


FROM	NAME & TITLE	Niles R. Ford, PhD, Chief of Fire Department <i>NRF</i>	CITY OF BALTIMORE MEMO 
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Baltimore City Fire Department 401 East Fayette St. 21202	
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill #21-0085 Baltimore City Fire Code-Telephone Access to 9-1-1-Emergency System	

TO

The Honorable Nick J. Mosby, President
 And All Members of the Baltimore City Council
 City Hall, Room 408

DATE: June 4, 2021

FOR the purpose of requiring that certain multi-line telephone systems allow for the direct dial of 9-1-1; defining certain terms; authorizing certain inspections; providing for certain fines; and generally relating to access to the City's 9-1-1 emergency system. The Baltimore City Fire Department has no objections and supports City Council Bill #21-0085 – Baltimore City Fire Code- Telephone access to 9-1-1 Emergency System.

City Council Bill #21-0085 will ensure that the City of Baltimore, for the safety of residents and visitors, is in compliance with Maryland Public Safety Article §1-314 and has the capability to enforce Kari's law to ensure that any person that installs a multiple line telephone system program the phone system to dial 9-1-1 without dialing any other number.

Kari's law is the result of a very tragic event that occurred in 2013 and will help save lives in Baltimore City: Kari, was attacked and killed by her estranged husband in a Marshall, Texas hotel room. Kari's nine-year-old daughter was in the room and tried calling 911 on the hotel phone. She dialed 911 four (4) times as her mother was attacked. But not one of her calls ever went through to the 911 center. Why? The hotel phone required guests to dial a "9" before calling outside the hotel—even for 911.

In Maryland, Kari's law was enacted on October 1, 2015, and it became Federal law on Feb. 16, 2018. In 2020, the Maryland Public Safety Article §1-314 was further amended adding that each county shall be responsible for enforcing Kari's law. The Office of the Fire Marshal will be the enforcement body and will ensure that businesses comply will all applicable codes, ordinances, and laws, including City Council Bill #21-0085 during inspection. The Office of the Fire Marshal will collect the number of multi-line telephones inspected for compliance and the number of violations found.

The above does not negate any requirements for submission of plans to the Office of the Fire Marshal for review of construction, Fire Detection/Notification/Suppression Systems, and Automatic Sprinkler installations. The location may be subject to annual fire inspection and/or permits from the Office of the Fire Marshal.