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For Immediate Release

FCC PROPOSES ACTION TO IMPROVE 911 RELIABILITY

WASHINGTON, April 22, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed rules to promote public safety by ensuring that 911 call centers and the public receive timely and useful notifications of network disruptions that affect 911 service. These notifications will help 911 call centers maintain emergency services and inform the public when to use alternatives to call 911.

One of the ways the Commission oversees the integrity of 911 communications infrastructure is by requiring service providers to report network outages to both the Commission and 911 call centers. At present, the Commission has different outage notification rules for providers that serve 911 call centers (covered 911 service providers) and the wireless, wireline, and VoIP providers that individuals use to call 911 (originating service providers). In a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted today, the Commission proposed to improve the framework for reporting network outages that potentially affect 911 service and harmonize many of the requirements, including the timeframe, means, and frequency of providing notification. The proposed rules would standardize the type of information conveyed in the notifications and ensure that it is clear and actionable.

The proposed rules would also require service providers to maintain accurate contact information for 911 call centers. In addition, the proposed rules would require service providers to notify potentially affected customers when 911 is unavailable by providing information on their websites and Internet-related applications, such as their mobile apps, within 60 minutes of discovering an outage affecting 911 service has occurred.

Action by the Commission April 22, 2021 by Third Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 21-45). Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

PS Docket Nos. 13-75, 15-80; ET Docket No. 04-35

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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).