What to do if you need urgent police help through the 999 service, but can’t speak

If you’re in an emergency situation and need police help, but can’t speak, Make Yourself Heard and let the 999 operator know your call is genuine.

WHEN YOU CALL 999
All 999 calls are directed to call centres and will be answered by BT operators. They will ask which service you need. If no service is requested but anything suspicious is heard throughout the process, BT operators will connect you to a police call handler.

IF YOU CALL 999 FROM A MOBILE
It is always best to speak to the operator if you can, even by whispering. You may also be asked to cough or tap the keys on your phone in response to questions.

If making a sound would put you or someone else in danger and the BT operator cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, your call will be transferred to the Silent Solution system.

WHAT THEN?
When transferred to your local police force, the police call handler will attempt to communicate with you by asking simple yes or no questions. If you are not able to speak, listen carefully to the questions and instructions from the call handler so they can assess your call and arrange help if needed.

IF YOU CALL 999 FROM A LANDLINE
Because it’s less likely that 999 calls are made by accident from landlines, the Silent Solution system is not used.

If, when an emergency call on a landline is received:
- there is no request for an emergency
- the caller does not answer questions
- only background noise can be heard and BT operators cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, then you will be connected to a police call handler as doubt exists.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick it up again.

If you pick up again during this 45 seconds and the BT operator is concerned for your safety, the call will be connected to police.

When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about where you’re calling from should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response.

#MakeYourselfHeard
#SilentSolution

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