



CALLSIGN

Ohio Appreciates Professional Communications Operations

February 2026

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President's Message By OHIO APCO President Cody Post

As we all bear the cold temperatures and snow across Ohio, I want to take a moment to highlight a few important upcoming deadlines from the Ohio 9-1-1 Program Office. Several reporting deadlines are approaching, and I encourage everyone to submit their required funding reports as soon as possible.

While we're on the topic of reporting, I'd like to specifically call attention to the **County PSAP Funding and Funding Sources Report** and why it is so important.

It can be easy to view this request as simply providing your PSAP's operating budget numbers. However, for many centers—especially those housed within a Sheriff's Office, Police Department, Fire Department, or other larger organization—there are significant operational costs that may not be reflected in the PSAP's standalone budget.

Examples include utility costs such as electricity, water, and sewer, as well as employee-related expenses like Bureau of Workers' Compensation premiums, health insurance, retirement contributions, and Employee Assistance Programs. Dispatch centers rely on these services just as much as any other department, yet these costs are often absorbed at the agency or county level rather than directly attributed to the 9-1-1 center.

I strongly encourage County 9-1-1 Coordinators and center leadership to work with their fiscal staff or accountants to identify and appropriately allocate a percentage of these shared costs to their 9-1-1 operations. While there may be concern about making an operation appear "too expensive," accurate reporting is critical.

The Ohio General Assembly has relied on these funding reports when assessing statewide funding levels, and in recent years has cited them as evidence that 9-1-1 centers are "appropriately funded." In fact, many counties reported in 2023 and 2024 that state 9-1-1 assistance funds covered more than half of their total PSAP costs.

Complete and accurate reporting helps ensure the true cost of providing 9-1-1 services is understood—and ultimately strengthens our collective case for sustainable, long-term funding.

Thank you for everything you do, and for your continued commitment to Ohio's 9-1-1 profession.

Cody R. Post, ENP, RPL

November Chapter Events

Ohio APCO/Ohio NENA Combined Membership Meeting

Wednesday Feb 11th, 2026

Ohio DPS Building

1970 W Broad St.

Columbus, OH. 43223

Meeting 10:00 – 11:30 Lunch to Follow

Go to Pg.7 for remote access information

APCO – INTERNATIONAL

President

Capt. Jack Varnado, RPL
911 Director
Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office Communications Division
Livingston, LA
jvarnado@LPSO.org

Board of Directors- North Central Region

Jessica Loos
Lincoln Emergency Comm. Center
jloos@lincoln.ne.gov

B. Fred Cummings, RPL
Delaware Co. Emergency Comm. Center
fcummings@co.delaware.in.us

Executive Council Representative

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells
Regional Communications Coordinator
Franklin County EMA & HS
JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

Ohio APCO Executive Committee

President

Cody Post
cpost@akronohio.gov

Immediate Past President

Cheryl Pratt
clpratt@dps.ohio.gov

Past President

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells
Johnnasells@franklincountyohio.gov

1st Vice President

Erica Walsh
elwalsh@columbus.gov

2nd Vice President

Nick DiCicco
elwalsh@columbus.gov

Secretary/Treasurer

Mike Banks
mbanks@summitoh.net

Chapter Executive Council Delegate

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells
johnnasells@franklincountyohio.gov

Chapter Commercial Advisors

Mark Culbertson
mark.culbertson@adsrecorders.com

Steve Zitney
szitney@wsi-tech.com

Appointed Executive Committee Positions

Lydia Frey
lfrey@marion.oh.us

Adrienne Sheffer
ajsheffer@dps.ohio.gov

Ohio APCO - Standing Committees/Chairs

Constitution and By Laws Committee

2nd V.P. Erica Walsh
elwalsh@columbus.gov

Training

Lydia Frey, Chair
lfrey@co.marion.oh.us

Nominating

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells, Chair
JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

Mike Banks
mbanks@summitoh.net

Lydia Frey
lfrey@co.marion.oh.us

Satoru Persons
Persons.4@dps.ohio-state.edu

Awards & Scholarship

Adrienne Sheffer
ajsheffer@dps.ohio.gov

Legislative

Chapter Legislative Liaison
Johnna Gonzalez-Sells
JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

