

# Newsletter

April 2021

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Volume 5, Edition 4



## An interoperability solution for Franklin County, KS

First responders in Kansas launched a 3-month trial of RapidDeploy to test interoperability across the state. Hear what they have to say about how this app can help first responders in the future. [WATCH VIDEO](#)

## Transmitting critical patient data impetus for Franklin County EMS to join FirstNet

**By Christi Hilliker**

Assistant Chief, Franklin County EMS

My role as EMS assistant chief is overseeing the daily operations of our service. We communicate a lot with our hospitals and other first responders. And we have to make sure that equipment is up and functioning properly.

Franklin County EMS first subscribed to FirstNet about 2-3 years ago. We were having issues with coverage with our previous provider. Coverage was very spotty. Transmitting things like 12-lead EKGs to the hospital for a faster

*(Continued on Page 6)*



## FirstNet & 5G: An experience unlike anything else for first responders

Bringing public safety the only nationwide network with comprehensive, tower-to-core encryption

As public safety's partner, [AT&T\\*](#) is committed to evolving FirstNet® to meet first responders' needs and supporting innovative new technologies to help them stay mission ready. That's why we're announcing 3 major milestones for [FirstNet](#), the *only* network built with and for public safety:

- A first responder-centric approach to 5G
- Comprehensive tower-to-core network encryption
- The FirstNet Health & Wellness Coalition to better support responders holistically

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# FIRST RESPONDER HEALTH & WELLNESS

## APRIL FOCUS: Officer health in the Black law enforcement community

By, Anna Fitch Courie

Director, Responder Wellness, FirstNet Program at AT&T

and Lynda R. Williams

National President, National Organization

of Black Law Enforcement Executives

In the public safety community, we know that first responders face unique health risks as a result of keeping our communities safe, healthy, and whole. Those health risks include problems such as post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes.<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> But while suicide rates in 2019 declined by 2.1% from previous years, the rates for black Americans (and other ethnic minorities) did not.<sup>4</sup>

We know that minority populations have unique health risks including higher rates of stroke and coronary heart disease, obesity, asthma, periodontitis, tuberculosis and others.<sup>5</sup> These risk factors coupled with socio-ecological risk factors including persistent stressors, social marginalization, and personal (relationship, financial, legal) problems present a critical storm of factors that can contribute to suicide ideation and suicide attempt. Black communities face many of these issues daily. But are the risk factors the same for minority first responders?

The data are sparse on minority first responder health risks. But risk factors do exist, and they likely traverse both the problems that first responders in general face, as well as the risk factors of their ethnic and cultural groups.

This month, I sat down with Lynda R. Williams, National President, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) to discuss the health risk factors of minority law enforcement officers from the perspective of African American leadership.

**Dr. Courie:** Do you think the risks differ? Why or Why not?

**President Williams:** African Americans are generally at higher risk for heart



*When I think of people who can teach me habits that can make me a better person or help me respond to a tough event, I think of first responders.*



disease, stroke, cancer, asthma, influenza and pneumonia, diabetes, and HIV/AIDS, as compared to their white counterparts according to the Office of Minority Health, Department for Health and Human Services. African American police officers are generally predisposed to these conditions yet report to work daily to perform the fundamental rigors of policing their communities in an already stressful environment; consequentially there are other, very real challenges nuanced in the black officer's career life impacting their physical and emotional health.

Specifically, challenges related to racial tension, peer acceptance, and the general pressure of working within a larger system that continues to place little emphasis on racial equity to include opportunities for minority officers. This may be enigmatically

related to a specific medical disposition that links to an underlying or compound factor to overall officer health and wellness.

**President Williams:** Also, Mental Health is a significant part of our well-being but even more so for members of the African American or law enforcement members of other communities of color. Psychological stress can be a daily challenge to master. The expectation of persons of color to excel or to be accepted by members of the community along cultural norms, as well as within their own agency can be impactful. The phenomena of "code switching", that is, being "relatable" in both communities of color and also in the professional setting among law enforcement peers, adds to the inherent stressors of life in public safety; navigating being both is a reality and a necessary tool of the trade to be trusted, effective and successful.

