

DISPATCHER

DEFINITION

Receives and responds to and/or dispatches 911 police, fire and medical emergency calls, answers non-emergency calls for public safety and other City departments; monitors video cameras in selected City locations and responds as situations warrant; provides office and may provide booking support, as appropriate, on an assigned shift; performs related work as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

General supervision is provided by a non-sworn supervisor or by the sworn commanding officer on shift duty. No direct supervision is provided, however, work instruction and/or review may be provided to less experienced staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This class performs dispatch and police office support duties that do not require performance by a sworn Police Officer. Responsibilities are centered on extensive contact with the public, primarily over the telephone, in both emergency and non-emergency situation and to receive, transmit and provide factual information and assistance. The work involves coordinating interdepartmental activities within the City as well as with other agencies throughout the County. All activities must be performed within specified legal guidelines. Much of the work, particularly on off-shift hours, is performed independently, with only radio contact with sworn staff. This class is distinguished from other non-sworn Police support classes by the emphasis on dispatch responsibilities, maintaining attention to detail and making sound decisions in a variety of situations with individuals from which it may be difficult to elicit information from or provide instructions to.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Illustrative Only)

- Receives and evaluates 911 police, fire and medical emergency calls and related business calls for the City during specified hours; dispatches appropriate public safety staff; provides information and/or transfers calls to the appropriate department, agency or response organization.
- Logs call data in a written or automated format; monitors calls after initial dispatch to provide additional coordination, support or information.
- Accesses federal, state and local law enforcement information databases to obtain and enter information regarding outstanding warrants, criminal history, missing persons, stolen and found automobiles and property, records information, weapons and related data; relays such information to sworn staff.
- Provides initial non-emergency contact with the public and representatives of other agencies for the requesting of police records or for fire or related services at a public counter or over the telephone on a regularly assigned basis; determines the nature of the contact; provides factual information regarding services, policies and procedures or directs the caller to the proper individual or agency.

- Monitors closed circuit television cameras in a variety of City locations; notifies appropriate public safety or other City staff in the event of unusual situations.
- Processes warrants and subpoenas, confirms information provided; maintains status and disposition records and notifies appropriate agencies as required.
- Prepares and processes a variety of reports and records using a word processor and/or typewriter; enters data into the automated law enforcement systems as required.
- Following established procedures distributes to the proper individual or agency, such as the District Attorney, City Attorney, Probation Department, Sheriff's Office or court; files reports and maintains automated or manual logs of departmental actions.
- Maintains accurate departmental and law enforcement records and files; researches and compiles information from such files.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic functions, principles and practices of law enforcement agencies.
- Terminology and procedures used in public safety dispatching.
- Operation of computer-aided communications equipment, including multiple telephone lines, radio systems and closed circuit camera equipment.
- Applicable regulations, policies and statutes.
- Business letter writing and the standard format for correspondence and reports.
- Business arithmetic.
- Correct English usage, including spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Computer applications related to the work.
- Standard office practices and procedures, including records management and the operation of standard office equipment.
- Techniques for effectively dealing with and solving the problems presented by a variety of individuals from various socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, in person and over the telephone.

Skill in:

- Assessing and prioritizing emergency situations while remaining calm and using sound, independent judgment.
- Memorizing codes, names, street locations and other information.
- Interpreting, applying and explaining policies, procedures and regulations.
- Attending to multiple activities simultaneously.
- Obtaining necessary information from individuals in stressful or emergency situations.
- Organizing own work, setting priorities and meeting critical deadlines.
- Performing technical, detailed and responsible technical support work.
- Compiling and summarizing information to prepare clear and accurate reports.
- Using sound, independent judgment within legal, policy and procedural guidelines.
- Maintaining accurate records and files.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.
- Entering data into a computer system with speed and accuracy required for successful job performance.

Education and Experience:

Equivalent to graduation from high school and one year of work experience, preferably involving dealing with the public. One year of experience of dispatching experience in a public safety, medical response or similar setting is desirable.

Working Conditions:

Works predominantly inside. Must pass a detailed background investigation. Must be available to work holidays, weekends and off-hours shifts including, but not limited to, 12 hour shifts on a regular basis; may be required to work extended shifts in relief or emergency situations.

Physical Demands:

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office and law enforcement communications equipment; stamina to maintain attention to detail and work on a computer for an extended period of time; vision to read printed materials, video monitor and a computer screen; strength and stamina to lift and carry 25 pounds; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone.