



Empowering rural first responders: How Rescue 101 harnessed connectivity to save lives

The T-Mobile® for Government Connecting Heroes® program represents a \$7.7 billion commitment to expand wireless network access for first responders over 10 years. With smartphones, mobile hotspots, and free service, Rescue 101 transformed their emergency response and community training programs.

Working with the community: Rescue 101 Search and Rescue

Based in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Rescue 101 volunteers provide free search, rescue, and disaster response to their community in South Salem, Ohio—and beyond.

Since its inception, Rescue 101 Search and Rescue has deployed volunteers to over 240 emergencies, in response to extreme events including tornadoes, floods, wildfires, and hurricanes.

“There is no place we won’t go to help people in an emergency—that’s always been true. Improved wireless service has allowed us to do so much more and go so much further.”

– Andrew Surratt, Rescue 101 executive director

The challenge of rural first response

Before partnering with Connecting Heroes, first responders at Rescue 101 faced a cumbersome response workflow. Incoming emergency calls reached responders only if coverage was adequate, and then responders had to rely on sluggish connections to access the map and satellite data needed to direct them to emergencies. These inefficiencies slowed them down precisely when unpredictable events demanded speed to save lives.

Through the Connecting Heroes program, T-Mobile worked with Rescue 101 to equip members with five smartphones, including two with mobile hotspots, to provide a signal strong enough to penetrate buildings and the rugged terrain. These devices, alongside free unlimited talk, text, and data services, help members stay connected.

Three key solutions:

Enable constant connectivity with America’s largest and fastest 5G network

T-Mobile offers extensive coverage in rural areas, with a 600MHz signal capable of penetrating even the rugged terrain of the Appalachian Mountains.

Distribute devices to accelerate the work of first responders

Mobile smartphones and hotspots help first responders respond and navigate to emergencies without searching for coverage.

Provide dynamic support that’s ready for what’s next

An open line of communication helps T-Mobile cater services to first responders’ needs and offer expert support in implementing solutions.



Community impact: trainings bolster long-term resilience

Alongside direct response to emergencies, the volunteers of Rescue 101 provide valuable safety trainings to the public. These trainings take place in-person and, increasingly, online—where reliable, high-speed network connectivity is needed to host and deliver training videos and livestreams.

“We teach more than 500 students a year and, especially during the heart of COVID, T-Mobile played a key role in getting us the network speeds and capacity we needed to get the job done.”

– **Andrew Surritt, Rescue 101 executive director**

Scaling virtual training to reach a broader audience

To expand these life-saving trainings, Rescue 101 is launching a statewide Hands-On Practice Experience (HOPE) training program. The goal is to train 10,000 people in CPR, so they can be ready to respond to life-threatening emergencies in their daily lives. Virtual training videos and live-streamed classes, made possible by the mobile hotspots provided by Connecting Heroes, play a crucial role in bringing these resources to more people.

Training to save a life

Samy Rowe, a kindergarten teacher from Greenfield, Ohio, took a CPR course with Rescue 101. Three weeks after giving birth to her son Luke, a life-or-death situation put those skills to the test.

After an appointment with her pediatrician, she visited a local store with her husband and son. She fed her baby, burped him, and placed him back in his car seat. That’s when she noticed something was wrong. “He had a weird look in his eyes. Then I saw that he was turning purple.”

In these critical moments, every second matters. The training with Rescue 101 taught Rowe the urgent need to immediately deliver CPR to her child. Rowe began doing chest compressions and rescue breaths on Luke, while her husband called 911 and started the drive to the hospital across town—arriving in time to save her baby’s life.

“The class [offered by Rescue 101] is so important for everyone, especially new parents. The hospital said CPR saved my son.”
– **Samy Rowe, CPR course graduate**



Connecting Heroes helps first responders stay connected using devices, a powerful network with robust coverage and high-capacity, and unlimited plans at little or no cost. By building strategic relationships with first responder agencies, T-Mobile for Government can tailor solutions to department needs, positioning first responders for success.

To sign up for Connecting Heroes,
visit T-Mobile.com/ConnectingHeroes
or call our team of Government Experts at
1-877-386-4246.