**Dr. Courie:** What challenges do African American law enforcement officers face in addressing their health

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# FIRST RESPONDER HEALTH & WELLNESS

## APRIL FOCUS: Officer health in the Black law enforcement community

(Continued from Page 2)

needs and what are some barriers?

**President Williams:** Culturally, in general, there is a negative stigma in the African American community in seeking either professional medical or psychological assistance, which can lead to misunderstandings about the resources, support for and, as importantly, the causes of serious illness. Compound this with a general gender reluctance in the male population to seek professional help, and this becomes a compounded barrier to addressing mental and emotional needs before it spirals or negatively affects their duty to serve. We see this manifest among many ethnic first responders who, though they may have adequate resources or insurance, will still ignore their health warning signs. In many ways, while rooted in cultural exposure and upbringing, is also similar to their white colleagues in being hesitant to seek peer support or employee assistance programs when faced with emotional or health challenges.

**President Williams:** In terms of psychological wellness, we often find that seeking mental health help is frowned upon in law enforcement in general for a multitude of reasons. For some seeking help, it is viewed as a weakness or a deficiency.

Others do not come forward because they may be fearful that there may be a negative impact on their job, such as being ostracized or having their service weapon temporarily taken as a protective measure.

The stigmatization of police officers seeking help for mental health issues is a far-reaching problem and can ultimately have damaging effects on the communities they are sworn to serve and protect. For the African American police officer, the reluctance to seek help for their health needs may go beyond machismo, and result from feeling compelled to perform at a higher



*First responders are equipped with unique traits that allow them to run towards problems, rather than away from them.*

standard than their white colleagues. Will they be perceived as inferior or not worthy of their roles if they reveal health problems?

**Dr. Courie:** What do you think are some solutions to this?

**President Williams:** I believe police leaders/agencies must acknowledge the historical prejudices towards minorities that have plagued the law enforcement profession over the years, internally and externally. To ensure equity in responding to officer wellness issues, there must be trust between African American officers and the managers/leadership of the agency. Messaging that reiterates the value and importance of every employee should be part of the department's health and wellness campaign or vision statement. Stereotypes that exist regarding mental illness and other health problems should be condemned by leadership to effectively nurture and cultivate an environment that genuinely supports employee wellness for all employees. Once trust is developed in this area, African American officers will feel more empowered to seek assistance knowing it is safe to do so.

**President Williams:** Secondly, academy training must change from a

warrior mentality to one of guardianship. The military system, which was a foundation for most law enforcement training, has to be changed to face current needs in our communities and how we train new officers who are entering the field of law enforcement.

Promoting culture awareness and dispelling the negative connotation of seeking mental health aid should be established. Organizations such as NOBLE and like-organizations can help sponsor mental health aid training and counseling workshops. Increasing awareness and education within the law enforcement community can have great benefits and tap into uncharted waters.

**Dr. Courie:** Are there actions leaders can take to address issues facing African American law enforcement officers?

**President Williams:** There needs to be more open dialogue in police departments about the impact of being "black and blue" or embracing the diversity among the ranks of people of color. NOBLE recommends more formal research efforts to examine the toll of the past 12 months on the physical and emotional health of first responders who identify

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# FIRST RESPONDER HEALTH & WELLNESS

## APRIL FOCUS: Officer health in the Black law enforcement community

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as persons of color. The law enforcement profession needs to seek qualified ethnic mental health providers to address the psychological health of public safety employees. More departments need to embrace wellness as a philosophy and develop more efforts to positively impact the health and welfare of their employees.

**Dr. Courie:** Thank you President Williams for your time and expertise. I hope that this dialog helps with the first step in addressing health and wellness problems of a specific community: bringing awareness to the issue. The next is bringing awareness to resources available to help them. FirstNet, Built with AT&T, is committed to integrating these health and wellness resources into the way we look at the mission of FirstNet.

