



PUBLIC NOTICE

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY BUREAU SEEKS INFORMATION ON EFFECTS OF JANUARY 2026 VERIZON OUTAGE ON WIRELESS SERVICE CONSUMERS, PUBLIC SAFETY ENTITIES, AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

PS Docket No. 26-21

Comment Date: March 16, 2026

On January 14, 2026, Verizon Communications (Verizon) suffered a service outage that lasted at least ten hours and affected millions of customers, many of whom were unable to make and receive calls and text messages over Verizon's wireless network.¹ According to media reports, many customers observed their handsets were in "SOS mode" during the outage.²

To enable a thorough and accurate investigation and analysis of this outage, the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (Bureau) has opened a docket and invites interested parties to provide all relevant information concerning the effects of the outage, particularly on 911 calling and public safety.

We seek comment from the public on the outage's impact on individual and enterprise consumers. Were consumers of Verizon's wireless service able to successfully make or receive calls? Were consumers of other communications service providers able to successfully complete calls to Verizon customers? Were consumers' text messages successfully sent or received? Did Verizon customers experience a disruption of data services? For subscribers who lost access to mobile voice and data service, how long did the loss of service last? Were consumers whose handsets were in SOS mode able to call 911? Did any harm or injury result from a consumer's inability to reach 911 during the outage?³

The Bureau also seeks information about Verizon's handling of the outage and the outage's impact. How did consumers learn about the outage? Was Verizon's public communication about the outage appropriate, timely, and effective? What effect did the outage have on businesses and providers of critical services, such as hospitals? What effect did the outage have on consumers' ability to contact emergency services, ability to contact family members, and personal activities?

We also seek comment on the effect of the outage on public sector entities (e.g., first responders

¹ See, e.g., Patience Haggin, *Verizon Resolves Hourslong, Widespread Outage*, (Jan. 14, 2026 10:56 pm), https://www.wsj.com/business/telecom/verizon-users-experience-outages-nationwide-f2d7ee31?mod=article_inline.

² See, e.g., Lily Hay Newman, *Verizon Outage Knocks Out US Mobile Service, Including Some 911 Calls*, (Jan. 14, 2026 1:54 pm), <https://www.wired.com/story/verizon-outage-knocks-out-us-mobile-service-including-some-911-calls/>.

³ See, e.g., Amanda Yeo, *Verizon outage may have impacted 911 calls*, (Jan. 14, 2026), <https://mashable.com/article/verizon-outage-911-down-call-emergency> (describing an emergency during the outage where a Verizon customer was unable to call 911 and relied on a customer of another provider to complete the 911 call).

and state and local governments). What was the effect of the outage on public safety activities and government services? Was there a disruption of voice or data services (including prioritized services) relied on by public safety entities and state and local governments?

We further seek comment on the outage as it relates to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). Are there estimates of how many 911 calls were attempted, and whether any of these calls failed or were otherwise affected by the outage? Did PSAPs receive 911 calls originated on Verizon's wireless network during this outage? If so, were those calls accompanied by Automatic Number Identification (ANI) and Automatic Location Identification (ALI) information? What challenges did PSAPs face in handling these calls and quickly dispatching emergency assistance? For those PSAPs that are capable of receiving text messages sent to 911, did the outage disrupt the receipt of those text messages or the sending of texts in reply? Did Verizon provide timely, actionable notification about the outage? If not, how did PSAPs learn of the outage? If timely, actionable information about this outage was not received, what effect did this have on the availability of 911 call-handling resources to the public? What measures, if any, did PSAPs take to maintain the public's continuity of access to emergency services? How effective were these measures?

Interested parties may submit comments by following the filing instructions below. Commenters may also send a description of their experience to VerizonOutage2026@fcc.gov.

Procedural Matters

Ex Parte Rules. In the interest of facilitating the Commission's ability to conduct a thorough investigation, this proceeding shall be treated as exempt in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.⁴ Accordingly, *ex parte* presentations to or from Commission decision-making personnel are permissible and need not be disclosed.

Filing Requirements. Interested parties may file comments in response to this Public Notice on or before March 16, 2026.⁵

- *Electronic Filers:* Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs>.
- *Paper Filers:* Parties filing by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing.
 - Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial courier, or by the U.S. Postal Service. **All filings must be addressed to the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.**
 - Hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary are accepted between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. by the FCC's mailing contractor at 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes and boxes must be disposed of before entering the building.
 - Commercial courier deliveries (any deliveries not by the U.S. Postal Service) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
 - Filings sent by U.S. Postal Service First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Priority Mail Express must be sent to 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554.

Materials in Accessible Formats. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call

⁴ See 47 CFR § 1.1200(a) ("Where the public interest so requires in a particular proceeding, the Commission and its staff retain the discretion to modify the applicable *ex parte* rules by order, letter, or public notice.").

⁵ See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121-01 (1998).

the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530.

Additional Information. For further information regarding this proceeding, contact Jeanne Stockman, Cybersecurity and Communications Reliability Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, at (202) 418-7830 or jeanne.stockman@fcc.gov.

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