For Immediate Release

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SUBJECT: Text to 911 Service now available in Okeechobee County

Okeechobee County has now integrated texting into its 911 answering system. This will allow residents in need of Fire, EMS or Law Enforcement services to reach an emergency dispatcher via text when calling is not an option. Incoming text-to-911 communications are answered from the same console as voice calls.

The system works by allowing individuals with a text-capable wireless phone to send a message to “911.” Similar to call, a dispatcher will receive the message and begin a text conversation with the individual until law enforcement or fire rescue arrives on scene.

“This is an important enhancement to Okeechobee County’s 911 system and increases the ability of our residents to reach help when needed”, said County Public Safety Director/Fire Chief Ralph Franklin. Chief Franklin also reminds all residents that accessing 911 either by text or telephone should only be done during emergency situations and not for “general” information.