Consequently, we've been bringing in resources into the app catalog that address first responder health and wellness needs. This plan is to ensure that

- Small departments have tools they can use when dealing with limited resources;
- Your FirstNet devices have the ability to easily access health and wellness features;
- Curate high quality third-party health and wellness applications that support you as you continue to serve your communities. Some of those resources include the [ResponderRel8](#) Peer to Peer Chat app, the [Better App](#) for mental health support, and [Lighthouse Health and Wellness](#) for programs and services supporting first responders across our nation. You can learn more about the wellness and safety apps available by checking out the [FirstNet App Catalog](#).

Health and wellness disparities are a problem for our communities of color. They are also a problem for our first responders of those populations.

When organizations like NOBLE and



FirstNet, Built with AT&T, come together, we help to raise awareness, drive solutions, and facilitate outcomes that make a difference. When YOU become aware of those problems and seek solutions for your health and wellness needs, you become a part of making a difference too.

*Dr. Anna Fitch Courie, Director of Responder Wellness, FirstNet Program at AT&T is a nurse, Army wife, former university faculty, and author. Dr. Courie has worked for over 20 years in the health care profession including Bone Marrow Transplant, Intensive Care, Public Health, and Health Promotion practice. Dr. Courie holds a Bachelor's in Nursing from Clemson University; a Master's in Nursing Education from the University of Wyoming; and a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Ohio State University. Dr. Courie's area of expertise is integration of public health strategy across disparate organizations to achieve health improvement goals.*

*Lynda R. Williams is Professor of the Practice at Middle Tennessee State University in the Department of Criminal Justice Administration. With this appointment in 2017, she became the first individual bestowed this title in recognition of the breadth and depth of her knowledge and expertise in the field of criminal justice and executive security. Ms. Williams' curriculum subject matter includes*

*foreign/domestic terrorism studies, criminal justice processes, community and public service engagement and executive law enforcement leadership speaker symposiums. Prior to joining the faculty of Middle Tennessee State University, Ms. Williams led an accomplished career as a veteran of the United States Secret Service, from 1988 until she retired, as the Deputy Assistant Director in 2017.*

*As President of NOBLE, Ms. Williams is focused on achieving the organization's goals through a three-pillar platform on police reform, gun violence, and voter engagement.*

<sup>1</sup> Heyman, M., Dill, J.; & Douglas, R. (2018). The Ruderman White Paper on Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders. Ruderman Family Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> Benedek, D., Fullerton, C., and Ursano, R. (2007). First responders: Mental health consequences of natural and human-made disasters for public health and safety workers. *Annual Review of Public Health*. 28: 55-68.

<sup>3</sup> Substance Abuse, Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2018). Disaster Technical Assistance Center Supplemental Research Bulletin: First Responders: Behavioral Health Concerns, Emergency Response, and Trauma. Retrieved from: [First Responders: Behavioral Health Concerns, Emergency Response, and Trauma \(samhsa.gov\)](https://www.samhsa.gov)

<sup>4</sup> Stone, D., Jones, C., and Mack, K. (2021). Changes in Suicide Rates—United States, 2018-2019. *CDC Weekly*: 70 (8) 261-268; [Changes in Suicide Rates — United States, 2018–2019 | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr).

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report*. Atlanta, GA: 1-35.

# FIRST RESPONDER HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Making first responder health and wellness a top priority

By Jason Porter

President, Public Sector and FirstNet Program at AT&T

Four years ago, the federal government selected AT&T to enter into a public-private partnership to build and manage public safety's network. And when we set out on this historic and critical initiative, we committed to *Be There* for America's first responders. Now, [as the FirstNet network turns 3](#), we're going beyond our commitment to the federal government and have established the [FirstNet Health & Wellness Coalition](#) (FNHWC) to coordinate how we support holistic health and wellness of first responders.

Nothing is more important than the lives of first responders and the people they serve day in, and day out. These are the men and women who run toward emergencies. And we understand the service public safety provides to our communities does not come without personal sacrifice and burdens.

The FNHWC has more than 2 dozen members representing more than 1.3 million first responders – including organizations like the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#), [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#), [National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives](#) and [National Emergency Management Association](#). Its mission is to integrate responder, community, industry and academic capabilities to support the health, wellness and readiness of America's first responders.

