

Major US City Becomes First in Country to Hand 911 Calls Over to AI Bot

New Orleans has become the first city in the U.S. to send 911 callers to an AI bot.

Receiving more than 1,000 emergency calls every day, the Orleans Parish Communications District announced late last month it is now routing many calls through an artificial intelligence system that determines who needs to be connected immediately to a human dispatcher and who can be assisted by a bot.

The system, AI Emergency Call Triage, went through a trial run via the OPCD's non-emergency 311 line before going live on the main 911 line at the end of July.



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According to the Shreveport Times, the AI tool monitors the contents of each call and filters out the urgent needs to alleviate strain on human dispatchers, keeping them from fielding redundant and low-priority requests.

OPCD Executive Director Karl Fasold explained that callers will only be routed to the AI bot when all human dispatchers are busy, and someone calls 911 within about 200 meters of a previously reported crash. If the bot determines the caller is requesting assistance for another issue, it will connect the individual to a human being.

"Every 911 center in the country is dealing with the reality of tighter budgets and inability to reach full staffing even with funding to do so," Fasold said in a statement after

receiving intense scrutiny online over the new system. “We have found this AI triage tool, used specifically for the scenario outlined above involving motor vehicle accidents, to be an extremely positive use of the technology to make the best use of our staff’s very limited time.”

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