# IN FORCE911 POLICY & PROCEDURE

Issue Date: October 5, 2018

Effective Date: TBD

Revision Date:

## I.  PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for department personal in the use of In Force911.

## II.  POLICY

It is the policy of the Worcester Police Department to participate in the use of the In Force911 alert system, in partnership with the Worcester Public Schools to enhance our ability to protect the school populations within our community and by decreasing our response times when there is a call for help and to receive critical information about the incident in real time.

The philosophy driving this policy recognizes that a critical incident at one of our schools, such as an active shooter, must be stopped to negate or reduce the loss of innocent lives.  This will be the duty and responsibility of all responding officers.

## III. DEFINITIONS

**In Force911**:  An emergency notification software application that is installed at the local schools, the Worcester Police Dispatch center and in our cruiser MDT's, to allow rapid emergency alerts to be sent and received.  This software also allows for communication to occur between all parties in real time.

**In Force911 Activation**:  Any alert that is activated through the use of In Force911 from the school or other subscriber that is recognized as a call for help.  This activation may or may not include specific information about the nature of the emergency.

**Chat**: A feature of the software application is to allow for a "chat screen" to be opened by any party involved in the alert notification.  This chat screen gives

anyone involved the ability to send and receive typed messages, which are used to help pass on critical information to all parties involved.

**Reverse Alert**: A method by which the Worcester Police Department can send alerts to notify schools and other participating organizations of pending threats or other important issues affecting their building(s) or organization, as the threat/issue is discovered or reported.

# IV. PROCEDURE

The Operations Commander or his designee will be identified as the In Force911 coordinator and that person will be responsible for acting as a liaison with In Force911 and with the schools to insure that In Force911 is properly working. If any police employee experiences an issue with In Force911, they are to advise the Coordinator immediately.

All authorized officers who have been assigned a user account will be required to sign in to In Force911 on their cruiser MDT's at the beginning of every shift. Those officers and administrative staff that have In Force911 installed on their desktop computers at the station should be logged in to In Force911 at all times when logged in to a company computer.

All Police Personnel with department-issued cell phones may be ordered by the Chief of Police or his designee to install the In Force911 software application on their issued devices.

## A. Response to an In Force911 Alert

When the department receives an In Force911 alert activation, the patrol supervisor should request that any available unit (F1 or F2 depending on location) respond to the location of the call for help.

The Patrol Supervisor should begin working with Dispatch to ascertain if there is any specific information available about the event and determine if a School Resource Officer (SRO) is present at the alert location. If an SRO is on scene, immediate communication shall be established by Dispatch.

Dispatch should send a message to the activating location, acknowledging that the In Force911 activation was received. The message could be something as simple as, "Alert received Officers enroute." This will provide the activating location with confirmation of that the alert was received and that officers are on the way.

Information can be gathered by reviewing the In Force911 chat window, by calling the school's number and/or by calling the cell phone of the principal or other administrators that may be known.

Responding units should rely on Dispatch passing on any information that is received by way of the In Force911 chat screen. No officer should attempt to read the In Force911 chat screen while responding to the call.

If the only information available is that there has been an In Force911 Alert, and no other information can be gathered, all responding officers will respond to this as a critical call for help and respond in accordance with an Active Shooter response protocol. (Would like to have our active shooter experts develop this protocol and attach to this policy).

### B. <u>Confirming an Accidental In Force911 Alert</u>

There may be occasions where an In Force911 alert is activated in error from the school.

The Police Department and School Administrators will first establish that the alert was made in error and is not a true activation.

Once it is confirmed that the alert was made in error, Dispatch should communicate to all officers that it is believed the alert was sent in error. All responding officers should discontinue their emergency response and continue to the scene with traffic unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.

At least two officers and the Sector Sergeant should continue to the location of the activation to confirm the alert was made in error.

Upon their arrival, the officers on the scene should conduct an investigation to help dispel any concerns and to confirm that the alert was sent in error.

Once the investigation is complete and they have determined that the call was made in error, the Sector Sergeant shall notify Communication to end the alert.

If, at any time during this process, it cannot be confirmed that the alert was made in error, the officers on the scene should communicate that a full response is necessary in accordance with an Active Shooter response protocol.

### C. <u>Ongoing Training with In Force911</u>

It should be recognized by all parties that the use of In Force911 will only work through the collaborative efforts of the police department and the schools. To

that end, police and school officials should routinely meet to develop, establish, and review local defined expectations regarding school safety plans, police response plans, and how the use of In Force911 is part of those plans.

Police SRO's and school officials should plan and conduct drills using the In Force911 alert system every year as part of these efforts.