We're focused on collaborating with our members to support healthy, well and resilient first responders that are ready to support public safety at a moment's notice. Our support of first responder health and wellness began long before the formation of the FNHWC through dedicated financial and resource support to public safety associations and related programs.

- For the past two years, we've [sponsored](#) the [IACP Officer Safety & Wellness Symposiums](#) which focuses

- on improving officer safety and wellness to enhance the health and effectiveness of officers, as well as the safety of the community.
- Just last fall we launched a [collaboration with All Clear Foundation](#) to help increase the accessibility of education, resources and support that will aid first responders who may be struggling with health wellness challenges brought on by the unique stressors of their jobs.
- And, more recently, we've added more health and wellness apps to the [FirstNet App Catalog](#) and supported conferences and seminars with [1st Responder Conferences](#).

Moving forward, the FNHWC will serve as the backbone to everything we do to support the health and wellbeing of first responders.

Coalition priorities were developed from the input of over 350 first responders in professions including law enforcement, fire, emergency communications, emergency management, and emergency medical personnel. Priorities include Post Traumatic Stress, Suicide Prevention, Physical Fitness, Stress Management, Resiliency, leadership engagement and others. The coalition will be developing integrated approaches to

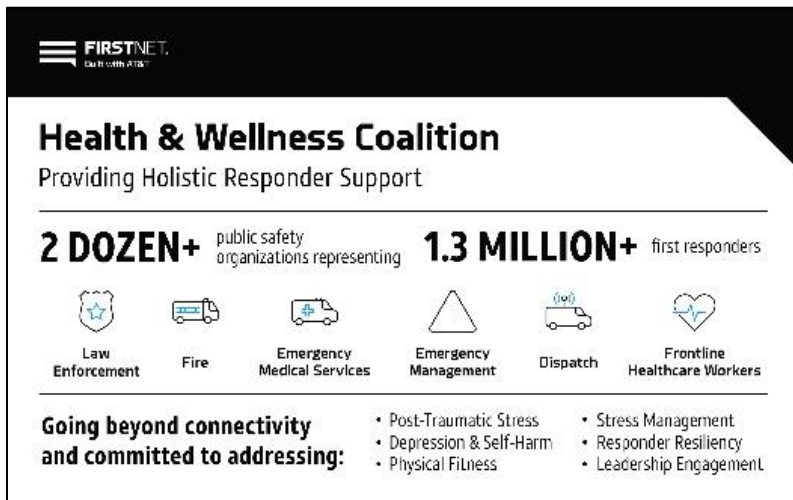
raising awareness, identifying technical solutions and applications, and local targeted areas to support these priorities.

We believe FirstNet is the most important wireless network in the country because it's serving our first responders and the extended public safety community.

And we have a responsibility unlike any other wireless carrier to deliver for America's first responders. Shaped by the vision of the first responder community and Congress following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, FirstNet stands above commercial offerings. It is built with [AT&T](#) in public-private partnership with the [First Responder Network Authority](#) – an independent agency within the federal government.

The FirstNet network is providing public safety with truly dedicated coverage and capacity when they need it, unique benefits like *always-on* priority and preemption for first responders, and high-quality Band 14 spectrum. These advanced capabilities help fire, EMS, healthcare workers and law enforcement save lives and protect their communities.

Just as FirstNet is built with and for first responders, we want to be there to support the health and well-being of those who serve their communities every day.





## KANSAS: Franklin County EMS

### Transmitting critical patient data key for agency to join FirstNet

(Continued from Page 1)

STEMI notification was something of value to us. And we just were not able to do that.

We had service issues or coverage issues throughout the whole county, which is about 577 square miles. The further we got out of the city limits of Ottawa, the more difficulty we had with our coverage.

