

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 195

BY REPRESENTATIVE SELDERS

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: Adds statewide civilian emergency dispatchers to the definition of "first responders" for certain purposes

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 23:1017.1(6), R.S. 29:723(9), and R.S. 40:1372, relative to first  
3 responders; to provide for emergency assistance and preparedness; to expand the  
4 definition of first responders to include civilian emergency dispatchers; to provide  
5 for a definition of civilian emergency dispatchers; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 23:1017.1(6) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §1017.1. Definitions

9 Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following words and  
10 terms, when used in this Part, shall have the following meanings:

11 \* \* \*

12 (6) "First responder" means a volunteer engaged in activities involving the  
13 Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness pursuant to  
14 R.S. 29:721 et seq., and first responders as defined in ~~R.S. 40:1231~~ R.S. 29:723(9)  
15 including but not limited to medical personnel, emergency and medical technicians,  
16 volunteer firemen, auxiliary law enforcement officers, state agency essential  
17 workers, emergency service dispatchers, and emergency response operators, and  
18 members of the Civil Air Patrol.

19 \* \* \*

1 Section 2. R.S. 29:723(9) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

2 §723. Definitions

3 As used in this Chapter:

4 \* \* \*

5 (9) "First responders" means the first arriving organized responders with the  
6 capability and mission to contain, mitigate, and resolve the emergency at hand,  
7 including but not limited to state agency essential workers.

8 \* \* \*

9 Section 3. R.S. 40:1372 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

10 §1372. Definitions

11 As used in this Sub-part:

12 (1) "Civilian employee" means any employee assigned to a position other  
13 than that of police employee.

14 (2) "Department" means the Department of Public Safety.

15 (3) "Division" means the Division of State Police in the Department of  
16 Public Safety.

17 (4) "Emergency response operator" and "emergency services dispatcher"  
18 shall include individuals with and without the ability to provide medical advice as  
19 provided by R.S. 40:1131(22).

20 ~~(4)~~(5) "Employee" means any employee of the Division of State Police in  
21 the Department of Public Safety.

22 (6) "First responder" means a public employee or volunteer whose duties  
23 include responding rapidly to an emergency. The term includes any of the following:

24 (a) A peace officer whose duties include responding rapidly to an  
25 emergency.

26 (b) Fire protection personnel.

27 (c) A volunteer firefighter.

28 (d) An individual certified as emergency medical services personnel.

1           (e) An emergency response operator or emergency services dispatcher who  
2           provides communication support services for an agency by responding to requests  
3           for assistance in emergencies.

4           (f) Other emergency response personnel employed by a state agency.

5           ~~(5)~~(7) "Police employee" means any employee who is assigned to police  
6           work as a peace officer pursuant to R.S. 40:1379.

7           Section 4. The Louisiana State Law Institute is hereby authorized and directed to  
8           arrange in alphabetical order and renumber the definitions provided in R.S. 29:723.

### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 195 Engrossed

2021 Regular Session

Selders

**Abstract:** Adds civilian emergency dispatchers to the definition of "first responder" for purposes of emergency assistance and preparedness and provides a definition for "civilian emergency dispatchers".

Present law (R.S. 23:1017.1(6)) provides a definition of "first responder" as meaning a volunteer engaged in activities involving the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness pursuant to present law (R.S. 29:721 et seq.) and first responders as defined in present law (R.S. 40:1231) including but not limited to medical personnel, emergency and medical technicians, volunteer firemen, auxiliary law enforcement officers, and members of the Civil Air Patrol.

Present law (R.S. 29:739(C)) provides that "first responder" refers to those individuals who in the early stages of an incident are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property, evidence, and the environment, including emergency response providers as defined in Section 2 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101), as well as emergency management, public health, clinical care, public works, and other skilled support personnel, such as equipment operators that provide immediate support services during prevention, response, and recovery operations consistent with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8.

Proposed law retains present law and adds state agency essential workers, emergency service dispatchers, and emergency response operators to the definition of "first responder".

Proposed law retains present law (R.S. 29:723(9)) and adds state agency essential workers to the definition of "first responder".

Proposed law retains present law (R.S. 40:1372) and adds the definition for "emergency response operator", "emergency services dispatcher", and "first responder".

Proposed law authorizes the Louisiana State Law Institute to arrange in alphabetical order and renumber the definitions provided in R.S. 29:723.

(Amends R.S. 23:1017.1(6), R.S. 29:723(9), and R.S. 40:1372)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Judiciary to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Add state agency essential workers, emergency service dispatchers, and emergency response operators to the definition of "first responder".
3. Add definitions for "emergency response operator", "emergency services dispatcher", and "first responder" under State Police Law.