Frequency Advisory

Bob Bill, Chair
Bob.bill@das.ohio.gov

911 & Communications Center Mgt. Committee

Andrew Knapp, Co-Chair
andrew.knapp@hamilton-co.org

Nick DiCicco, Co-Chair
Nick.dicicco@cvgdispatch.com

TERT

Nick DiCicco, Co-Chair
Nick.dicicco@cvgdispatch.com

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells, Co-Chair
JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

Additional Designations

Joint Conference Committee – Erica Walsh
elwalsh@columbus.gov

911 Steering Committee – Adrienne Sheffer
ajsheffer@dps.ohio.gov

PSAP Operations Subcommittee – Matt Franke
mfranke@butlersheriff.org

Ohio ESI Net PSAP Subcommittee Representative

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells
JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

Ohio ESI Net Technical Subcommittee Representative

Johnna Gonzalez-Sells
JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

SIEC Representative - Johnna Gonzalez-Sells

JohnnaSells@franklincountyohio.gov

November 19, 2025

Ohio APCO Meeting Minutes

Welcome Remarks – Cody Post

Cody Post welcomed attendees to the November 2025 Ohio APCO meeting, held in conjunction with Ohio NENA's chapter meeting at the Department of Administrative Services Building Columbus, Ohio.

Secretary / Treasurers Report

Mike Banks stated that the September 2025 meeting minutes were posted online and posted in the chapter newsletter. Patrick Brandt made the motion to waive reading of the September Meeting minutes, seconded by Erica Walsh. Motion passed with all in favor.

Mike Banks presented the Treasurer's Report, the current balances are: checking account \$15,530.32, money market account \$84,347.92, and Gold Star conference checking account \$18,037.15. Major activities included payments for the Gold Star banquet and website hosting. Erica Walsh made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Cheryl Pratt. Motion passed with all in favor.

Joint Conference Committee – Erica Walsh

A conference is confirmed for 2026, the location will be at The Ohioan, formerly the Nationwide Conference Center, located at US 23 and Polaris Parkway just north Columbus. Anyone interested in volunteering for the conference committee, please reach out to Erica.

Gold Star – Brian MacMurdo

The Gold Star event was well-attended and financially successful due to strong commercial partner sponsorship. More information for next Gold Star will be available after the first of the year.



Thanks!
**To our sponsors past, present
and future.**

Thank you to the November lunch sponsor:



The February meeting is sponsored by:

Critical Response Group

For sponsorship opportunities at future meetings, please contact Mark Culbertson.

Mark.culbertson@adsrecorders.com

**Ohio 9-1-1 Program Office –
Patrick Brandt / Nathan Bryan**

ESINet Status: 12 counties are live on the system, with 29 more in progress. Molly Falls and Walt have joined the project team.

· Legislation Updates:

o House Bill 144: An ad for the "Ohio Blue Envelope Program" for special needs registration was noted. The Department of Public Safety is creating a web version and an API for CAD integration.

o House Bill 359: This bill, which has passed the House, codifies the use of the EAS system for missing individuals under 18 with autism and other disorders ("Joshua's Words").

· Compliance and Funding:

o All 88 counties submitted compliance documentation (79 compliant, 1 non-compliant, 8 pending).

(Continued Next Pg.)

- o The new funding formula is a draft based on a \$0.60 increase; numbers are estimates and should not be used for budgeting. It will be presented to the committee in January.
- o Counties are responsible for determining their own internal fund distribution methods within their county plan.
- Next Meeting: The next statewide 911 meeting is Monday, January 26th.

