

ALABAMA STATEWIDE NINE-ONE-ONE BOARD
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 585-X-5
PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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585-X-5-.01 **General Provisions.**

(1) Definitions.

(a) **Act** means Alabama Act 2022-387 for the purposes of Rule 585-X-5.

(b) **Call or 911 Call** means any request for public safety assistance that the PSAP is equipped to receive, without regard to the media used to make that request; provided, however, that the term may appear in conjunction with specific media, including voice call, video call, text call, or data-only call, when the specific media is of importance.

(c) **Certified** means an entity or individual that completes the certification program and maintains certification requirements.

(d) **Date of hire** means the start date of work as documented in a telecommunicator's personnel record.

(e) **District** means a communications district as defined by Code of Ala. 1975, §11-98-1 et. Seq., as amended.

(f) **Emergency Service Provider** means an agency of the State of Alabama, or a political subdivision thereof, that provides firefighting, rescue, natural or man-caused disaster, or major emergency response, public safety telecommunication and dispatch, law enforcement, ambulance, or emergency medical services. The term also includes private ambulance services.

(g) **Exigent circumstance** means a crisis situation that may arise in a primary PSAP, without adequate planning notice, in which the 9-1-1 calls cannot be managed without using a non-

participating public safety telecommunicator, or otherwise uncertified personnel.

(h) **First Responder** means an individual who rapidly receives and responds to emergency situations to protect life and property. The term includes law enforcement officers, fire fighters, rescue squads, emergency medical service providers, public safety telecommunicators, and any other emergency management providers responding to an emergency situation.

(i) **Force Majeure Event** means an event that is a result of Acts of Nature (including fire, flood, earthquake, storm, hurricane or other natural disaster), war, invasion, act of foreign enemies, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), civil war, rebellion, revolution, insurrection, military or usurped power or confiscation, terrorist activities, nationalization, government sanction, blockage, embargo, labor dispute, strike, lockout or interruption or failure of power sources not due to the fault of the affected party.

(j) **Internal training** means training that is specific to a primary PSAP and may be used toward the minimum training hours or continuing education credits for certification as approved by the Board.

(k) **Leave of absence** means a period of time that a telecommunicator is absent from work, during regularly scheduled work time and that is approved by the employing agency.

(l) **Non-participating** means an entity or individual that fails to participate in the certification program or fails to maintain certification requirements.

(m) **Public Safety Answering Point or PSAP** means an entity responsible for receiving 911 calls and processing those calls according to a specific operational policy.

(n) **Public Safety Telecommunicator or PST** means a person employed by a public safety answering point or emergency service provider as a public safety dispatcher or 911 operator whose duties and responsibilities include both of the following:

1. Answering, receiving, transferring, and dispatching functions related to 911 calls and texts.
2. Dispatching first responders to the scene of an emergency.

(o) **Public Safety Telecommunicator (or PST) Trainee** means either of the following:

1. A person hired as a telecommunicator not more than 12 months before the effective date of these rules.
2. A person hired after the effective date of these rules who has not completed the requirements of these rules.

(p) **Non-affiliated Public Safety Telecommunicator or PST** means a person certified as a public safety telecommunicator by the Board but not currently employed by a public safety answering point or emergency service provider to act as a public safety dispatcher or 911 operator whose duties and responsibilities include both of the following:

1. Answering, receiving, transferring, and dispatching functions related to 911 calls and texts.
2. Dispatching first responders to the scene of an emergency.

(q) **Non-affiliated PST Trainee** means a person not currently employed by a public safety answering point or emergency service provider to act as a telecommunicator but is enrolled in a public safety telecommunicator certification program approved by the Board.

(2) Certification Authority. The Alabama 911 Board shall have the authority to establish a certification program to train and certify public safety telecommunicators employed by a primary PSAP receiving 911 calls, including establishing minimum core competency topics and minimum number of training hours, deciding whether a written examination is required, and any necessary certification requirements, to the extent funds are available to cover all costs for the training established by the board. The board may establish rules for enforcement of those PSAPs that fail to participate in the certification program. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the training and certification requirements of the Board shall not apply to any public safety telecommunicator employed by the state or an agency or department thereof.

(3) Applicability.

(a) The following shall comply with the provision of these rules no later than 360 days from July 1, 2022:

1. The Alabama 911 Board.
2. All primary Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) receiving 911 calls.
3. All new and existing public safety telecommunicators of an Alabama primary PSAP.

4. All Emergency Communication Districts that act as primary PSAPs or otherwise provides resources to the operation of primary PSAPs.

(b) The Board, as authorized in Code of Ala. 1975, §11-98-4.1, shall create rules and implement procedures as needed to carry out these rules.

Author: Leah Missildine/Alabama 911 Board

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§11-98-4.1.

History: New Rule: Published August 31, 2022; effective October 15, 2022.

585-X-5-.02 Certification Program Requirements.

(1) Administration Requirements.

(a) These rules identify the minimum standards and performance requirements necessary or applicable to the respective certification.

(b) The purpose of these rules and standards is to specify the minimum requirements for a certification approved by the Board. It is not the intent of these rules and standards to restrict any jurisdiction from exceeding these requirements.

