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MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES USE OF  
 DIGITAL 911 TECHNOLOGY TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### ***Citywide Advertising Campaign Also Unveiled***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced two initiatives designed to combat domestic violence in New York City. First, using new technology, the [NYPD](#) will strengthen the ability of District Attorneys to prosecute domestic violence cases by giving them immediate access to high-quality 911 recordings. Second, the City will launch an extensive citywide advertising campaign aimed at perpetrators of domestic violence in November. Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt, Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Yolanda Jimenez, Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications Commissioner Gino P. Menchini, Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson, Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau and Assistant District Attorney of Richmond County Yolanda Rudich attended the announcement.

"Technology has immeasurable potential to improve people's lives and there is no better uses than to protect the vulnerable and punish those who abuse them," Mayor Bloomberg said.

"Digitizing 911 calls will help our District Attorneys bring those who abuse children, their partners or their parents to justice and even help protect those victims as the criminal justice system takes its course. We have no tolerance for those who commit these despicable acts and I hope the new advertising campaign will deter potential abusers and let victims know they can turn to us for help. "

The New York Police Department (NYPD) and the Department of Information, Technology and Telecommunications ([DoITT](#)) have completed work on a new system that digitally records and indexes all calls made to the City's 911 emergency response system. As a result, clear and accurate recordings of these calls can now be retrieved and used by prosecutors within a matter of hours. Prior to the implementation of this new technology, 911 calls were manually retrieved by technicians and provided to prosecutors on cassette tapes, a process that took an average of three months to complete.

The immediate availability of 911 recordings at arraignment will bolster bail applications, increasing the likelihood that domestic violence defendants will be incarcerated pending trial and affording prosecutors greater leverage in negotiating pleas. In some cases, 911 recordings can serve as direct evidence of a

crime. Because victims often decline to testify in domestic violence cases, the use of a 911 recording could substitute for the testimony of a reluctant victim, giving prosecutors sufficient evidence to proceed to trial.

The 911 initiative will begin with a 90-day demonstration period in Kings County, where the new technology will be tested. The program will then be implemented Citywide, where its application will extend beyond domestic violence to include every type of criminal case.

"Previously, the Police Department had to go through a painstaking process of manually searching and listening to tapes to find the relevant 911 call," said Commissioner Kelly. "The new digital process saves police time and gets vital evidence quickly into the hands of prosecutors."

"This is another example of applying technology to make government more efficient," said Commissioner Gino P. Menchini. "Digital audio will make it much easier and faster to pass along vital information from the police to prosecutors in a timely and efficient manner that will help save lives."

"We want to help victims of domestic violence in every way we can," said Commissioner Jimenez. "Our strategy is aimed at getting the public involved, getting the victim to call and providing prosecutors and judges the tools to stop the violence."

"Advances in technology continue to enhance our ability to prosecute those who commit violent crimes and better protect crime victims - especially victims of domestic violence," said Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown. "Digital photos and digital 911 audio help arraignment judges to reach more informed decisions about custody, bail and other relevant issues. I commend Mayor Bloomberg for taking another strong step forward in the fight for public safety."

"For domestic violence victims, the new 911 technology removes the enormous burden of being the sole participant in the criminal prosecution of their batterer," said Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes. "Now, the evidence presented in digital 911 recordings will help prosecutors and judges assess the gravity of the offense, as well as better determine bail and more appropriately negotiate pleas."

"It is our responsibility to use every weapon at our disposal to punish those who commit domestic violence and to deter future occurrences," said Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson. "We welcome the speedy receipt of 911 recordings. This move is certain to enhance these prosecutions."

"This effort to provide prosecutors with 911 audio at an earlier stage is a tremendous step forward in law enforcement's battle on domestic violence," said Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau. "Prosecutors, armed with 911 audio, will be able to start investigations earlier, will be able to make stronger bail applications at arraignments and will end up with better prosecutions overall."

"I hope this encourages people to be alert and to report that which is appropriate," said Richmond County District Attorney William L. Murphy. "If people understand that the information is not going to be garbled and unusable, they may be more apt to step in and place a call. The ordinary citizen is part and parcel of successful law enforcement."

Beginning in mid-November, the City will also launch an

extensive advertising campaign, which was created for the City by Arnell Group, Inc. This campaign aims to raise public awareness about domestic violence. More than 12,000 posters printed in both Spanish and English will be prominently displayed on subways and buses throughout the City, conveying the clear message that those who commit acts of domestic violence will face serious consequences from the criminal justice system.

These initiatives augment the inter-agency program developed in May, the Domestic Violence Response Teams (DVRT). DVRT pinpoints high-risk households and offers comprehensive services through a multi-agency approach. In November, DVRT teams composed of NYPD officers and representatives of City social services agencies will begin implementing combined law enforcement and social service strategies in the 43rd Precinct in the Bronx and the 67th Precinct in Brooklyn, which are among the precincts with the largest number of domestic violence cases in New York City.

The NYPD responds to an average of 600 domestic incidents each day. Murder, rape and felonious assault among intimates have declined 18% in the past year. This year, 60 people have died in New York City as a result of domestic violence. In fiscal year 2002, the City's courts heard close to 25,000 domestic violence cases.

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