Review of OAC – 5507 PSAP Operations Rules Changes – Cody Post

- General: Definitions were added for terms like "virtual PSAP" to align with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). The rules still need to go through the JCAR process.
 - Staffing & Call Handling: The two-dispatcher minimum rule remains unchanged as it is mandated by the ORC. A 911 rollover must be to another PSAP. When transferring a call, the transferring PSAP shall provide the agency name, location, nature of the call, callback number, and any known safety information if available, without delaying the transfer.
 - NextGen 911 Routing: The concepts of primary and secondary PSAPs have been removed. Calls will be routed based on the PSAP boundary layer provided to the state.
 - Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP): PSAPs are now required to test their COOP annually through methods like full-scale, functional, or tabletop exercises and report completion to the state.
 - System Upgrades:
 - o PSAPs on the state network must have two diverse connections to the ESI net. The state will cover one-time costs for the last-mile connection.
 - o PSAPs must have full I-3 compliant call handling equipment and recording systems capable of documenting all i3 metadata.
 - o PSAP GIS data must be uploaded and refreshed monthly to the state NG portal.
- Updates to 911 Training and Education Standards
- Minimum Training: Basic training has increased from 40 to 80 hours. All PSAP staff must complete ICS 100 and 700; supervisors must also complete ICS 200 and 800. Training will also include legal concepts, NG911 call types, and active listening skills.
 - Continuing Education (CE): Required CE hours increased from 8 to 12 annually (11

- agency-provided, 1 state-provided). Annual cybersecurity training from CISA is now required.
- EMD: The timeframe for EMD training for unsupervised operation has been extended from 6 to 12 months post-hire.
- Coordinator Training: All county 911 coordinators must attend an annual in-service training.

Executive Council – Mike Banks

Executive Council Update:

APCO Institute Certified Public-Safety Executive (CPE) Town Hall Conducted
 In October, all Certified Public Safety Executive (CPE) alumni were invited to participate in a new networking event, the CPE Town Hall. This event is part of a new quarterly opportunity for all CPE graduates to connect, share experiences and collaborate with peers across the nation. During the session held in a virtual environment on October 17, participants exchanged ideas on current and emerging challenges in public safety leadership, discussed pressing issues facing their communities and identified actionable ways CPEs can support one another and foster positive change within their agencies.

Standards Program Advances:

Working Groups, Training and Public Review
 The following standards have received final ANSI approval and will be published in the near future:

- APCO/NENA 1.107.2-2025 Standard for the Establishment of a Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Program for Emergency Communication Centers
 - 3.103.3-2025 Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators 3 During October, three working groups held open calls for participation, attracting over 55 volunteers, including one for the new AI Implementation in the ECC standard. Additionally, the standards program manager attended the ANSI Innovation Summit Emerging Professionals Program in Maryland from October 21-23.
- There are currently three standards in final draft that will move on to public review and comment. These standards are:
- 3.104.3-202X Core Competencies and Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Communications Training Coordinator

- 1.123.1-202X Minimum Technical Requirements for Remote Support to Emergency Communications Center (ECC) Operations
- 3.106.3-202X Core Competencies and Minimum Training for Public Safety Communications Quality Assurance

APCO's Spectrum Management (AFC) is pleased to announce a series of technical training classes to be held June 1–12, 2026.

The sessions will be conducted by IWA Technical Services, a recognized leader in radio communications training. This training series is designed to strengthen technical knowledge and practical skills essential to maintaining and optimizing public safety communications systems. Courses offered include:

- GCT1 – General Communications Technician, Level 1 Focuses on the fundamentals of communications systems, including basic radio theory, system components, and safety practices.
- GCT2 – General Communications Technician, Level 2 Builds on GCT1 with advanced topics such as system alignment, diagnostics and maintenance procedures.
- Antenna Line Sweep Provides hands-on instruction in testing, measurement and analysis of transmission lines and antennas to ensure system performance and reliability.
- Interference Mitigation Covers techniques to identify, locate and resolve sources of radio frequency interference affecting public safety systems

Details on registration, class schedules and location will be announced soon. For additional information or to express interest in attending, please email us (AFCgeneral@apointl.org).

Events

- Call for Speakers Call for speakers is open and we currently have over 100 submissions. Wellness & Workforce Summit
- The Wellness & Workforce Summit is taking place February 18-19 in Phoenix, Arizona. Call for speakers has closed. Program to be announced in the next few weeks.
- APCO 2027 APCO International is seeking a host committee chairperson for APCO 2027, taking place July 25-28, 2027, in Anaheim, CA. Please submit your completed nomination to Patricia Giannini Henry by December 1, 2025.

o Nominations must include a letter of interest from the candidate, a letter of support from the candidate's employer (if the candidate is retired, this item is not required) and letters of recommendation from the candidate's executive council representative and chapter president. If the candidate serves as either the executive council representative or president of the chapter, they will then provide a letter of support from the immediate past president of the chapter or a vice president of the chapter.