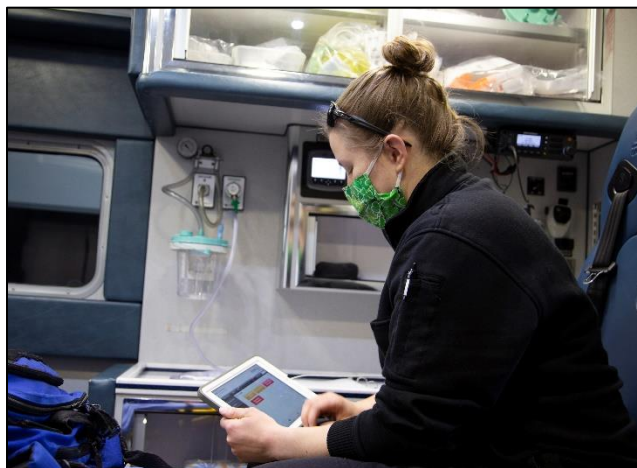
So, it was important to us to make sure our 12-lead EKGs actually got to a PCI center. While we could get on the radio and tell the Cath Lab we're coming with a STEMI, it's in the best interest of the patient to have a cardiologist with an actual printout of the 12-lead EKG. So we had to have reliable coverage where we could send that via fax from our ambulance to make sure that it got to the cardiologist before we arrived with the patient.

#### Reliability matters

It changes or affects the outcome. With a STEMI, it's a time critical diagnosis. We definitely want to make sure that our patients are in the Cath Lab as soon as possible so that they can get their heart reperfused. The longer it takes to get an actual 12-lead so that they can look at the area of the blockage, is critical in these cases. And the more we can do up front to help that process, the better it is for the patient.

Currently, Franklin County EMS is using cell phone technology and Cradlepoints. We are a standalone ambulance service with about 32 employees. That includes EMTs, advanced EMTs and paramedics. And we have both full-time and part-time staff. There are some rural hospitals we transport patients to that still that want us to give report via cell phone. And we know with FirstNet, we will have the ability to do so even in a rural area.

We also know we have security in doing that. We use our Cradlepoints for everything – from helping to run our CAD system so we can talk directly with dispatch or other responders coming to the scene to transmitting our 12-lead EKGs to the hospitals.



EMS in Franklin County, KS, needed the ability to send patient information to the hospital consistently and reliably when responding to cardiac calls. They were unable to do that until they subscribed to FirstNet. Hear their story.

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

#### Interoperability

I look forward to the trial with RapidDeploy, using FirstNet to increase interoperability between responders.

When we are able to collaborate with responders, we're able to get more information to more people. So in the instance of a vehicle accident, we can communicate with the police department. You may not know the exact location. So, the first responder who shows up can type in a note and everybody can see that from their CAD device and know exactly where we're going.

Also one of the features in RapidDeploy is mapping, which definitely provides some ease of getting to the scene.

#### The differentiator

So, I keep talking a lot about 12-lead EKG. But for our agency that has been hugely instrumental in helping with our patients. Before, if our coverage was unreliable, and we were in a very rural part of the County, we had a delay in getting those 12-lead EKGs sent to the hospital.

Now with FirstNet, we're able to get coverage anywhere in the County. And we don't have to worry about not being able to send those. We know that our 12-leads are going to go through with no problem. I believe FirstNet provides the best

coverage in the industry and there should be no hesitation in subscribing to the service.

I started in the agency as an EMT. Since I have been in EMS, things have changed drastically. The primary mode of communication when I first started was via cell phone. That was to get in contact with the hospitals and give them reports on our patient's conditions. Also, we rarely would see a 12-lead EKG.

We would monitor somebody's heart, but it was from either a 3- or a 4- lead. So we did not have the ability to look and see if somebody was truly having a heart attack.

A three-lead EKG gives us three looks at a patient's heart. A 12-lead EKG is the gold standard of diagnosing a heart attack or what we call a STEMI in the field. It gives us 12 different views of the patient's heart. With that capability, we have the ability to look at more areas of the heart than we would otherwise.

