

# The Dispatch Center

## **802.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy establishes guidelines for the basic functions of dispatch. It addresses the immediate information needs of the department in the course of its normal daily activities and during emergencies.

## **802.2 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Fontana Police Department to provide 24-hour telephone service to the public for information and for routine or emergency assistance. The department provides two-way radio capability providing continuous communication between dispatch and department members in the field.

## **802.3 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 the event of an emergency.

Access to the dispatch center shall be limited to dispatch members, the watch commander, command staff and department members with a specific business-related purpose.

## **802.4 CALL PRIORITIES**

The department did a recent review of call priorities. As a result, some of the priorities were condensed to allow for a priority 1-6 system. Below is the procedure for the handling of calls according to priority.

1) Priority 1 & 2 ***An immediate response is required.*** In the event a beat unit is not available, the call should be dispatched to the next closest available unit(s) regardless of beat assignment. In the event no units are available, dispatch should immediately attempt to break a unit from a non-priority call to respond. If no units are able to break, a verbal broadcast should be made. If no units are able to respond, the Watch Commander should be advised and a notation made in the call card.

2) Priority 3 - 6 Should be dispatched as soon as possible according to beat assignment. If, however, a beat unit is not available and the call appears that it will hold for 30 minutes or more, the call should be dispatched to the next available unit regardless of beat. If no units are available and the call has held for more than 60 minutes, dispatch will make a call back to the reporting party to notify them of the delay (depending on staffing levels) and a notation made in the call card.

Call priorities and their definition:

**Priority 1** - In progress or just occurred calls involving a threat to human life.

**Priority 2** - In progress or just occurred calls involving a threat to property.

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**Priority 3** - Report calls involving a threat to human life. They also include suspicious circumstances, persons, and vehicles, non-injury traffic accidents, and disturbance calls.

**Priority 4** - Report calls involving a threat to property and misdemeanor report calls. They also include public nuisance calls and disturbance report calls.

**Priority 5** - Officer initiated activity, public assists, calls for information and/or documentation purposes, municipal infractions and parking related calls.

**Priority 6** - Animal related calls.

## **802.5 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **802.5.1 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER SUPERVISOR**

The Chief of Police shall appoint and delegate certain responsibilities to a Communications Supervisor. The Communications Supervisor is directly responsible to the Administrative Division Commander or the authorized designee.

The responsibilities of the Communications Supervisor include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Overseeing the efficient and effective operation of Dispatch Center in coordination with other supervisors.
- (b) Scheduling and maintaining dispatcher time records.
- (c) Supervising, training and evaluating dispatchers.
- (d) Maintaining Dispatch Center database systems.
- (e) Maintaining and updating Dispatch Center procedures manual.
  - 1. Procedures for specific types of crime reports may be necessary. For example, specific questions and instructions may be necessary when talking with a victim of a sexual assault to ensure that his/her health and safety needs are met, as well as steps that he/she may take to preserve evidence.
  - 2. Ensuring dispatcher compliance with established policies and procedures.
- (f) Handling internal and external inquiries regarding services provided and accepting personnel complaints in accordance with the Personnel Complaints Policy.
- (g)

### **802.5.2 DISPATCHERS**

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

- (a) Receiving and handling all incoming and transmitted communications, including:
  - (a) Emergency 9-1-1 lines.
  - (b) Other electronic sources of information (e.g., text messages).
  - (c) Radio communications with department members in the field.

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- (d) Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/Text Telephone (TTY) equipment.
- (e) Business telephone lines.
- (b) Documenting the field activities of department members and support resources
- (c) Inquiry and entry of information through Dispatch Center, department and other law enforcement database systems (CLETs, DMV, NCIC).
- (d)
- (e) Maintaining the current status of members in the field, their locations and the nature of calls for service.
- (f) Notifying the Watch Commander or field supervisor of emergency activity, including, but not limited to:
  1. Vehicle pursuits.
  2. Foot pursuits.
  3. Assignment of emergency response.

#### **802.6 CALL HANDLING**

This Department provides members of the public with access to the 9-1-1 system for a single emergency telephone number.

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 by asking four key questions:

- Where?
- What?
- When?
- Who?

If the dispatcher determines that the caller has a hearing and/or speech impairment or disability, he/she shall immediately initiate a connection with the individual via available TDD/TTY equipment or Telephone Relay Service (TRS), as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

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 language assistance is still needed, the language is known and a language-appropriate authorized interpreter is available in Dispatch Center, the dispatcher should immediately connect the LEP caller to the authorized interpreter.

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.

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Dispatchers should be courteous, patient and respectful when dealing with the public.

#### **802.6.1 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 immediately. The Watch Commander shall be notified of pending emergency calls for service when department members are unavailable for dispatch.

#### **802.6.2 NON-EMERGENCY CALLS**

A call is considered a non-emergency call when there is no immediate or potential threat to life or property. 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.

### **802.7 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

The police 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, businesslike 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 Dispatch Center shall be notified of radio procedure violations or other causes for complaint. All complaints and violations will be investigated and reported to the complainant's supervisor and processed through the chain of command.

#### **802.7.1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION COMPLIANCE**

Fontana Police Department radio operations shall be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements.

#### **802.7.2 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. Members should use their call signs when initiating communication with the dispatcher. The use of the call sign allows for a brief

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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 station name.

#### **802.8 DOCUMENTATION**

It shall be the responsibility of Dispatch Center 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.

#### **802.9 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information that becomes available through Dispatch Center may be confidential or sensitive in nature. All members of Dispatch Center 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. Prior to transmitting confidential information via the radio, an admonishment shall be made that confidential information is about to be broadcast.

#### **802.10 TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

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