

Q & A

Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Program

The Ministry has received questions in relation to the NG9-1-1 transition support transfer payment program. The following is a consolidation of the inquiries received. Please note that similar questions have been combined in the following document.

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Program Eligibility

1. Who is eligible to apply for the NG9-1-1 program?

Municipalities who currently operate Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) along with their PSAPs, and privately managed PSAP operators in Ontario are eligible to apply for NG9-1-1 funding.

2. Do we have to apply now even if we don't need funding until next year?

All applicants must apply through this call for proposals to be eligible for funding in any of the three years.

3. We operate several PSAPs in our municipality (for example, we have a fire PSAP and a municipal police PSAP), does the funding apply to both?

Separate applications will be required for each PSAP in your municipality. Each PSAP will also need to complete the readiness assessment survey that is part of the application process.

4. Our municipality contracts out to the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) to provide PSAP services or only has a Ministry of Health (MOH) PSAP. Are we eligible to apply for funding for the OPP or MOH?

No. The OPP and MOH are excluded from the scope of this transfer payment program and no municipal level funding should be required.

5. If a municipality has a contract with the OPP as our PSAP, and a third party as our fire dispatch center, is that municipality not eligible for this grant?

In alignment with the follow-up memo dated December 1st, 2022, which was shared with AMO, OACP, and OAFCA, The Central Ambulance Communications Centres (CACCs) and Ontario Provincial Police are not eligible for this Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) transfer payment program as they are separately funded by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Solicitor General, respectively.

As a result, municipalities that are under contract with the OPP would not be eligible for funding under this NG9-1-1 transfer payment program.

6. Will municipalities who contract out PSAP services be eligible to apply for funding to assist in offsetting the costs for an increased cost of service associated with PSAP upgrade costs?

The funding is available to PSAP operators only for transition expenses. If you require further clarification, please contact us at ESTD.NG9-1-1@Ontario.ca.

7. Are PSAP operators eligible for funding if they are still a PSAP but have a partner agency host their NG9-1-1 gear?

The transfer payment program has a defined scope for the NG9-1-1 transition support funding, but the program does not place restrictions on the service delivery method municipalities may contract. Applicants are requested to provide their transition cost estimates based on the specific service delivery method being employed. The Ministry acknowledges that there may be variances in costs incurred based on the delivery method being employed.

Application Process

8. Who should submit the application for the transfer payment program?

Municipalities and their PSAP operators are asked to coordinate on the application and define who should complete the Transfer Payment Ontario entries to submit the application form.

The part C form accommodates multiple approvers with signing authority which could be from the municipality and the PSAP.

9. Are there any additional details or information required other than the present basic form that is to be filled before January?

All applications must include the submission of the application form with any supporting documentation that was identified in the Readiness Assessment Questionnaire. All documents are required to be submitted through the TPON portal.

10. Do all expected/anticipated costs up to 2025 need to be identified in the initial submission?

Applicants are requested to provide the current estimated cost of transition through to completion in 2025. The Ministry understands that PSAPs are at varying levels of transition and that these will be estimated projections at this time for some applicants.

11. Our NG9-1-1 costs are estimated at this time. What happens if we don't use all the support funding that we received for these upgrades. Can we reallocate those funds to something else?

No. As per the terms of the Transfer Payment Agreement, NG9-1-1 support funding cannot be reallocated to other initiatives. NG9-1-1 transition support funding can be used solely for expenses related to the PSAPs transition to NG9-1-1.

12. When can we start applying for next year's funding?

Everyone who has applied for this year's funding will be notified when next year's funding is open for application. This is expected to be early in the Ministry's 2023-24 fiscal year.

13. What will the process be for year two and three funding?

Further details will be available early in the Ministry's fiscal 2023-24.

14. If you have a regional police service and a separate municipal fire dispatch centre that operate on the same radio system, should they be applying separately or jointly for the funding?

They should be applying separately. It is one application for each PSAP which should include both the costs associated with the primary and back-up/disaster recovery site.