#### Serving the public

When I first heard about FirstNet, I was very excited. You have or hear about mass casualty incidents or storms that come through. And everybody is trying to get through on their cell phone. With FirstNet, there is safety and reliability of knowing that's not going to happen to our first

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## KANSAS: Franklin County EMS

### Transmitting critical patient data key for agency to join FirstNet

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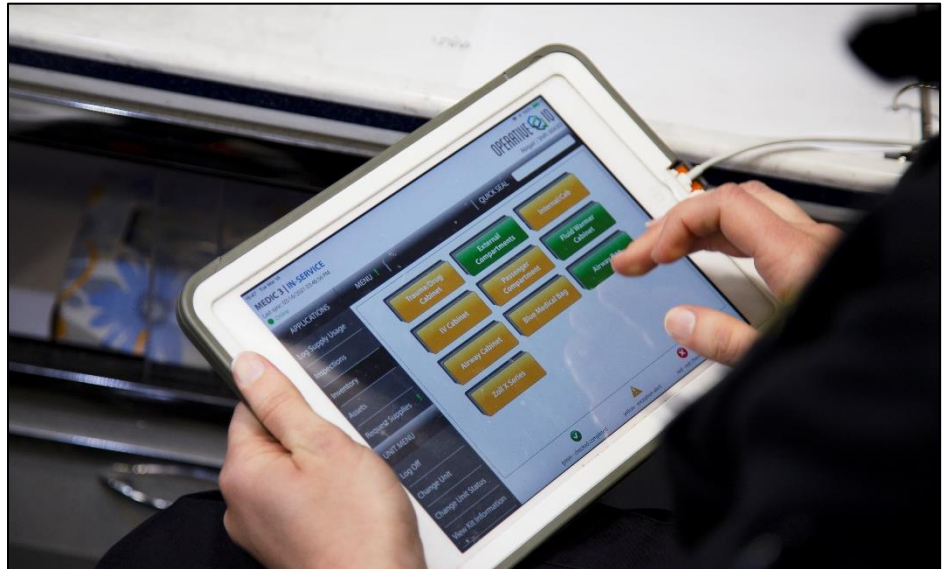
responders. We have priority.

Ultimately, FirstNet is a value to EMS because we know that we'll have the coverage, the reliability we need. We're going to be able to communicate with one another.

If we have the ability to communicate with one another, it means we're better able to serve the public. We know we're going to be able to communicate with law enforcement and with fire departments and bring a better outcome for our citizens here in the county.

*Christi Hilliker is the Assistant EMS Chief for Franklin County EMS. She started with the agency as an EMT, gained her paramedic license,*

*then went on to become a battalion chief, division chief and most recently, assistant chief.*



"Ultimately, FirstNet is a value to EMS because we know that we'll have the coverage, the reliability we need," – **Christi Hilliker**.



### First Responder Agencies:

## FREE SMARTPHONE FOR LIFE\*

Available with a new activation or eligible upgrade on a 2-year service agreement or AT&T installment 30-month agreement.\*

\*Available only to First Responder Agencies, including Medical Emergency Departments, for their Agency Paid Users on FirstNet Mobile—Unlimited for Smartphone line. 2-year agreement: Upgrade your smartphone with a new eligible smartphone every two years at no additional cost for as long as your service plan is in effect and in good standing. Pay \$0.99 for eligible smartphone at purchase, credited back within 3 billing cycles. Upgrade requires new 2-year agreement. AT&T Installment 30-month agreement: Upgrade your smartphone with a new eligible smartphone every time you satisfy your current AT&T Installment agreement and sign a new one for no additional cost for as long as your service plan is in effect and in good standing. For both agreements, tax on full retail price due at sale. Activation and other fees, taxes, charges and restrictions apply. [SEE DETAILS](#)

# FIRSTNET & 5G

## An experience unlike anything else for America's first responders

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### First Responder-Centric 5G

We've upgraded the dedicated FirstNet network core to enable reliable 5G connectivity. And it's being built to intuitively provide America's first responders with an optimal experience. While 5G will ultimately bring a combination of benefits like ultra-low latency and ultra-high speeds to support all kinds of users, it's essential we approach 5G in a different way for first responders. That's why, with FirstNet, we're taking the right steps for public safety in a way that meets their unique mission needs.

