
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

SB 985 (Strickland) - 911 emergency system

Version: March 23, 2026
Urgency: No
Hearing Date: May 4, 2026

Policy Vote: E., U. & C. 15 - 0, E.M. 9 - 0
Mandate: No
Consultant: Ashley Ames

Bill Summary: This bill would require the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to submit specified reports to the Legislature regarding the implementation of California's Next Generation 911 (NG 911) system.

Fiscal Impact:

- Cal OES estimates ongoing costs of \$237,000 annually (General Fund) for one position through the duration of NG 9-1-1 implementation to manage accelerated reporting timelines and required updates that are stipulated in this bill.

Background: In February 2026, the LAO issued a report on the new statewide NG 911 proposal. The report noted a lack of transparency regarding the errors that occurred under the regional system and an absence of sufficient information about concrete steps Cal OES will take to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated in the development of a statewide system.

The LAO's report recommended the following:

- a) Pause the transition to the statewide approach until Cal OES provides sufficient information or seek an independent, third-party evaluation.
- b) Establish quarterly fiscal reports and monthly progress reports to the Legislature.
- c) Consider long-term governance options and oversight.

The reporting requirements in this bill are consistent with the quarterly reporting requirements recommended by the LAO.

Cal OES response. Cal OES shared its written comments in response to the LAO report with the Committee. Cal OES writes that the statewide approach will resolve the inadequacies and flaws of the regional model because every element of the NG 911 system will be standardized and backed up. That requirement applies to specific technical components and to the overall combination of components. The NG 911 provider will supply not only backup technology configurations within a data center, but also multiple data centers, and multiple distribution networks utilizing separate physical paths to allow for failover, or the transition from one network to another when issues arise.

Using the statewide approach and open procurement, Cal OES states that they will require potential providers to describe their capabilities to protect the state from component failures, distribution failures, and entire service failures. Cal OES will also require providers to demonstrate the use of those capabilities in live NG 911 systems

where the capabilities can be verified. Cal OES will require the use of consistent operation and reporting that follow industry-standard support and operations processes. Cal OES indicates that, together, these capabilities will allow the NG 911 providers to deploy solutions that work 99.999% of the time and protect all areas of the state without the risk involved with custom solutions.

Proposed Law: This bill would:

- 1) Direct Cal OES to submit quarterly reports to the Legislature on the development and implementation of a NG 911 system in California and require the reports to include current year and total spending on the NG 911 system's development and implementation.
- 2) Specify that the quarterly reports must also include the following:
 - a) Documentation of progress and challenges towards implementing the NG 911 system.
 - b) Proposed solutions to identify challenges and the costs associated with potential solutions.
 - c) Identified impacts to timelines and expected dates of completion for solutions to address implementation challenges.
- 3) Require Cal OES to submit a copy of each quarterly report to the chairs of the legislative budget committees, appropriate budget subcommittees, and to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), according to specified deadlines.
- 4) Provide that Cal OES shall submit quarterly reports as specified by this bill until NG 911 has been fully implemented and the legacy 911 system has been retired.

Related Legislation:

SB 670 (McGuire, Chapter 412, Statutes of 2019) establishes reporting requirements for telecommunications outages that impact 911 services and directs telecommunications providers to submit specified reports to Cal OES when such outages occur.

SB 1211 directs Cal OES to develop a plan and timeline for the testing, implementation, and operation of the NG 911 system.

-- END --