15. What about multiple fire PSAPs in one region?

Each PSAP within that region would submit one application. For example, if you have 3 fire PSAPs in one region, there should be 3 separate applications.

16. How much content is expected in each section?

Each response should be brief. However, we understand that the NG9-1-1 transition is technically complex and that applicants may want to provide additional information.

Applicants can submit supporting documents in TPON as part of the application. Where supporting documents are being submitted, applicants are requested to include the associated reference file name in the application.

For any specific questions, please contact ESTD.NG9-1-1@ontario.ca

17. Would question 14 of the Readiness Assessment include private partners including Bell for access to the ESInet and call handing solution vendors?

Applicants are asked to provide information on the internal resourcing and vendors that may be engaged.

18. For question 19 of the Readiness Assessment, can we submit a worksheet instead of putting the information into the form, as it may be detailed?

Applicants can submit supporting documents in TPON as part of the application. Where supporting documents are being submitted, applicants are requested to include the associated applicant and reference file name in the application.

19. Is there a pre-review process for applications before submitting in the Transfer Payment Ontario system?

Due to the volume of applications, the Ministry cannot support an application pre-review process prior to the submission date but is available to answer any questions on the application and process. Additionally, we will work with applicants during the review process to seek any clarifications once the application process has closed

20. Can a PSAP with TPON access be submitted instead of a municipality?

Municipalities and the PSAP operators are asked to coordinate on the application and define who should complete the Transfer Payment Ontario entries to submit the application form.

Part C in the applications form, accommodates multiple approvers with signing authority which could be from the municipality and the PSAP.

The Ministry will work with municipalities once funding allocations are determined to have all approvers execute the agreement.

21. Is Section D – the PSAP readiness assessment questionnaire the same as the survey conducted by the Inter-agency Advisory Panel through Deloitte?

No. They are independent requests. The survey through the IAP is to support information gathering and is not directly related to the NG9-1-1 transfer payment program.

All applications for the NG9-1-1 transfer payment program must include a completed Form D which is only available on the Transfer Payment Ontario (TPON) site. You cannot submit your application without completing this form in the system.

22. If interoperability between PSAPS and emergency services is an important part of this project as identified through a Coroner's Inquest, why would an alignment of CAD between the Police/ Fire PSAPs not be covered?

The NG9-1-1 transfer payment program supports the transition work required to achieve the CRTC mandated transition timeline of March 4, 2025.

Concurrently with the transfer payment program, the Ministry has engaged an Inter-Agency Advisory Panel to assess options for standards and governance of 9-1-1 going forward.

23. If a municipality has two PSAPs (Fire and Police) and the NG9-1-1 transition is being coordinated jointly (one consultant, one needs assessment, one RFP), can these FY22/23 costs be split 50/50 in each of the two applications, or would you prefer a different allocation process to Fire PSAP and Police PSAP?

The application requests the estimated cost to transition each PSAP. Shared resources may be allocated on a ratio basis to reflect the anticipated fiscal impact to each PSAP's transition costs.

24. In the Transfer Payment Ontario system, if we want someone to get the application and funding notifications, do we enter them twice?

The Transfer Payment Ontario system has three roles which can be defined in the application process:

- Applicant Role – receives all notifications.
- Payee Role – Receives only payment notifications.
- Approver Role – receives all notifications.

25. How does the funding work for PSAPs that are looking to enter agreements with a larger service to host? For example, our Police and Fire Services are looking to be hosted by another larger Police Service.

The transfer payment funding program supports transition of a PSAP from 9-1-1 to NG9-1-1. Where services are being contracted with another PSAP, the contracted PSAP should include the municipal information in their application.

Where a municipality is looking to enter into an agreement for a hosted PSAP solution (as recently approved by the CRTC), municipally operated PSAPs should reflect the transition costs associated with an externally hosted solution.

26. On January 10, 2023, do we need to attach invoices, supporting documents, etc.?

For the January 10 application deadline, there is no requirement to submit supporting invoices. A completed application and the associated documents should be provided through the TPON portal.

