

NEWS RELEASE

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Executive Shapiro Celebrates Public Safety Telecommunications Week

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Sunday, April 10 marked the beginning of National Public Safety Telecommunications Week and County Executive Ilene Shapiro is inviting residents to join her in thanking the dispatchers who work tirelessly to ensure that residents are connected to police, fire, and emergency medical services in Summit County. Also known as Public Safety Dispatchers Week, the event takes place annually and according to the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials, was founded in 1981, in California, to show the heartfelt appreciation for the dedication of dispatchers in the community. While dispatchers have always been critical to the public safety system, the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the importance of these frontline communicators.

Dispatchers are among the many underappreciated heroes of the last two years, for if police, fire, and emergency medical services are strained by the pandemic and its effects, so too are public safety dispatchers. Alongside the changes to their work and an increase in calls, dispatchers were asked to make the same sacrifices as residents across the community to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The dedication of dispatchers to their work through turbulent and stressful conditions saved countless lives, and now our community can thank them and celebrate some happier news!

In February, County Executive Shapiro and the Mayors of Tallmadge, Stow, Fairlawn, and Cuyahoga Falls signed an agreement to create the Summit County Regional Dispatch Center. The new Dispatch Center will also house the City of Akron's dispatchers and will collectively serve 14 communities and 365,000 residents. The dispatch center is located in Tallmadge and is expected to be operational in 18-24 months. For dispatchers and residents, this means efficient services through new coordination and new software. The center will recuperate the time spent transferring calls elsewhere and ensure that residents receive the fastest response possible. After all, in an emergency every second counts.

"I am proud of the commitment of dispatchers from across Summit County for their work, especially through the pandemic," said County Executive Shapiro. "I encourage all of us to take time to thank them. They truly deserve it."

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