



# Calls for Service Data 101

Calls for service to law enforcement agencies generally include calls to “911” for emergency assistance and may also include calls to non-emergency numbers. Generally, “311” data is not included in calls for service data, which is typically maintained in law enforcement computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems. As agencies make calls for service or CAD data available, consideration must be given to revealing information about sensitive crimes such as domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking; discouraging unauthorized persons from going to the scene of an incident; jeopardizing investigations; and managing the safety risks to officers. Nevertheless, calls for service and CAD data can be extremely useful in helping communities understand and visualize the demands for police service and how the agency responds. These data sets may also include “calls” that were initiated by the officers themselves, such as checking on a suspicious person or vehicle.

## Helpful Terms

**311** – Non-emergency calls that are not typically included in calls for service unless otherwise specified

**Beat** – Smaller assigned geographical areas among police agencies

**CAD** – Computer-aided dispatch; method of dispatching police following a call for service

**Calls for Service** – Call typically initiated by the public and relayed through the emergency telephone service (“911”) and dispatched to local police by a dispatcher

**Clearance** – A crime is cleared or “closed” either by arrest or exceptional means, such as identifying the offender but encountering a circumstance outside law enforcement control prohibiting arrest

**Incident** – A specific criminal act involving one or more victims and offenders

**Offense** – A crime

**Precinct/Sector/District** – Larger assigned geographical areas of distinction among police agencies

**Unit** – Smaller groups of police officers, often with a particular designation (i.e. highway patrol, gang intelligence, major case, etc.)



## BALTIMORE

The Baltimore Police Department calls for service data include emergency and non-emergency calls to 911, and is updated more than once per day. There are currently more than 2.8 million calls in the database. Variables captured include the following:

- Date and time of the call
- Priority (Low, Medium, High, Non-Emergency, Emergency, Out of Service, Missing)
- District
- Call number
- Description
- Incident location (address)
- Location (latitude & longitude)



## CINCINNATI

The Cincinnati Police Department calls for service data include all incidents reported to the PD (reactive incident calls), and is updated hourly. All address data is anonymized by block. There are currently more than 1.5 million calls in the database. Variables captured are:

- Event number
- Agency
- District
- Alarm level
- City
- Neighborhood
- Block begin & block end
- Street name
- Incident type (ID) (how many officers)
- Incident type (description)
- Incident type (alias)
- Date and time of incident
- Arrival time of primary unit
- Time of incident closing
- Time the primary unit was dispatched
- Time the primary unit was transmitted
- Time of phone pick-up
- Reporting district
- Status ID



## SEATTLE

The Seattle Police Department calls for service data shows all police response to 911 calls within the city, and is refreshed on a 4-hour interval. For security purposes, events are made public only after the incident is considered safe to close out. There are currently more than 1.4 million calls in the database. Variables captured are:

- CAD ID and Event Number
- General offense number
- Event clearance information (code, description, group and subgroup, date)
- Hundred block location
- District/sector
- Zone/beat
- Census tract
- Incident location (latitude & longitude)
- Initial type information (group and subgroup, description)
- At scene time