27. Once the application is submitted through TPON, is it to be emailed to the ESTD.NG9-1-1@ontario.ca email, or any other specific contact as well?

Once submitted on TPON the Ministry will be notified of the submission. There is no additional requirement to submit the application via email as TPON is the central repository for all applications and agreements.

Transfer Payment Program Scope

28. What is eligible under the NG9-1-1 Transfer Payment Program?

New NG9-1-1 technology and associated costs that were occurred during the 2022-23 fiscal year (April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023). These costs include:

- Hardware, software, licensing costs
- Project management
- Project resources including consultant fees
- Additional training and change management

29. What is not eligible under the NG9-1-1 Transfer Payment Program?

- Technology purchased and/or installed prior the 2022-23 fiscal year (before April 1, 2022)
- Existing overhead costs of operating a PSAP
- Physical security systems
- Facility upgrades
- Geographic information system/mapping and civic addressing
- Maintenance
- Any post-transition or on-going costs beyond March 31, 2025

30. What if NG9-1-1 technology has already been purchased but not installed yet. Can we request installation costs for this fiscal year 2022-23?

NG9-1-1 technology purchased prior to April 1, 2022, would not be eligible, however, installation costs that incurred within the 2022-23 fiscal year (April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023) are eligible.

31. If we currently have a consultant on board and we anticipate that we will need them for another 2 years, would these costs be funded?

Consultant services specific to supporting the NG9-1-1 transition, can be included in the multiyear impacts which is part of the application process.

32. Can the funding be used to support upgrades to the existing 9-1-1 environment? Specifically, would upgrades to related systems or where additional equipment/software is required to support the required fully redundant backup site; would these expenses be eligible.

System upgrades/replacement of peripheral systems including CAD, RMS and GIS systems are considered out of scope for the transition funding.

Where there is a need to acquire additional licenses to support integration between NG9-1-1 based applications and existing applications, these costs may be considered in-scope. Applicants are asked to note this in their submission.

33. Can you provide clarity on what is in-scope for Training and Change management costs?

Examples of in-scope training costs may include training licenses, training consoles and professional services. However, applicants are asked to provide additional details in their readiness assessment for other expenses.

34. If our PSAP serves multiple municipalities, would only one application be required, and would a resolution from other municipalities using the same PSAP be included in the supporting documents?

The application should be completed at the PSAP level. One application should be completed per PSAP. Where there are one or multiple municipalities being serviced by a PSAP, the readiness assessment requests information on the community(ies) served and this should be incorporated into the final response.

35. Are professional services fees to link (not upgrade) NG9-1-1 with CAD, Niche, etc., eligible?

Integration costs, including professional services for the connectivity to CAD, RMS and GIS systems are considered in-scope of the transition funding. Replacement of the forementioned systems or upgrades to these systems (outside of integrating NG9-1-1) are considered out of scope.

36. Would the demolition of an old tower and construction of a new tower be considered in-scope?

The scope of the transition to NG9-1-1 under the transfer payment program is exclusive to the one-time costs to migrate from an existing analog call management system to a digital call management system. Requirements associated with radio network and broadband network tower infrastructure demolition and installation would be considered outside of the scope of the NG9-1-1 transition support funding.

Application Timelines

37. We have concerns about meeting the [December 2022] deadline. Can we request an extension?

The Ministry has heard this concern and has revised the close date for transfer payment applications to January 10, 2023.

38. We have multiple PSAPs in our municipality, but we are running out of time to submit before the deadline, can we just submit them together as one application?

No. The Ministry has heard this concern and has extended the deadline to January 10. There must be a separate application for each PSAP.

Transfer Payment Funding

39. How much funding is available this year?

There is \$80 million available this year (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023).

40. How much funding will each PSAP receive?

The Ministry will evaluate all applications once received and will advise allocation amounts along with transfer payment agreements before March 2023.

For 2023-24 and 2024-25, more information on the transfer payment program will be provided early in the Ministry's 2023-24 fiscal year.

