

# New 911 Center in Jefferson County to reduce response times

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During an emergency, seconds count.

Jefferson County's 911 operations is making a major upgrade to send help faster. The new system will be used by one third of the population of Jefferson County, that's about 200,000 people.

Eighteen cities including Trussville, Clay, Center Point, Pinson and Fultondale will use the service, along with unincorporated Jefferson County.

Many emergency calls right now are answered at one location and transferred to another.

The new center in Center Point will consolidate all operation and eliminate the transfer.

That will get help on the way faster.

"Anything could happen in a matter of seconds. It only takes a couple seconds for a gun to go off," said Ivory Price.

Price called 911 several weeks ago because he says he was being harassed.

"I was trying to roll my windows up," he explained. "I was sitting in the car trying to avoid her at all costs and call Jefferson County at the same time. Next thing you know, she drove away and 30-45 seconds later, Jefferson County pulled up."

In an effort to reduce response times, Jefferson County 911 is making a major change.

Soon, all calls to the county's emergency line will be answered in one room- no transfer needed.

"Normally, there's at least a thirty second delay to transfer a call somewhere else," said Howard Summerford, the county's 911 Director. "That's just normal processing and expected. So we should see at least a 30 second reduction in that time it takes to process a call."

Summerford's vision for this new center is more than 20 years in the making.

He believes 30 seconds could make a major difference.

"In a heart attack, a situation where a person stops breathing, four to six minutes is when the brain starts to die from lack of oxygen. You can see if first responders don't get there in that first four to six minutes, it can make the difference between life and death."

The center is already answering calls for fire emergencies. All operations should be moved there by early 2015.

The facility and all the equipment cost five million dollars.

