' 911 Call Center and
Bill 25-344, the Office the United Communications Transparency and Accuracy Act of 2023**

Thursday, October 5, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.
Room 123, John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

To watch live:

Councilmember Pinto's Youtube Page (www.youtube.com/@cmbrookepinto)
DC Council Website (dccouncil.gov)

On Thursday, October 5, 2023, Councilmember Brooke Pinto, Chairwoman of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, will hold a hearing on Operations of the Office of Unified Communications' 911 Call Center and Bill 25-344, Office of Unified Communications Transparency and Accuracy Amendment Act of 2023. Chairwoman Pinto invites the public to testify with ideas for improvements to the call center. The hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Room 123 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004. The hearing will also be streamed live at dccouncil.gov and www.youtube.com/@cmbrookepinto.

In recent years, significant concerns have been raised regarding the operations of the District's 911 call center. The Committee has received regular reports of dispatch errors, dropped or missed calls, inconsistent adherence to agency protocols, and a range of other issues that have impacted the ability of District first responders to respond to calls for emergency services in an accurate and timely manner. In addition to the direct effect these errors have on the health and safety of individuals calling 911 for help, these errors have eroded public trust in the reliability and responsivity of our 911 and emergency response systems in the event of an emergency. In response to these concerns, in 2021, the District of Columbia Auditor issued an audit report of the operations of the District's 911 call center and emergency response systems. That audit identified a number of areas in which the Office of Unified Communications' ("OUC") emergency call-taking and dispatch operations deviated from national standards and best practices and included thirty-one recommendations to address these deficiencies. To date, less than a third of those recommendations have been implemented.

The Committee invites testimony at the hearing on the operations of the District's 911 call center and emergency response systems. Specifically, the Committee seeks comments and recommendations from members of the public, public safety and emergency response system experts, and other stakeholders on strategies for OUC, the Mayor, and the Council to address errors and concerns with the 911 call center operations.

The Committee also seeks testimony on Bill 25-344, the Office of Unified Communications Transparency and Accuracy Amendment Act of 2023. That legislation establishes several important oversight mechanisms for the Office of Unified Communications ("OUC") in order to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accuracy of OUC operations. First, the bill would require

OUC to post data each month on the number of call-taker and dispatcher errors and the cause of those errors, the number of shifts operated under minimum staffing levels, call to answer times, the number of calls dropped, and the number and type of 911 misuse calls. The bill would also require OUC to collect and publicly post data each month on the agency's website regarding the number of 911 calls received that are eligible to be diverted to alternative responses, and the number of those eligible calls so diverted. These data reporting requirements, which the Council passed on emergency last July, will assist the Council and residents in tracking performance at OUC and in better understanding the issues contributing to recent agency errors.

In addition, Bill 25-344 would add a representative from OUC to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board to help ensure that OUC is up to date on needs of victims of domestic violence who may use the District's 911 service, as well as training for call-takers and dispatchers to identify callers experiencing domestic violence. Last, the bill would update the District's 311 system to allow residents to submit service requests for porous flexible pavement sidewalk repairs, leaf collection, neighborhood quality of life issues related to business alcohol sales, and maintenance to electrical wires, utility poles, and fire hydrants.

The Committee invites the public to testify. Those who wish to do so must register using the Council's Hearing Management System at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/hearings> by **9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 4, 2023**. Those who represent organizations will have 5 minutes to speak. All other witnesses will have 3 minutes to speak. **Witnesses will have the option to testify in person or virtually**; witnesses should specify which option they are electing at the time they sign up to testify.

Witnesses who anticipate needing spoken language interpretation, or who require sign language interpretation, are requested to inform the Committee office of the need as soon as possible, but no later than 5 business days before the proceeding. We will make every effort to fulfill timely requests, although alternatives may be offered. Requests may be submitted via the Hearing Management System during registration or by contacting Ms. Aukima Benjamin, Committee Manager to the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, at (202) 724-8058 or via e-mail at judiciary@dccouncil.gov. Requests received less than 5 business days before the proceeding may not be fulfilled. Witnesses will receive instructions on how to participate by Zoom prior to the hearing. If you have additional questions, please contact the Committee Manager at the phone number or e-mail listed above.

If you are unable to testify at the public hearing, written statements are encouraged and will be made a part of the official record; written testimony should be submitted through the Council's Hearing Management System at <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/hearings>. Testimony will be publicly accessible following Committee review. The public may also leave voicemail testimony for the Committee by calling (202) 630-7585, which will be transcribed and made part of the hearing record. Members of the public leaving voicemail testimony should speak slowly and clearly, state their full name and the organization they represent, if any, and note the bill, hearing, or agency that they are submitting testimony on. For privacy purposes, members of the public are asked to not provide an e-mail, phone number, or other personal contact information in voicemail testimony.

The record will close at the end of the business day on October 19, 2023.