5G connectivity on FirstNet will be ideal for IoT and video intelligence solutions. Imagine being able to deploy cameras to the front gate of a stadium and screen attendees' temperature to potentially help prevent the spread of [COVID-19](#). Or using 5G in an ambulance to transmit patient data back to the emergency room. Those are just a few ways 5G on FirstNet could help you achieve your life-saving missions in the future.

"5G for FirstNet is not your typical 5G. Now, there's no doubt that 5G has a lot to offer the entire public safety community, but what's most important is ensuring that as new technologies become available – whether it's 5G, augmented reality, edge computing or others – that we take a first responder-centric view in how we approach its deployment," Jason Porter, President, Public Sector and FirstNet Program at AT&T, said. "That's what we committed to 4 years ago when we became public safety's communications partner, and it's what we will continue to do for decades to come."

This commitment is why FirstNet is the *only* network to provide comprehensive, tower-to-core encryption for public safety. And it's why our work with this community goes beyond connectivity by also helping ensure that those who put their lives on



### 5G+ is Here for Public Safety

America's first responders already have *always-on* priority and preemption across 2.71 million square miles of the country with 4G LTE. And now, public safety is gaining access to **5G+ in parts of 38 cities as well as in more than 20 venues** across the country... with more to come!



○ 38 CITIES

AZ: Phoenix  
CA: Los Angeles, Menlo Park, Oakland, Redwood City, San Bruno, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, West Hollywood  
FL: Jacksonville, Miami, Miami Gardens, Orlando, Tampa  
GA: Atlanta  
IN: Indianapolis  
IL: Chicago  
KY: Louisville  
LA: New Orleans

MD: Baltimore City, Ocean City  
MI: Detroit  
NC: Charlotte, Raleigh  
NV: Las Vegas  
NY: New York City  
OH: Cleveland  
OK: Oklahoma City  
PA: King of Prussia, Philadelphia  
TX: Austin, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Waco  
WI: Milwaukee

● 20+ VENUES

AT&T Stadium  
Arlington  
US Bank Stadium  
Minneapolis  
Hard Rock Stadium  
Miami  
United Center  
Chicago  
Mercedes-Benz Stadium  
Atlanta  
Dodger Stadium  
Los Angeles  
Fiserv Forum  
Milwaukee  
Bank of America Stadium  
Charlotte  
Spectrum Center  
Charlotte  
American Family Field  
Milwaukee  
AT&T Center  
San Antonio

Ball Arena  
Denver  
Oracle Park  
San Francisco  
Raymond James Stadium  
Tampa Bay  
Tampa International Airport  
Tampa Bay  
Las Vegas Convention Center  
Las Vegas  
Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center  
Dallas  
Lucas Oil Stadium  
Indianapolis  
Vivint Arena  
Salt Lake City  
Mercedes-Benz Superdome  
New Orleans  
Toyota Center  
Houston

the line are holistically at their best day in and day out."

First responders in Houston are already experiencing the unique, early benefits. And now, first responders in parts of 38 cities and more than 20 venues will gain access to AT&T mmWave (5G+) spectrum this April, while also maintaining *always-on* priority and preemption across LTE – Band 14 spectrum plus all of AT&T's commercial LTE spectrum bands, which currently covers [2.71 million square miles](#) of the country. This is the beginning of a multi-phase, multi-year journey to deliver full 5G capabilities on FirstNet for public safety, but we're rolling out more locations all the time and will continue to approach 5G for public safety in a way that meets their unique mission needs.

"We are excited to bring 5G to FirstNet and see our investments in the next generation of public safety communications become reality," Edward Parkinson, CEO, FirstNet Authority said. "The FirstNet Authority has spent years working hand-in-hand with public safety across America to plan for, launch and innovate their network. They've told us about the need for a dedicated network that would continue to evolve as technology advanced. While there is more work to

be done to advance mission-critical 5G capabilities for first responders, the FirstNet Authority is thrilled to deliver lifesaving capabilities to first responders with access to this new technology."

