PA 19-79—SB 1082
Planning and Development Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINTS AND INCENTIVES FOR REGIONALIZATION AND CONSOLIDATION THEREOF

SUMMARY: This act establishes an enhanced subsidy formula for regional public safety emergency telecommunications centers that serve at least one municipality with a population of at least 100,000 as of July 1, 2016. The act also modifies the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection’s (DESPP) Division of State-Wide Emergency Telecommunication’s (DSET) responsibilities and statewide emergency service telecommunications policy.

Public safety answering points (PSAPs) are 24-hour facilities that receive 9-1-1 calls and dispatch emergency response services (e.g., fire and police) or transfer the calls to other public safety agencies. Regional public safety emergency telecommunications centers are PSAPs that serve three or more municipalities (“regional PSAPs”).

The act specifies that the subsidies to other regional PSAPs cannot be reduced as a result of the new enhanced subsidy payments to large regional PSAPs.

The act also requires DSET to examine the use of a cost-of-living adjustment in the funding formula and report its findings and any recommendations for legislative action to the Public Safety and Security Committee by February 15, 2020, unless it adopts regulations before then.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

ENHANCED SUBSIDY FORMULA FOR LARGE REGIONAL PSAPs

Enhanced Subsidy Formula

Under the act, the enhanced subsidy calculation weighs the number of calls a PSAP receives more heavily than the size of the population it serves. Except as described below, the enhanced subsidy for a regional PSAP serving at least one municipality with a population of at least 100,000 (“large regional PSAP”) is based on the:

1. region’s aggregate population (RPOP), which is the aggregate population of municipalities a PSAP serves (determined by the Department of Public Health’s most recent population figures);
2. regional population value (RPV), which equals 25% of the total FY 18 subsidy paid to all regional PSAPs, divided by the aggregate population of municipalities served by such PSAPs in existence on December 31, 2017;
3. average annual number of 9-1-1 calls a regional PSAP received over the prior three calendar years (the RCALL); and
4. regional call value (RCV), which equals 75% of the total FY 17 subsidy paid to all regional PSAPs, divided by total number of 9-1-1 calls received in FY 18 by such PSAPs in existence on December 31, 2017.

The modified calculation is as follows:

\[(RPOP \times RPV) + (RCALL \times RCV)\]

The act requires the RPV and RCV to be updated annually starting July 1, 2020, for any increase in inflation (based on the consumer price index for all urban consumers during the three calendar years preceding the adjustment, as published by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics).

The act includes an exception for member municipalities of a regional PSAP that do not provide (1) emergency police, fire, and medical services, and (2) emergency medical dispatch services. Under the act, the RPOP and RCALL for such municipalities are excluded from the calculation unless the municipality is served exclusively by the state police for law enforcement purposes. In that case, the RPOP and RCALL of such municipalities are included only for the provision of emergency police services.

The act requires DESPP to amend its regulations to adopt an enhanced subsidy formula that is substantially similar to the one the act establishes. The statutory formula applies to enhanced subsidy calculations for large regional PSAPs beginning July 1, 2019, and ending on the earlier of (1) May 1, 2020, or (2) the date on which DSET’s amended regulations are posted on the secretary of the state’s eRegulations System.

DSET EMERGENCY SERVICES TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The act requires DSET to establish incentives, rather than just a transition grant program, to encourage PSAPs to regionalize. It requires the DESPP commissioner to include the costs of such incentives in its annual report to the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority on the enhanced 9-1-1 (E 9-1-1) program’s funding. By law, E 9-1-1 is a service that enables users to reach the appropriate PSAP based on the geographic location of the call and is funded by fees assessed against subscribers of certain telephone and commercial mobile radio services.

Existing law requires DSET to review and make recommendations on emergency service telecommunication funding to the General Assembly. The act requires it to include ways to reduce costs by removing barriers to PSAP consolidation.

The act additionally specifies that DSET must, when coordinating and assisting in state-wide planning for 9-1-1, E 9-1-1, and the next generation 9-1-1 telecommunications systems, focus on facilitating the regionalization of PSAPs.