



## COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER

### DEFINITION

Under general supervision, receives police and emergency calls, and dispatches police and fire field units following prescribed procedures; answers non-emergency calls for public safety and other City departments; performs a variety of general administrative support duties including record keeping, typing, and filing; and performs related work as required.

### SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from Police Services Supervisor. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

### CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the journey-level Communications Dispatcher classification. Positions at this level perform the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. Work is normally reviewed upon completion and for overall results.

### EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

*Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.*

- Performs a variety of dispatching, clerical, and record-keeping duties in support of City-wide emergency and non-emergency police services; coordinates flow of communications between City services to assure appropriate and timely response to City needs and emergencies.
- Operates a telephone to receive routine and emergency requests from City personnel and the public; dispatches police personnel utilizing assigned radio equipment according to established guidelines and procedures, including determining priority of emergency, and contacting and sending appropriate response unit; maintains related call and radio logs.
- Maintains radio communications with City police units; monitors location and status of Police Officers; keeps officers current regarding police, fire, and medical activities, emergencies, and situations; sends back-up units as necessary, ensuring the safety of Police Officers.
- Accesses federal, State, and local law enforcement information databases to obtain information regarding outstanding warrants, criminal history, records information, and vehicle data; relays such information to sworn staff.
- Enters, updates, and retrieves a variety of records from teletype database, including stolen vehicles and property, vehicle registration information, guns and property, and warranted or missing persons.
- Compiles information and statistics and prepares and maintains a variety of records, reports, and files related to crime, calls, dispatches, victims, suspects, witnesses, cases, accidents, and assigned activities; processes and prepares case files for submittal to the District Attorney's office as required.
- Acts as a liaison to the public and representatives of other agencies for the department; provides initial non-emergency contact with the public and representatives of other agencies for the requesting of police records or related services; determines the nature of the contact; provides factual information regarding services, policies, and procedures, which requires knowledge of legal guidelines, departmental policies

- and procedures, and the use of tact and discretion, or directs the caller to the proper individual or agency.
- Performs a variety of clerical support duties; receives and routes telephone calls as required; takes and relays messages; greets and assists visitors; prepares and distributes a variety of correspondence; duplicates and distributes materials as requested.
- Communicates with City personnel, outside agencies, and the public to exchange information and resolve issues or concerns.
- Provides training to other communications dispatchers as assigned by the position.
- Participates in a variety of other assigned activities such as selling dog licenses, monitoring alarm systems, assisting with DARE and other special programs, and arranging for vehicle tows.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of data collection and report preparation.
- Business arithmetic and basic statistical techniques.
- Functions, principles, and practices of law enforcement agencies.
- Telephone and radio procedures, techniques and etiquette.
- Terminology and procedures used in public safety dispatching.
- Operation of computer-aided communications equipment, including multiple telephone lines and radio systems.
- City and County geography, maps, streets, landmarks, and driving directions.
- Applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Record-keeping and report preparation techniques.
- Principles and practices of data processing.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

### **Ability to:**

- Assess and prioritize emergency situations while remaining calm and using sound, independent judgment.
- Perform a variety of dispatching, clerical and record-keeping duties in support of City-wide emergency and non-emergency police services.
- Read and interpret maps and other pertinent documentation.
- Operate a telephone to receive routine and emergency requests from City personnel and the public.
- Perform technical, detailed, and responsible office support work.
- Organize, maintain, and update office database and records systems.
- Make accurate arithmetic and statistical computations.
- Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy.
- Learn local geography, street locations, important buildings and landmarks of the area.
- Learn City and department organization, operations, radio procedures and dispatch guidelines.
- Type or input data at an acceptable rate of speed.
- Maintain records and prepare reports.

- Complete work with many interruptions.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Learn and understand the organization and operation of the City and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:*

Equivalent to graduation from the twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade and one year of general office experience.

**Licenses and Certifications:**

- Possession of a Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Public Safety Dispatcher certificate.
- Incumbents in this classification must complete the P.O.S.T. recertification program every two years.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. Standing in and walking between work areas is frequently required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification frequently bend, stoop, kneel, and reach to perform assigned duties, as well as push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds with the use of proper equipment. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

Employees work in an office environment with constant interruptions, moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, Employees regularly interact with upset public and private representatives in providing services. The principal duties of this class are performed in a police station environment with exposure to criminal offenders, mentally ill individuals, and persons potentially infected with communicable diseases.