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Representatives from Haven House, Blount County E911, Maryville Police Department and Alcoa Police Department took part in a run-through on Thursday for a Web program on domestic violence 9-1-1 call handling. The training program, also called a webinar, will be broadcast live to 250 public safety agencies nationwide with Blount County experts acting as panelists.

Blount anchors E911 webinar; panel to discuss domestic violence calls before national audience

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Blount County's E911 dispatchers get regular training on handling domestic violence calls, but Thursday's training session promises to be unique.

In an online program broadcast live over the Law Enforcement And Public Safety Channel (LEAPS,TV), a panel of experts from Blount County report on and critique two domestic violence calls, one that's handled flawlessly and another that's not handled well. In the latter part of the program, the panel will take questions and observations from an estimated audience of 2,000 people from about 250 public safety agencies nationwide.

"We've never done anything like this," said Susan Porter, Blount County E911 training officer and panelist. Aside from the online delivery, the web program stands as unique for its mix of agencies and organizations.

The panel includes Porter and Richee Kidd, Blount County E911 Supervisor; Joani Shaver, executive director of Haven House, a domestic violence emergency shelter in Maryville, and Amy Canfield, a licensed professional counselor and program manager for Haven House; Sgt. Keith Fletcher, Alcoa Police Department, and Officer Shelly Irwin, Maryville Police Department field training officer. Rebekkah Hilgraves, president of SheTech and Company, will serve as moderator.

"I'm hoping this training will help dispatchers know, from a law enforcement standpoint, what we need to know in the field," said Fletcher, who has been a member of the Haven House Board of Directors for four years and the Blount County Task Force Against Domestic Violence for 8 years. "They do regular training in this area, but it's always best to get refresher training."

Domestic violence calls represent about half the 9-1-1 calls dispatched, according to Fletcher.

The webinar on Thursday will last 90 minutes. The first 30 minutes will be an anatomy of the two calls in a "just the facts" style, according to the LEAPS program description.

The next hour will focus on sharing insights and observations and fielding viewers' questions.

Registered viewers will get a copy of Blount County E911's Domestic Violence Protocol for handling calls, a 10-point check list for working with domestic violence victims and 9-1-1 calling guidelines for victims of domestic violence from Haven House.

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