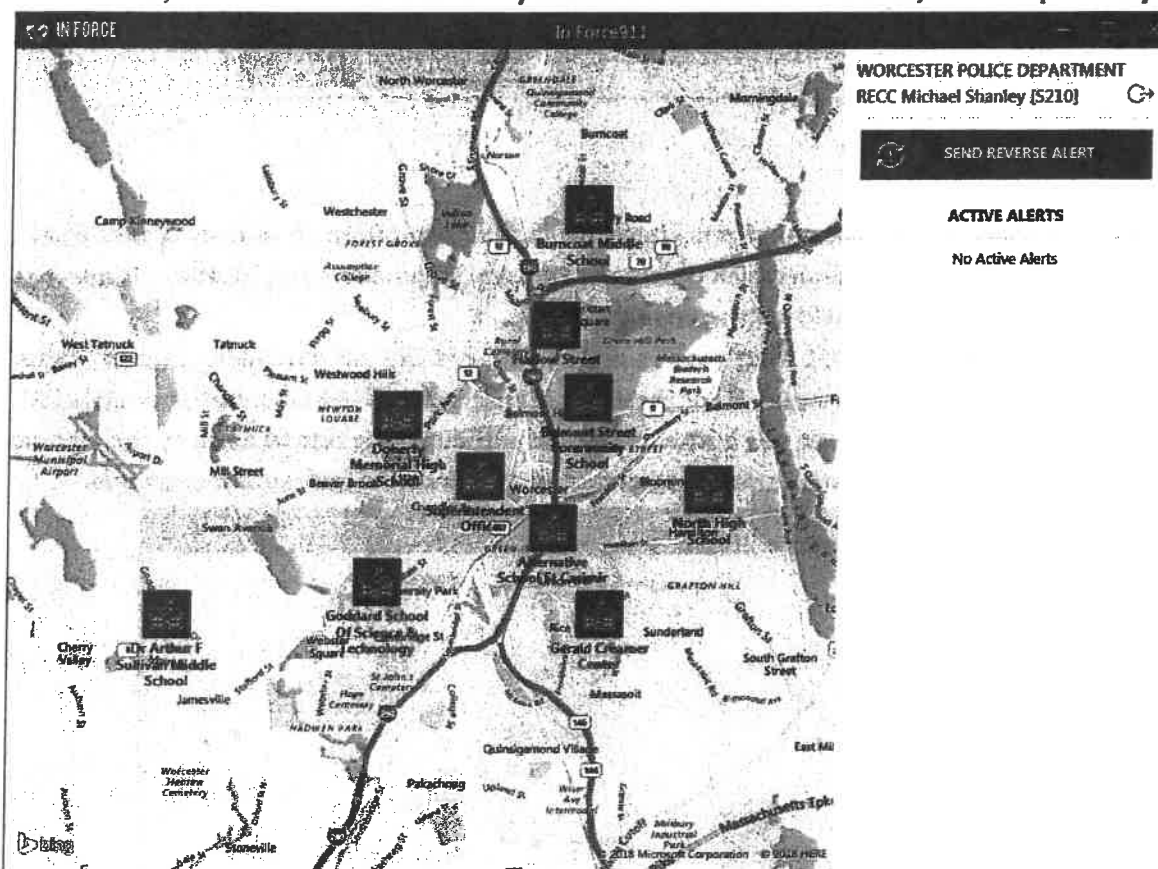# In Force911 user guide

ANNEX A
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## Logging in:

- **Click on the In Force911 icon on your desktop.**



- **Use the Username and Password provided to you in the email from In Force911**
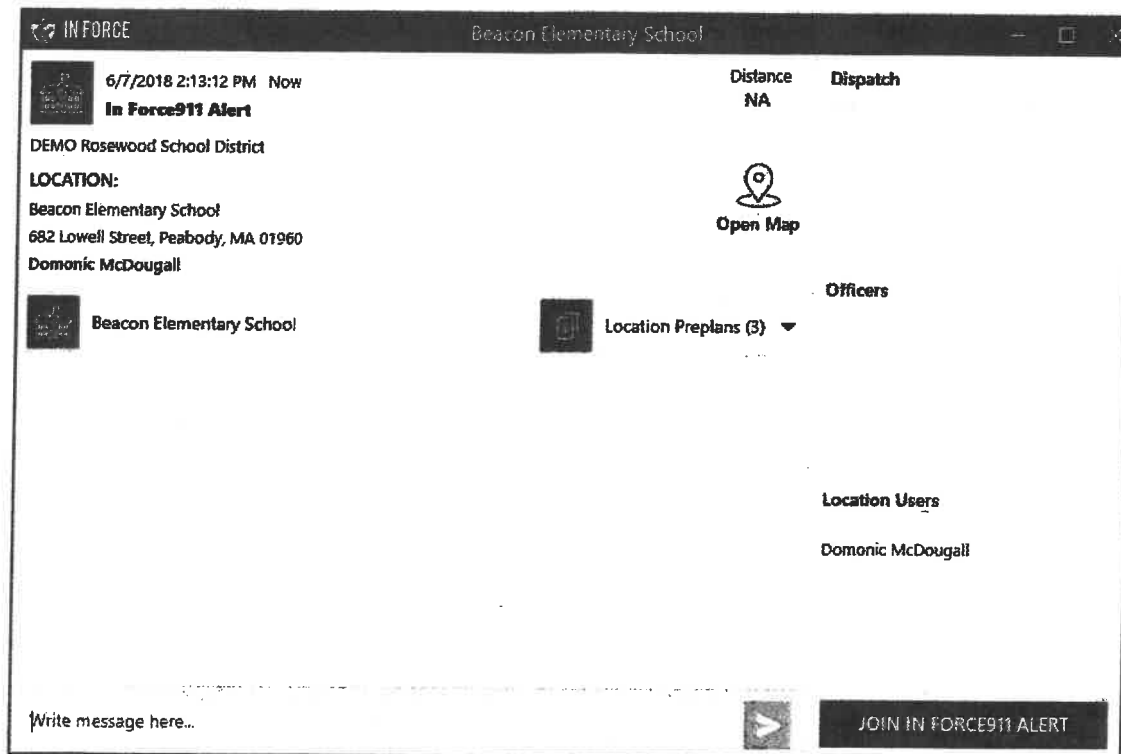
## Interface (map screen)

- **In Force911 utilizes BING maps to provide you with all In Force911 locations that we are connected to. This feature will enable the following: Locations will flash when notifying you of an alert, allow you to choose locations to view their details, send Reverse Alerts to notify locations of a threat in the area, and also provide you a map of the area**
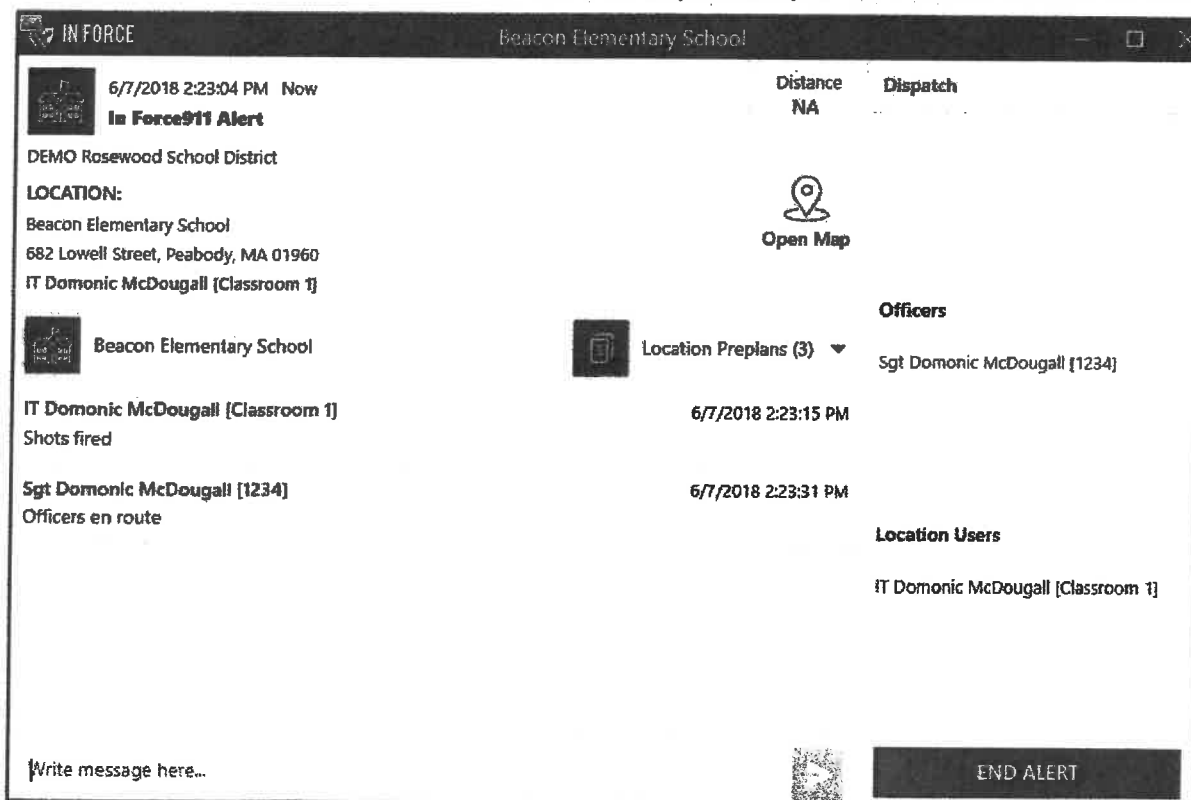


## Receiving Alerts

- **As soon as an alert is activated by one of your connected locations you will be prompted with the following window. You will be prompted with this window whether In Force911 is opened or minimized within the taskbar. Besides being prompted with this window, you will also hear an alarm (volume must be on), see a flash on the IF911 icon within the taskbar and if you look at the BING map you will see the specific location flashing.**

## Using the Chatroom

- The IF911 chatroom consists of 5 items: Location from where the alert initiated from, dropdown of files from the "Location Details" feature, participant column which consists of Officers, Dispatchers and Location Users, ongoing chat between participants and an empty field to type your messages.

- Once the chat is joined, the "Join In Force911 Alert" button will be replaced with an "End Alert" button. If this button is clicked, you will be prompted for confirmation. If confirmed, that chatroom will no longer be accessible for participation. Under no circumstances should this button be clicked without being told to do so by the whomever is in command of the incident from the Worcester Police Department, as this ends the incident for everyone.

# The City of WORCESTER

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Michael E. Shanley
Acting Director

Elizabeth M. Monahan
Deputy Director

October 3, 2018

### Procedural Directive #18-006

To:     All Personnel
From:   Acting Director Michael E. Shanley
Re:     In Force911

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this directive is to provide guidelines for Department personnel in the use of In Force911

## SCOPE:

All notifications of incidents at Worcester Public Schools received by Worcester Emergency Communications through the In Force911 software

## DEFINITIONS:

- **In Force911:** An emergency notification software application that is installed at many Worcester Public Schools(WPS), the Worcester Regional Emergency Communications Center(WRECC), and on Worcester Police Department(WPD) Mobile Data Terminals(MDTs), which allows for emergency alerts to be sent and received rapidly. This software allows for communication to occur between all parties in real time.

- **In Force911 Activation:** Any alert that is activated through the use of In Force911 from a WPS or other subscriber that is recognized as a call for help. This activation may or may not include specific information about the nature of the emergency.

- **Chat:** A feature of the software application is to allow for a "chat screen" to be opened by any party involved in the alert notification. This chat screen gives anyone involved the ability to send and receive types messages, which are used to help pass on critical information to all involved.

## PROCESS:

All Dispatchers have been assigned a user account and log in credentials. Every Dispatcher is responsible to be logged into the In Force911 software immediately upon logging onto their computer.

The WPS staff will be using the In Force911 software to alert the WRECC and WPD of an ACTIVE SHOOTER/HOSTILE EVENT in their school. This is the only reason that the WRECC and WPD should receive an In Force911 Activation. Knowing this, and in effort to preserve lives and safety, the WRECC shall immediately acknowledge the In Force911 Activation. This shall be done by an on duty call taker announcing to the room "I have the In Force911 Activation", acknowledging the alert in the software, and typing "Alert received, officers enroute". This will provide the activating location with confirmation

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EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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that the alert was received and that officers are on the way. We should not have multiple dispatchers messaging in the chat window, as this will cause confusion for all involved.

An incident shall be created in CAD, and sent to the appropriate Police Dispatcher. The Police Dispatcher shall contact the patrol supervisor, at which point the patrol supervisor will request that any available unit respond to the location of the call for help.

If a School Resource Officer is working at the School where the In Force911 Activation originated, the Police Dispatcher shall immediately establish communications with this Officer and provide updates as they are received.

Throughout the incident, the WRECC should continue to message in the chat to obtain details just as they would on a phone call. Any newly obtained information should be put out over the appropriate Police radio channels.

- **ENDING AN ALERT:** Once it is confirmed that the threat is over (or the determination that it was an accidental activation) the patrol supervisor in charge of the incident will notify Dispatch to "End the alert". At that point, Dispatch will click the "END ALERT" button on the In Force911 Chatroom. Doing this will end the alert for everyone. The "END ALERT" button should not be clicked at any time without first being told to do so by the patrol supervisor in charge of the incident.