

**HB439 / SB374: Worker's Compensation – Occupational Disease Presumptions –
9-1-1 Specialist**

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Position: Favorable

I am Susan Greentree and I worked for Anne Arundel County 911 for over 35 years, having retired March of 2020. I started in 1984 prior to this county's implementation of 911.

When you dial 911 something is very wrong and the first person you talk to, who is going to help you and send police, fire or EMS to your emergency is me. And those instances in your life are likely and hopefully few. The 911 Specialist is hearing, triaging these events every day... for years. My husband would tell when I got home if I had a hard day, bad calls. He could feel my low mood. My children thought I was overprotective, but I say I was all too aware of dangers and tragedies and feared them for my family.

Calls:

I was the dispatcher on Northern District when an officer who was a close friend was shot at the scene of home where the resident had barricaded himself in his home. I maintained my composure and did my job. As soon as my shift ended, I drove home crying.

I took call in the middle of the night from a woman who lived alone having an asthma attack. Got her information, and units enroute. Stayed on the phone with her, assuring her they were on their way and hearing her increasing labored breathing. Listened to her take her last breath before they arrived. She was in respiratory arrest and medics were unable to revive.

A call from a mother in Sev Pk who got home from work to find her teenage daughter hanging in her bedroom. Mom was hysterical. I tried to coach her on cutting the rope to getting her daughter down so we could do CPR, but she not able to reach to cut the rope and didn't know if it was too late or not. Got units enroute and told mom if you can't get her down grab her around the legs and hold her up. As the few minutes passed the mother was saying I can't hold her any longer. Yes, you can! You're a mom and this is what us mom do. You can hold her. Help is

almost there. The girl was in arrest when medics arrived, they were able to work the arrest and transport to a Baltimore trauma center. I did learn later from my daughter, the girl survived and after several months in rehabilitation she made a full recovery. I know I helped that mother save her daughter's life.

I took a call from a man who checking on his toddler napping and found him with the cord to the blinds wrapped about the toddlers' neck and child blue. I gave CPR instructions and as the ambulance arrived the child's color was returning, and he was breathing.

A call from a homeowner who just had a tree trimmer fall 50-60' from a tree in his yard in Crownsville. The resident was hysterical and co-workers were screaming. The man unsure if the trimmer was alive or not, thought maybe his chest was moving, we started CPR. I continued with the CPR instruction. When the man's mouth was full of blood, tilt his on his side to drain that, restart CPR. Then more was coming from the man's mouth. It was 7 mins we continued this process till EMS arrived. The man was deceased, brains coming out of his mouth.

As a supervisor I was monitoring a call taker taking a very violent call and relaying information to the fire department. A 15-year-old boy had sent his little sister to the neighbor's house and was beating his mother with a bat and yelling "Die bitch die. Don't get up or I'll hit you again" and then we heard him hit her again. All I could think after that was could I love my children as much as I do and one day, they would try to beat me to death.

The countless calls over the years of violence, tragic accidents, crimes, medical emergencies and so many drug overdoses.... in ALL communities. Listening to people's lives being shattered. In the 911 center you just keep going. Each call ends and regardless of what that call was, when the phone rings you answer again and move on. It changes who you are. How you think, what you fear and breaks you down. It is an emotional career, being so up close and personal with the worst of humanity and the worst day in people's lives. I did seek counseling on my own a couple times in all those years. Never mentioned it at work. It was a very different time than now. I loved my job and as much as parts of it pained me, I don't regret my career. I know I helped many people in 35 years, but I also know the scars it left.