### Comprehensive Encryption

Security is paramount. That's why FirstNet is designed with a defense-in-depth security strategy that goes well beyond standard commercial network security measures. This provides protection without sacrificing usability or impacting public safety's missions. And now, we've gone farther than anyone in the industry to secure public safety communications by introducing comprehensive tower-to-core encryption based on open industry standards.

FirstNet will be the first-ever nationwide network with this comprehensive network encryption. That means FirstNet traffic will be automatically secured as it moves from the cell tower, through the backhaul, to the core and back again. Commercial networks may encrypt parts of the communications pathway, but only FirstNet will have encryption along the entire route.

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# FIRSTNET & 5G

## An experience unlike anything else for America's first responders

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To achieve this, we're rolling out security upgrades on every cell tower across the country. Houston and Cleveland are the first 2 cities to benefit this month, with nationwide completion expected by Q1 2022.

### FirstNet Health & Wellness Coalition

Today, the FirstNet network turns 3! And when we set out on this historic and critical initiative, we committed to *Be There* for America's first responders. We understand the service public safety provides to our communities does not come without personal sacrifice and burdens. That's why we've gone beyond our commitment to build and operate FirstNet and established the [FirstNet Health & Wellness Coalition](#). The FirstNet Health & Wellness Coalition has more than 2 dozen members – including organizations like the International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, National Emergency Management Association and [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#). Its mission is to integrate responder, community, industry and academic capabilities to support the health, wellness and readiness of America's first responders. Read more about the FirstNet Health & Wellness Coalition in our [latest blog post](#).

### 5G connectivity on FirstNet

FirstNet was created to truly bring public safety communications into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That means reliable, secure and [interoperable](#) connectivity. While 5G connectivity will ultimately bring a combination of benefits like ultra-low latency and ultra-high speeds to support all kinds of users, it's essential we approach 5G in a different way for first responders. That's why, with FirstNet, we're taking the right steps for public safety in a way that meets their unique mission needs. First responders maintain voice communications with priority and



preemption on LTE, while the intuitive FirstNet network determines the best route for data traffic with compatible devices, whether that's 5G+ or LTE spectrum.

"As the largest juvenile probation department in Texas, it is essential our teams in the field have not only reliable communications, but connectivity built and designed specifically for public safety," Leroy Barrera, Administrator of Information Technology, Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, said.

"And that's exactly what FirstNet is. Being a part of the FirstNet 5G+ trial in Houston has given our team a glimpse into the future of what next-generation technology can provide for our first responders and the communities we serve, and we look forward to seeing public safety's network continue to advance for years to come."

While commercial wireless offerings remain available to public safety, FirstNet continues to grow because it offers distinct advantages from those commercial offerings. And the more than 15,000 agencies and organizations – accounting for more than 2 million connections nationwide – would agree.<sup>1</sup>

### 5G+ connectivity on FirstNet

As a FirstNet subscriber there is no additional charge for 5G connectivity – whether for access to current 5G+ spectrum or future 5G spectrum on FirstNet. All first responders need to

access 5G on FirstNet is a 5G-capable [FirstNet device](#), like the Samsung Galaxy Note 5G Ultra or the Netgear Nighthawk® 5G Mobile Hotspot. And to ensure public safety everywhere can access the power of FirstNet, individual verified first responders not already on FirstNet can sign up [online](#) or at the more than [5,000 AT&T retail stores](#) across the country.

### What is FirstNet?

FirstNet is the only nationwide, high-speed broadband communications platform dedicated to and purpose-built for America's first responders and the extended public safety community. Shaped by the vision of Congress and the first responder community following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, FirstNet stands above commercial offerings. It is built with [AT&T](#) in public-private partnership with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) – an independent agency within the federal government. The FirstNet network is providing first responders with truly dedicated coverage and capacity when they need it, unique benefits like *always-on* priority and preemption, and high-quality Band 14 spectrum. These advanced capabilities help fire, EMS, law enforcement save lives and protect their communities.

<sup>1</sup>As of Feb. 2021