CCAM Excellence Award

Nominations are now open. On behalf of the APCO Commercial Advisory Council, we are pleased to share with you an opportunity for recognition that could highlight the hard work of your chapter's commercial advisory member (CCAM). APCO International is now accepting nominations for the Chapter Commercial Advisory Member (CCAM) Excellence Award.

Webinars

On October 2, APCO hosted the webinar "Telecommunicator Mental Wellness: Silent No More," sponsored by Eventide Communications, with a total of 1,067 registrants. APCO hosted a second webinar on October 15, titled "Public Safety Vehicle Communications: How Virtual Routing and Forwarding (VRF) Strengthens Security," sponsored by Aviat Networks, with a total of 237 registrants. A third webinar, titled "The Evolving Role of AI in ECCs," was delivered on October 29 and sponsored by Hexagon, drawing a total of 455 registrants. All webinars were free to APCO members and provided one CDE for attendance. Recordings were made available to registrants after the webinars were completed.

Awards and Scholarships – Cody Post

The Ohio APCO scholarship for individual or large group membership has been awarded to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

- The award was granted based on a well-written application.
- Further details on how to process the award and a formal letter will be provided to the Union County Sheriff's Office at a later time.

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9-1-1 Operations and Management

Looking for PSAP Managers to help fill this committee.

Training Committee – Lydia Frey

The Training Committee is seeking volunteers and planning to host regional training sessions across Ohio in the upcoming year.

- The committee is working to bring APCO-based training to Ohio.
- A key initiative is to bring Nathan Lee to Ohio to conduct his "Victim's Plea" class in multiple locations.
 - o The target locations for the class in the spring are Athens, Columbus, Hamilton County, Akron, and Lucas County.

Commercial Advisory – Mark Culbertson

A review of the Gold Star event was provided, along with a call for membership to engage with commercial partners at future events.

- The Gold Star event was well-attended and exceeded its goals for commercial partner sponsorship.
- The board enters into venue commitments with no initial funds, relying on the good faith of commercial partners to cover costs.
- A request was made for members attending events, such as the upcoming 2026 state conference in Columbus, to visit and learn about the commercial partners, regardless of purchasing intent.
- New and present commercial partner representatives were recognized:
 - o Jessica with NICE
 - o Stuart with Motorola
 - o John with Pays-Interaction and Site Corporation
- Angela from RapidSOS will present on their services at the end of the meeting.

Health and Wellness – Tom Donahue

A new health and wellness initiative for dispatchers is being developed for the chapter's website.

- Tom reported on an idea to provide a monthly newsletter created by a personal trainer.
- The newsletter will feature healthy habits and a monthly workout routine that can be performed at a dispatcher's workstation.

- The goal is to have this initiative launched within the next two months.

Good of the Order

APCO Awards: Jay Somerville: The deadline for submitting nominations for national awards is December 6th at midnight.

- It was noted that Ohio has historically been a "very light submitter" for these awards.
- **Incentive for Nominating:** The person who nominates a winning candidate receives a "full ride" to the next APCO International Conference, which includes conference registration, airfare, and lodging.
- **Award Categories:**
 - o Telecommunicator of the Year
 - o Director of the Year
 - o Supervisor of the Year
 - o CTO of the Year
 - o RF Engineer of the Year
 - o IT Engineer of the Year
- **Nomination Process:**
 - o Nominations can be made for individuals in one's own agency or a partner agency.
 - o Nominations are completed via an online form at awards.apointl.org A how-to video is available on the site.
 - o New this year: Attachments such as PDFs, photos, or videos can be included with the submission.
 - o Permission from the nominee's agency or supervisor is not required.
 - o One does not need to be an APCO member to submit a nomination.
- A suggestion was made for the chapter's executive committee to consider nominating a worthy member from the chapter itself. Clarification was provided on two different state programs: the "Blue Envelope" program and House Bill 359.
 - The "Blue Envelope" program is a national initiative aimed at improving communication and reducing anxiety during encounters involving individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
 - House Bill 359 codifies the use of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) for missing individuals under the age of 18 with autism or other related disorders.