41. How is the funding distributed - to our municipality or PSAP?

The Ministry will work with municipalities and PSAPs to ensure funding distribution and work completion are appropriately supported with respective approvers. Funding will be distributed through the Transfer Payment Ontario system. We encourage municipalities and PSAP operations to coordinate the funding distribution within the municipality.

42. What is the formula that is being used to determine who gets what amount?

More information will be shared shortly. In alignment with the follow-up memo dated December 1, 2022, which was shared with AMO, OACP, and OAFCA, the first phase will be focused on higher risk PSAPs and municipalities. More information on the remaining funding will be released in the Ministry's 2022-23 Quarter 1 and this funding is intended to support the whole sector to seamlessly transition to the new standards. The next phase will focus on supporting all municipalities, including those with comprehensive and well-thought-out plans, and the work of early adopters within the constraints of Treasury Board directives.

43. Our municipality has already paid for NG9-1-1 upgrades at our PSAP, can we apply to be reimbursed for these expenses?

The program announcement was made in April 2022, and NG9-1-1 eligible costs incurred from April 1, 2022, March 31, 2023 will qualify for support funding.

However, we understand that NG9-1-1 represents a significant change to PSAP operations. Funding to support the implementation of the NG9-1-1 systems including change management, project support, and training are eligible under the program.

The Ministry will have more information to come in 2023. We hope to be able to support all eligible municipalities in 2023 on as equitable a basis as possible while ensuring all of Ontario is ready to transition by March 4, 2025.

44. Will we receive the funds first or is the expectation that we procure the technology and installation, pay the bill, and then forward the invoice to the Ministry for the reimbursement?

Following the Ministry's review and approval of applications, a Transfer Payment Agreement will be issued identifying the approved funding allocation. Reimbursement will be provided based on the Payment Schedule outlined in the Transfer Payment Agreement.

45. How is the funding distributed to our municipality or PSAP?

Funding will be distributed through the Transfer Payment Ontario system. We encourage municipalities and PSAP operators to coordinate the funding distribution within the municipality and will be looking for appropriate approvers for both funding and implementation.

46. What is the planned timing and requirements to receive funding for applications that are approved?

We are anticipating the release of transfer payment agreements to begin in February 2023. Once appropriately executed transfer payment agreements are received, funding will be able to commence in March or shortly thereafter.

47. Who will decide how much each PSAP/municipality will get?

More information on funding and allocations will be released in 2023.

48. Can my municipality use the funding for expenses other than NG9-1-1?

No. Funding must be used by PSAP operators to support the migration to NG9-1-1. This is consistent with the terms of the transfer payment application and Transfer Payment Agreement that will require signing before release of funds.

49. What happens if funding is used for other expenses not relating to NG9-1-1?

Funding must be used by PSAP operators to support the migration to NG9-1-1. This is consistent with the terms of the transfer payment application and Transfer Payment Agreement that will require signing before release of funds.

50. How much money can my PSAP expect to receive in years two and three?

More information on remaining funding in years two and three will be released in the Ministry's Quarter 1, 2023-24.

51. Are costs of a fully redundant failover which includes radio and CAD eligible?

Direct NG9-1-1 transition costs are eligible under the funding model which may include call handling systems and consoles. However, existing systems including LMRN and CAD solutions would be considered out of scope for the program.

52. Would vendor training licenses and associated training environment costs be included?

Yes, provided the licenses and associated training are in-scope of the NG9-1-1 transition.

53. For PSAPs that have completed the procurement and have contracts in place prior to April 2022, are costs incurred after April 2022 eligible?

Expenses incurred after April 1, 2022, through to March 31, 2025 are considered to be in-scope of the program.

54. Would any aspect of new data circuit costs (either initial access and/or recurring costs) necessary to light up NG9-1-1 be eligible for this funding?

Additional new circuits required to support the primary of backup/disaster recovery sites required to transition and implement NG9-1-1 are considered in-scope of the program.