(c) All certification requirements shall be performed safely, promptly, securely, competently, and in its entirety.

(2) General Requirements.

(a) Coursework shall be delivered by in-person instruction, virtually, or any other method as may be approved by the Board from time-to-time.

(b) In-person courses may have a minimum initial enrollment set by the Board.

(3) Enrollment Requirements.

(a) Prior to enrolling in a certification course, the Trainee shall meet the Enrollment Requirements as adopted by the affiliated agency or the Board.

(b) The Board reserves the right to reject any application or reapplication of persons who do not meet the requirements of the Board.

(4) Instructor Requirements.

(a) Coursework must be taught by an instructor who has been certified or approved by the Board as an Instructor.

(b) An Instructor Application shall be created and amended from time to time by the Board based upon minimum standards as set forth in the Application.

(c) In order to be considered for approval, an applicant must first submit a fully completed Application and resume' to the Executive Director.

(5) Testing and Proficiency Requirements.

(a) Course Assessments. Course assessments as approved by the Board shall be administered to the Trainee at the end of each subject area of the coursework. The Trainee must achieve a minimum of 70% on each end-of-subject assessment.

(b) Certification Examinations.

1. Certification examinations will be administered in a method approved by the Board from time to time.

2. An overall score of 70% is required for the successful completion of these examinations unless otherwise allowed by these Rules.

3. Re-test may be taken up to two times in a 12-month period from the date of the original examination failure and within 12 months of course completion.

(6) Reciprocity Requirements. An individual who holds a valid certificate issued by another state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. Territory, or any other 911 entity as recognized by the Board may seek certification from the Board.

(7) Participation Requirements.

(a) It shall be the responsibility of the District having jurisdiction over primary PSAPs to ensure compliance with these rules.

(b) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) shall be mandatory to maintain certification.

(8) Penalties.

(a) Penalties shall be imposed for Districts that are noncompliant and notice of noncompliance shall be provided to the District by the Board. Upon notice of noncompliance, the District's failure to return to compliance will result in some of the District's funding eligibility being forfeited.

(b) For good cause shown, the Board reserves the right to waive any requirement imposed by these rules.

Author: Leah Missildine/Alabama 911 Board

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§11-98-4.1.

History: New Rule: Published August 31, 2022; effective October 15, 2022. **Amended:** Published July 31, 2023; effective September 14, 2023. **Amended:** Published November 27, 2024; effective January 11, 2025. **Amended:** Published December 31, 2025; effective February 14, 2026.

585-X-5-.03 Exceptions And Exigent Circumstances.

(1) The training and certification requirements of this section shall not apply to any public safety telecommunicator employed by the state or an agency or department thereof.

(2) Nothing in these rules shall preclude a primary PSAP's authority from using whatever reasonable resources are available to perform public safety telecommunicator duties in an exigent circumstance.

(3) The Board reserves the right to issue an exception to any requirement imposed by these rules in the event of exigent circumstances or a force majeure event.

Author: Leah Missildine/Alabama 911 Board

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§11-98-4. 1.

History: New Rule. Published August 31, 2022; effective October 15, 2022. **Amended:** Published July 31, 2023; effective September 14, 2023.

585-X-5-.04 Certified Alabama Public Safety Telecommunicator-1.

(1) General Purposes.

(a) This rule identifies the certification requirements necessary or applicable for the Alabama Public Safety Telecommunicator-1 (or ALPST-1) certification.

(b) The purpose of this rule is to specify the minimum training requirements to perform the duties of a public safety telecommunicator. It is not the intent of these rules and standards to restrict any District or jurisdiction from exceeding these requirements.

(c) The objective of this rule is to ensure that the certified PST coursework consists of specific knowledge and skill objectives adopted by the Board based on the National 911 Program's Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines that identify the minimum topics to be included in any telecommunicator training program.

(2) Enrollment.

(a) Prior to enrolling in public safety telecommunicator certification courses, PST Trainees shall meet the enrollment requirements as adopted by the affiliated agency's certification program or the Board.

(b) Individuals hired on or after July 1, 2022, shall have 180 days from their date of hire to be enrolled in the certification process, but shall be allowed to perform the duties of a public safety telecommunicator without certification until the expiration of the 180-day period.

(c) ALPST-1 Trainees shall complete ALPST-1 certification within 180 days of their date of hire.

(d) ALPST-1 Trainees shall be reported to the Board within 30 days of their date of hire. ALPST-1s that become non-affiliated shall be reported to the Board within 30 days.

(e) The Board reserves the right to reject any application or reapplication for enrollment.

(3) Minimum Number of Training Hours. An ALPST-1 Trainee for this level of certification shall have completed 40 hours of training on the topics listed in the most recent version of the Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines for Public Safety Telecommunicators facilitated by the National 911 Office.

(4) Continuing Education Units (CEUs). A minimum of 12 CEUs per 12-month period shall be mandatory to maintain PST-1 certification.

Author: Leah Missildine

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§11-98-4.1.

History: New Rule: Published August 31, 2022; effective October 15, 2022. **Amended:** Published July 31, 2023; effective September 14, 2023. **Amended:** Published November 27, 2024; effective January 11, 2025.