

911/City Address Change FAQs

Why did my house number have to change?

Some addresses in the city were not compliant with the 911 addressing system as specified by The City of Johnson City (Johnson City) and Washington County Emergency Communications Board (E-911) when it was adopted in a 1987 Referendum. Dispatching for Johnson City by Washington County 911 started in Nov. 1988. Johnson City and E-911 are committed to correcting addresses that are not in compliance for public safety issues. Your address was recently identified as non-compliant and needs to be changed for this reason. Correct property addressing allows 911 call takers, dispatchers, and responders to locate an emergency as quickly as possible, perhaps saving a life.

What are some examples of non-compliance?

Simplified, the main standards are as the address increases, even numbers are on the right side of the road, and odd numbers on the left. Addresses must increase in order along the street. No duplication of addresses can occur. A new address is assigned every 5.28 ft for new subdivisions.

Does Johnson City have other options?

Yes. 1) Do nothing – leave all the incorrect addresses as they are. This places citizens at risk because emergency response vehicles might be unable to find them in an emergency.

2) All addresses within Johnson City could have been changed in 1987 to a standard 5-digit number assigned by E-911. With this option, every address in the city would have changed but this was neither practical, desired, nor necessary. Johnson City and E-911 chose instead to fix only those addresses that were found non-compliant. Johnson City and E-911 recognize that this may cause an inconvenience to those property owners/tenants who have to change their addresses.

How was my new house number chosen?

Once a problem is identified, Johnson City Development Services Dept. works with 911 to determine the best possible address that is National Emergency Numbers Association (NENA) compliant and mails an address change letter to the property owner and/or tenant. NENA addressing standards were adopted in 2004.

When do I need to make the changes?

As soon as possible, however, the US Postal Service will deliver your first class mail to your old address for up to one year. Please refer to the United State Postal Service change of address guidelines at upsp.com or visit your local post office to verify delivery for all mail. This should provide sufficient time to change your address and use pre-addressed materials such as checks and stationary.

Who should I notify about my new address?

Johnson City sends an email notification to all Johnson City departments, E-911 , Washington County Assessor's Office (or Carter or Sullivan County Assessors if the property is within that county), Johnson City Power Board, the US Postal Service, Johnson City School System, and several communications companies. You do NOT have to notify E-911, the Assessor's office, or the Water & Sewer department. They change the address when we notify them. You DO need to notify the Johnson City Power Board. You DO need to notify anyone who sends correspondence, bills, or other mail. Especially change the following: your driver's license, bank, phone service provider/s, other utilities (cable, satellite, alarm companies, etc...) , school system (if applicable), magazines, credit card companies, and anyone else you correspond with. If you have a business web site, change the address on the internet.

Do I need to change my deed?

No. A deed's legal property description is based on the control map and parcel id. The assessor's office does not provide copies of 'changed' deeds. However, we recommend keeping a copy of your official address change letter with your deed. It would be a good idea to provide your lender a copy.

How should I display the numbers on my house or business?

Johnson City follows the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code (F 304.3 Premises identification) which states that buildings shall have *approved* address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numerals or alphabet letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) in height with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inches (12.7 mm). Easily legible numbers are essential for rapid response of emergency personnel.

I haven't changed my address yet. What address should I give to 911 – my old address or my new address?

If an emergency occurs during the transitional period, provide 911 your new address. Your address is already in the E-911 and Johnson City data systems. Using your old address could cause confusion. If your posted number on the dwelling or business is the old address, please give 911 both addresses stating your address was changed fromto This should help avoid confusion when responders arrive. You can also provide 911 with additional identifying information, for example, "the blue house at the top of the hill" or "the apartment in the back". Please change your house number as soon as possible for your personal safety and the safety of others.

What will happen if I don't change my address?

There is a possibility that emergency responders will not be able to find you during an emergency. You may also be held responsible if your non-compliance causes confusion for an emergency responder while trying to locate another address on your street. The US Post office will not deliver to the old address after one year which could cause you to miss bills or other important correspondence.

What should I do if I think my new address has a new issue which might cause confusion for emergency responders?

Contact Monie Honeycutt at tnmonie@johnsoncitytn.org or 423-434-6077 or Ann Howland at howlanda@johnsoncitytn.org or 423-434-6188 and explain the issue. Johnson City and E-911 will research the issue and work with you to ensure your home or business can be found by responders.

What can I do to help ensure that emergency responders can find me quickly?

If you have a land line, contact your telephone company to verify your new 911 address. Post your property address near the telephone or other prominent indoor location for guests, babysitters, renters, or customers. Make sure the numbers posted outside your home meet the codes requirements stated above and are not placed too high or low. Reflective numbers are more visible. Make sure the number is not obstructed or hidden by bushes, plants, weeds or a mailbox flag. Ask yourself, if I was driving down the street for an emergency, could I see my house number, could I find my house, could I find it if the weather was bad? Also, if someone in your home or business has special needs, you may want to call the E-911 non-emergency line and have them add a special information notification to share with responders during an emergency. If you are calling for an emergency, please let 911 know of any special needs information! Sign up to receive free emergency alerts from E-911 by visiting www.wc911.org and click on the Emergency Notifications link. Or call 928-4702 and leave your name, address and telephone number after the recording.