



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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OKLAHOMA CARRIER FINED \$100,000 FOR FAILING TO DIRECT 911 CALLS TO LOCAL EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Message Instructed 911 Callers to “Hang Up and Dial 911” to Report an Emergency

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission fined Hinton Telephone Company \$100,000 after an investigation showed that the carrier failed to direct 911 calls to local emergency responders. The investigation, led by the FCC’s Enforcement Bureau, showed that Hinton routed emergency 911 calls for customers in Oklahoma to an automated operator message that directed callers to “hang up and dial 911” to report an emergency.

“The American public universally relies upon 911 in a time of crisis,” said Travis LeBlanc, Chief of the Enforcement Bureau. “It is unacceptable for any company to put the health and safety of the public at risk by sending 911 calls to voicemail or an automated message.”

Under the Commission’s rules, providers have an obligation to route 911 calls to a public safety answering point or an appropriate local emergency authority. In May 2013, the Commission received a complaint that Hinton was not providing basic 911 service to its Caddo County, Oklahoma, customers. Hinton was aware of the problem for several months and did not fix it. Hinton only began routing 911 calls directly to local emergency responders after FCC investigators demanded that they do so.

Today’s order finds that Hinton failed to use reasonable judgment when it knowingly routed 911 calls to an automated operator message—a message that instructed callers to “hang up and dial 911” to report an emergency and, only at the end of the long message, presented an option to press “0” to reach an operator. The Enforcement Bureau assessed a \$100,000 penalty for Hinton’s failure to route 911 calls to a public safety answering point or appropriate local emergency authority in 2013.

More information about the Commission’s rules regarding 911 is available at:
<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/9-1-1-and-e9-1-1-services>.

The Forfeiture Order is available at: https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-15-339A1.pdf.

The Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (August 2014) is available at:
<http://www.fcc.gov/document/100k-nal-oklahoma-carrier-sending-911-calls-autorecording>.