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· The speaker noted that the "Blue Envelope" program is distinct from the previously discussed House Bill 144.

Adjournment:

Lydia Frey made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Tom Donahue. Meeting adjourned at 1145 a.m. A presentation on AUXCOMM by Mike Myers from Franklin County EMA/HS was provided after the meeting followed by lunch and a presentation on behalf of RapidSOS.



For any questions regarding Ohio Gold Star please contact Chairman Scott Brown scott.brown@hamiltoncountyohio.gov.

For Remote Access To The November
Joint Meeting
Topic: Ohio APCO/NENA Meeting

Time: Feb 11, 2026 10:00 AM Eastern
Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

us04web.zoom.us/j/...

Meeting ID: 713 3044 2180

Passcode: 381400

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,71330442180#,,,,*381400
US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,71330442180#,,,,*381400
US

Join by SIP

• 71330442180@zoomcrc.com

Join instructions

us04web.zoom.us/join/71330442180/...

SEE THE NEXT
PAGES ABOUT
AN
OPPORTUNITY
FROM EMDRIA

EMDRIA Announces New Collaboration with 911 Professionals Organizations

How You Can Get Involved!

We know they are always there: the 911 professionals who are the primary point of contact in a crisis or emergency. And while we rely on them to be there, we are likely not familiar with the context and impact of their work. 911 professionals are the first responders who are heard but not seen. And they experience vicarious and secondary trauma as a natural part of their work because of situations and events they experience. Their headsets routinely convey the hardest of life circumstances, but because of the demand of their work, they must compartmentalize and move on to the next, even though the stress is cumulative, and many times the emotional impact long-lived.

The organizations who represent the 911 professionals have approached EMDRIA for assistance for their members. With their members needs and interests at heart, they want to make sure 911 professionals have access to trained and qualified EMDR therapists. Together, our three organizations are building a knowledge base and pathway so 911 professionals can find EMDR therapists when they need and want care.

The Program

The two 911 professional organizations, APCO International—The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials, and NENA—The National Emergency Number Association, have designed a course to provide cultural insight into the 911 community. In the course you hear the stories of 911 professionals, the kinds of challenges they face and the culture and norms that are an inherent part of this community. There is content at the beginning and the end that ties those personal experiences to EMDR therapy. The course, which is 4 hours long, is now in the EMDRIA On Demand site where you can access it.

The Plan

Those EMDRIA members who complete the course will be identified in the EMDRIA Find An EMDR Therapist® Directory as having achieved training in cultural awareness for 911 professionals.

911 professionals seeking care will be able to find those who have completed the course by searching for those who have completed the 911 Cultural Awareness training. APCO and NENA will be actively promoting and encouraging their members to go to the Find An EMDR Therapist® Directory to identify qualified EMDR therapists who have completed the course.

EMDRIA has agreed with APCO and NENA to make the course as inexpensive as possible to cover costs for administration, processing, etc. The price for the 4-hour course is \$29. We want this population to get the help they need. We encourage all of our members to take advantage of this opportunity to learn and serve these important responders.

The course is eligible for 2 hours of EMDRIA Credit. While all of the material in the 4 hours is important, the EMDR focus and our standards for EMDRIA Credit allow us to offer 2 hours for this course. (To keep the costs down, the course only has EMDRIA Credit hours attached to it.)

What You Can Do NOW!

Register for the course at EMDRIA's On Demand. Watch it, download the resources, take the exam and complete it fully.

EMDRIA is programming its Find an EMDR Therapist® Directory so that you will automatically appear in the search when the filter is used to find those who have completed the course.

APCO and NENA will continue to inform their members for the long-term about this collaboration. Whether referrals come immediately or over time, we know this is a population in need. EMDRIA members can be prepared to help address that need as part of their professional practice work. We have every confidence you will step up to help. Our community is comprised of compassionate, engaged professionals. This is a great opportunity to add a dimension to your practice.