Calling Triple Zero (000)



Introduction

Calling triple zero (000) can save someone's life – the emergency services are there to help when someone is seriously unwell, injured or their life is at risk. If the situation is not urgent, you can go to your local health centre, medical centre or call your local doctor.

When to call Triple Zero (000)

When you call Triple Zero you can ask for the police, the ambulance, or the fire service.

Triple Zero (000) is Australia's phone number to call for assistance in emergency situations.

- People with a speech or hearing impairment can use the **One Zero Six (106) text-based service**.

- If you can’t speak English you can call Triple Zero (000) and ask for ‘Police’, ‘Fire’, or ‘Ambulance’. Once connected you need to stay on the line and a translator will be organised.

- Further information in several community languages can be found on the Emergency information in other languages page.

- If you are unable to speak, you will be sent to an interactive voice response (IVR) unit. You will be asked to press ’55’ if you need assistance and police will be despatched.

What happens when I call triple zero?

Triple Zero calls are free.

When you call triple zero (000) you will first hear the recorded message ‘you have dialled emergency triple zero, your call is being connected’.

The triple zero operator will ask you if you need police, fire or ambulance.

Police are for any dangerous situations or accidents, fire are for any fires or car crashes, and ambulance are for anyone who may be hurt or having urgent health problems.

If you don’t know which one you need, you can tell the operator what is happening and ask them who you should be connected to

When do I need an ambulance?

You should call the ambulance when someone is in need of urgent medical help.

Some signs that you or someone else needs urgent medical help are:

- If someone has stopped breathing or is struggling to breath

- If someone has chest pains.

- If you are unable to wake someone up or they are not responding to you in the way they normally would.

- If someone is bleeding heavily.

- If someone has a sudden collapse or fall.

- If someone has been physically injured, including being beaten up, stabbed or shot.

- If you or someone you know expresses thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

- If you or someone you know are experiencing concerning behaviours or severe emotional distress.

- If someone has severe burns, like a large burn or a deep burn.

- If someone has been bitten by a dog or a snake, or an accident that has happened with large animals like horse-riding.

- If someone is having an allergic reaction, this might mean someone's throat or tongue are swelling up, they can't breathe, or they have a bad rash all over their body.

- If you're worried that you or someone you know has used alcohol or drugs in a bad or harmful way. *If someone is drowning or has had a near drowning experience (ask for the police as well).

- If someone is seriously injured and can't get to the emergency department

quickly.

- If someone has had an accident or fall and a part of their body is painful, swollen, they can’t move it or put weight on the injury it may be a broken bone and you should go to the Emergency Department.

When do I need the Fire service?

If there is a fire you can ask for the fire service.

When do I need the Police?

- This could be when someone has been in a fight.
- If you see someone being physically hurt by another person.
- If there is a fight that is getting out of hand.
- If there is a car crash.
- If someone has stolen something.
- If someone has gone missing.
- If you or someone you know is unsafe or scared at home, work, or school. They might be scared as a result of violence, abuse or neglect.
- If you fear for your safety – like if someone has broken into your house, or someone is following you.

Calling the emergency services should only be used when you are need of urgent help.

When you call triple zero

- Try to remain calm and speak clearly.
- Do not hang up until the operator tells you to.
- Try to find out the address of where you are or any buildings or locations that could help them to know how to find you.
- **Tip:** if you don't know your address or where you are, load a map application on a phone or device to find where you are, or you can ask someone nearby.

Questions the operator will ask you

The operator will have many questions to ask you. It's okay if you don't know the answers to the questions, answer as best you can with what you know. The operator's job is to get as much information as possible, this helps the responding emergency crew prepare for what's needed.

The operator will ask you questions such as:

- What's your emergency?
- Is anyone hurt? Are you hurt?
- Is anyone in immediate danger? (That means they might get hurt in some way very soon)

- Are you with the patient now? (That's the person who is unwell or injured)
- Is the patient awake?
- Is the patient breathing? The operator can talk to you about how to know if they are breathing.

Stay on the line and don't hang up until the operator tells you. The operator can provide updates on how far away the ambulance, fire or police are.

> *You will not get in trouble for having taken drugs if you call when there is a drug related emergency. The ambulance is there to help any medical situation, the police will only get involved if there is a crime being committed, if someone is attacking someone else or there has been a death.*

Costs of calling an ambulance

Most of the time the costs of using an ambulance will be covered either by your parent's ambulance cover, or if you are on Centrelink benefits (like a health care card or concession card). The cost of using an Ambulance is not covered by Medicare.

We encourage young people who aren't on a Centrelink benefit and who are over the age of 18 to look at purchasing private health ambulance cover. It is typically $50 per year.

> *The cost of an ambulance should not stop you calling one in an emergency. An ambulance at the right time can save someone's life or prevent long-term injury.*

Read more information about ambulance cover visit Private Health. Have a look at a number of different private health companies to see what they offer so you can find the best price and cover for you.