

Communications Center Operations

800.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the basic functions of the Communications Center (Dispatch). It addresses the immediate information needs of the Department in the course of its normal daily activities and during emergencies.

800.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the San Diego Community College District PD to provide 24-hour service to the campus community for information and for routine or emergency assistance. The Department operates on the City of San Diego's 700 Megahertz multi-site, simulcasting, radio system. This system provides two-way radio capability allowing for continuous communication between Dispatch and department members in the field.

800.3 DISPATCH SECURITY

The communications function is vital and central to all emergency service operations. The safety and security of Dispatch, its members and its equipment must be a high priority. Special security procedures should be established in a separate operations manual for Dispatch.

Access to Dispatch shall be limited to Dispatch members, the command staff and department members with a business-related purpose.

800.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

800.4.1 POLICE COMMUNICATIONS SUPERVISOR

The Chief of Police shall appoint and delegate certain responsibilities to the Police Communications Supervisor. The Police Communications Supervisor is directly responsible to the Chief of Police.

The duties and responsibilities of the Police Communications Supervisor may include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Responsible for the overall operation of Dispatch.
- (b) Interviews, selects and hires personnel according to established guidelines.
- (c) Supervises and evaluates the performance of police dispatchers.
- (d) Administration of district-wide fire and intrusion systems, and video surveillance systems to include the maintenance of records, logs and reports related to alarms, access, camera footage and related dispatching activities;
- (e) Preparing, finalizing and monitoring work schedules for assigned personnel.
- (f) Ensure the radio and telephone recording system is operational.
 - (a) Recordings shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule and as required by law.

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- (g) Processing requests for copies of Dispatch information for release.
- (h) Ensure Dispatch database systems are maintained.
- (i) Preparing and distributing department policies and procedures. Maintaining and updating the Dispatch Standard Operating Procedures manual. Ensure dispatcher compliance with established policies and procedures.
- (j) Handling internal and external inquiries regarding services provided and accepting personnel complaints in accordance to policy.
- (k) Maintaining a current contact list of district personnel to be notified in the event of a utility or facility related service emergency.

800.4.2 ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

The Communications Supervisor should establish procedures for:

- (a) Recording all telephone and radio communications and playback issues.
- (b) Storage and retention of recordings.
- (c) Security of audio and video recordings (e.g., passwords, limited access, authorized reviewers, preservation of recordings past normal retention standards).
- (d) Availability of current information for dispatchers (e.g., Patrol Sergeant contact, rosters, member tracking methods, member contact, maps, emergency providers, tactical dispatch plans).
- (e) Assignment of field members and safety check intervals.
- (f) Procurement of external services (e.g., fire suppression, ambulances, aircraft, tow trucks, taxis).
- (g) Protection of essential equipment (e.g., surge protectors, gaseous fire suppression systems, uninterruptible power systems, generators).
- (h) Protection of radio transmission lines, antennas and power sources for Dispatch (e.g., security cameras, fences).
- (i) Handling misdirected, silent and hang-up calls.
- (j) Radio interoperability issues.

800.4.3 POLICE DISPATCHERS

Police Dispatchers (Dispatcher) report to the Police Communications Supervisor. The responsibilities of the dispatcher include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Receiving and handling all incoming and transmitted communications, including:
 1. Emergency lines.
 2. Business telephone lines.
 3. Radio communications with department members in the field and support resources (e.g., fire department, emergency medical services (EMS), allied agency law enforcement units).

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4. Other electronic sources of information (e.g., text messages,, alarms, video).
- (b) Documenting the field activities of department members and support resources (e.g., fire department, EMS, allied agency law enforcement units).
- (c) Inquiry and entry of information through Dispatch, department and other law enforcement database systems (CLETS, DMV, NCIC).
- (d) Monitoring department video surveillance systems.
- (e) Maintaining the current status of members in the field, their locations and the nature of calls for service.
- (f) Notifying the field supervisor of emergency activity, including, but not limited to:
 1. Vehicle pursuits.
 2. Foot pursuits.
 3. Assignment of emergency response.

800.5 CALL HANDLING

When a call for services is received, the dispatcher will reasonably and quickly attempt to determine whether the call is an emergency or non-emergency, and shall quickly ascertain the call type, location and priority.

If the dispatcher determines that the caller is a limited English proficiency (LEP) individual, the dispatcher should quickly determine whether sufficient information can be obtained to initiate an appropriate response.

If no authorized interpreter is available or the dispatcher is unable to identify the caller's language, the dispatcher will contact the contracted telephonic interpretation service and establish a three-party call connecting the dispatcher, the LEP individual and the interpreter.

Dispatchers should be courteous, patient and respectful at all times.

800.5.1 EMERGENCY CALLS

A call is considered an emergency when there is an immediate or potential threat to life or serious property damage, and the timely arrival of public safety assistance is of the utmost importance. A person reporting an emergency should not be placed on hold until the dispatcher has obtained all necessary information to ensure the safety of the responding department members and affected individuals.

Emergency calls should be dispatched within the allotted thresholds.

- (a) Priority 1 calls, defined as those involving life or death situations, serious crimes in progress and/or calls when injury is imminent, should be dispatched within 5 minutes.

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- (b) Priority 2 calls are defined as those Emergency calls that are non-life threatening. All priority 2 calls should be dispatched within 30 minutes.

The on-duty sergeant shall be notified of pending emergency calls for service when department members are unavailable for dispatch within the expected time frame.

800.5.2 NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

A call is considered a non-emergency call when there is no immediate or potential threat to life or property, all cold reports, all service calls and all officer self-initiated activity. A person reporting a non-emergency may be placed on hold, if necessary, to allow the dispatcher to handle a higher priority or emergency call.

The reporting person should be advised if there will be a delay in the dispatcher returning to the telephone line or when there will be a delay in the response for service.

Priority 3 calls shall be handled as soon as practicable. Field supervisors shall be notified of any extended response delays

800.6 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

The San Diego Community College District Police Department operates on the San Diego Police Department radio system.

The radio system is for official use only, to be used by dispatchers to communicate with department members in the field. All transmissions shall be professional and made in a calm, business like manner, using proper language and correct procedures. Such transmissions shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Members acknowledging the dispatcher with their radio identification call signs and current location.
- (b) Dispatchers acknowledging and responding promptly to all radio transmissions.
- (c) Members keeping the dispatcher advised of their status and location.
- (d) Member and dispatcher acknowledgements shall be concise and without further comment unless additional information is needed.

The Police Communications Supervisor shall be notified of radio procedure violations or other concerns. All complaints and violations will be investigated and reported to the complainant's supervisor and processed through the chain of command.

The system has the ability to patch (mutual aid) with other systems allowing the Department direct communications with more than 30 other law enforcement agencies throughout San Diego County.

800.6.1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION COMPLIANCE

San Diego Community College District PD radio operations shall be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements.

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800.6.2 RADIO IDENTIFICATION

Radio call signs are assigned to department members based on factors such as duty assignment, uniformed patrol assignment and/or member identification number. Dispatchers shall identify themselves on the radio with the appropriate station name, "Station D", and identify the department member by their call sign. Members should use their call signs when initiating communication with the dispatcher. The use of the call sign allows for a brief pause so that the dispatcher can acknowledge the appropriate department member. Members initiating communication with other law enforcement or support agencies shall use their entire radio call sign, which includes the department name and unit number.

800.7 DOCUMENTATION

It shall be the responsibility of Dispatch to document all relevant information on calls for service or self-initiated activity. Dispatchers shall attempt to elicit, document and relay as much information as possible to enhance the safety of the member and assist in anticipating conditions that may be encountered at the scene. Desirable information would include, at a minimum:

- Incident control number.
- Date and time of request.
- Name and address of the reporting person, if possible.
- Type of incident reported.
- Involvement of weapons, drugs and/or alcohol.
- Location of incident reported.
- Identification of members assigned as primary and backup.
- Time of dispatch.
- Time of the responding member's arrival.
- Time of member's return to service.
- Disposition or status of reported incident.

800.8 CONFIDENTIALITY

Information that becomes available through Dispatch may be confidential or sensitive in nature. All members of Dispatch shall treat information that becomes known to them as confidential and release that information in accordance with the Protected Information Policy.

Automated data, such as Department of Motor Vehicle records, warrants, criminal history information, records of internal police files or medical information, shall only be made available to authorized law enforcement personnel. The transmission of sensitive Criminal Justice Information (CJI) and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) must be encrypted pursuant to the FBI CJIS Security Policy sections 5.10 and 5.13; and access may only be provided to authorized individuals as defined under the CLETS PPP and the FBI CJIS Security Policy.

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800.9 TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Dispatchers shall receive training consistent with minimum standards established by POST (Penal Code § 13510).