



City of Key West Staff Report NR: 003-2026

Subject: Public Safety – 911 Emergency Communications

Bill Number: SB 1586 (2026)

Effective Date: Upon becoming law (implementation deadlines through January 1, 2029)

Reference Document: SB 1586

I. BILL SUMMARY

Florida Senate Bill 1586 (SB 1586) proposes a comprehensive restructuring of Florida's 911 emergency communications system by requiring the consolidation of all 911 call-taking, emergency call handling, and dispatch services into a single, unified 911 call center within each county or through a regional interlocal agreement.

The bill significantly alters governance, funding, and operational authority for emergency communications, introducing mandatory consolidation timelines, new cybersecurity and interoperability requirements, and financial penalties for noncompliance.

II. PRESENT SITUATION

911 Emergency Communications – Current Framework

Under current law, counties and municipalities may operate 911 public safety answering points (PSAPs) through locally determined governance structures. Municipal police and fire departments may directly control or participate in dispatch operations tailored to local conditions, geography, and operational needs.

Local governments retain discretion over dispatch governance models, interagency coordination, staffing, and technology investments, provided statutory minimum standards are met.

III. EFFECT OF THE BILL

1. Mandatory Unified 911 Call Centers

SB 1586 requires each county, and every public agency within the county, to provide 911, emergency call, and dispatch services from a single, unified 911 call center by January 1, 2029. Counties may establish a regional unified 911 call center through interlocal agreement.

If a county fails to unanimously designate an operator by January 1, 2027, the county sheriff is automatically deemed the operator of all 911 services, and all existing operations must be integrated under the sheriff's control.

2. Governance and Decision-Making

The bill requires the formation of Emergency Communication Center (ECC) or Regional ECC executive boards, composed of county, municipal, and public safety leadership. All decisions regarding the selection of the 911 operator and funding levels must be approved by unanimous vote.

3. Funding and Financial Penalties

State emergency services funding is redirected only to counties that establish a unified 911 call center. Counties that fail to comply become ineligible for state funding and are subject to a 25 percent annual reduction in emergency funding beginning January 1, 2029.

4. Operational Restrictions and Technology Requirements

The bill restricts the transfer of emergency calls between 911 centers within the same county, except under limited circumstances, and imposes mandatory interoperability and cybersecurity standards consistent with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) guidelines.

IV. FISCAL IMPACT

Local Governments

Potential fiscal impacts to the City of Key West include staff time and professional services required to participate in consolidation planning, potential reassignment of dispatch personnel, technology integration costs, and compliance with enhanced cybersecurity requirements.

Failure to comply with SB 1586 may result in loss of state emergency services funding and recurring funding reductions.

State Government

The bill does not identify a direct fiscal impact to the state beyond administrative oversight and reporting requirements.

V. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Local Control and Home Rule

SB 1586 represents a significant reduction in municipal home rule authority by mandating consolidation of emergency communications and establishing a default transfer of authority to the county sheriff.

Public Safety Operations

A centralized, countywide dispatch model may reduce operational flexibility and limit the ability of municipal police and fire departments to tailor emergency response to local conditions, special events, and seasonal population fluctuations.

VI. DRAFTING ISSUES OR AMBIGUITIES

The bill does not address labor relations, collective bargaining impacts, or transition costs associated with dispatch consolidation. Additionally, the interaction between local emergency management practices and the mandatory prohibition on call transfers may require further clarification.

VII. EFFECTIVE DATE

The bill takes effect upon becoming law. Key implementation deadlines include January 1, 2027, for designation of a unified 911 operator, and January 1, 2029, for full statewide compliance.