

# The Dispatch Center

## 802.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the basic functions of the Dispatch Center. 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 Elk Grove Police Department to provide 24-hour telephone service to the public for information and for routine or emergency assistance. The Department utilizes a two-way interoperable radio system to provide continuous communication between the Dispatch Center and department members in the field.

## 802.3 THE DISPATCH CENTER SECURITY

The Dispatch Center function is vital and central to all emergency service operations. The safety and security of the Dispatch Center, its members and its equipment must be a high priority. Dispatchers routinely process sensitive, confidential and restricted information; the Center is therefore designated as a restricted area. Additional security procedures are found in the Dispatch Procedure Manual.

Except as provided below, persons not employed by the City of Elk Grove Police Department are prohibited from entering the Dispatch Center:

- Authorized representatives of allied Public Safety agencies.
- Authorized tours approved by the EGPD, and escorted by an authorized employee or representative.
- Applicants for employment with the Department.
- Authorized vendors and contractors.
- Family members and friends of employees as authorized by a Dispatch Supervisor, Dispatch Manager, or the Support Services Commander.

All persons not meeting the above criteria, shall complete a Dispatch Center Sit-Along Application.

## 802.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

### 802.4.1 DISPATCH MANAGER

The Dispatch Manager ensures the efficient and effective operation of the Dispatch Center. This includes long term planning, coordination with state and county funding sources related to 9-1-1, regional collaboration, implementation and selection of technology projects, policy and procedure recommendations, evaluation of staff, and recruitment/retention.

The Dispatch Manager, with assistance from Information Technology and Dispatch Supervisors selects, procures, implements and maintains all technical systems used in the day to day operation

# Elk Grove Police Department

Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

## *The Dispatch Center*

---

of dispatch duties. All recordings, analysis and data shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule and as required by law. The Dispatch Manager shall ensure procedures are established for:

- (a) Recording all telephone and radio communications and playback issues.
- (b) Storage and retention of recordings.
- (c) Security of audio recordings (e.g., passwords, limited access, authorized reviewers, preservation of recordings past normal retention standards).
- (d) Availability of current information for dispatchers (e.g., Watch Commander contact, rosters, member tracking methods, member contact, maps, emergency providers, tactical dispatch plans).
- (e) Assignment of field members and safety check intervals.
- (f) Handling misdirected, silent and hang-up calls.
- (g) Handling private security alarms, if applicable.
- (h) Radio inoperability issues.
- (i) Emerging issues, such as Next Generation 911, First Net, Radio Service delivery (VoIP, Wireless 911 routing, Text to 911, telephony networks, P25 standards, etc.)

The Dispatch Manager is directly responsible to the Support Services Division Manager.

### 802.4.2 DISPATCH SUPERVISORS

The responsibilities of the Dispatch Supervisors include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Overseeing the efficient and effective day to day operation of the Dispatch Center in coordination with other supervisors.
- (b) Scheduling and maintaining dispatcher time records.
- (c) Supervising, training, mentoring and evaluating dispatchers.
- (d) Creating audio recordings, querying and compiling analysis of technical systems, which include in part: State 911 call answering reports, audio logger, CAD, CLETS/NCIC, and radio statistics
- (e) Processing Dispatch Activity requests (DAR's) for copies of the Dispatch Center information for release.
- (f) Ensuring requests are processed for copies of the Dispatch Center information for release.
- (g) Maintaining and recommending procedure changes and updates to the Dispatch Procedures Manual as needed.
  - 1. Ensuring dispatcher compliance with established policies and procedures.
- (h) Handling internal and external inquiries regarding services provided, accepting and evaluating personnel complaints in accordance with the Personnel Complaints Policy.

# Elk Grove Police Department

Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

## *The Dispatch Center*

---

- (i) Maintaining a current emergency contact list of City personnel.
- (j) Works closely with Dispatch Manager, Information Technology staff and/or product vendors to ensure proper functioning of all technical systems utilized in the Dispatch Center.
- (k) Works closely with the Dispatch Manager to select and implement updated and new technological systems and/or programs.

Dispatch Supervisors report to the Dispatch Manager.

### 802.4.3 DISPATCHERS

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

- (a) Receiving and handling all incoming and transmitted communications, including:
  - 1. Emergency 9-1-1 lines.
  - 2. Business telephone lines.
  - 3. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/Text Telephone (TTY) equipment.
  - 4. Radio communications with department members in the field and support resources (e.g., fire department, emergency medical services (EMS), allied agency law enforcement units).
  - 5. Other electronic sources of information (e.g., text messages).
- (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 the Dispatch Center, department and other law enforcement database systems (RMS, CLETS, DMV, NCIC).
- (d) Maintaining the current status of members in the field, their locations and the nature of calls for service.
- (e) 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.

Dispatchers report to a Dispatch Supervisor.

### 802.5 CALL HANDLING

In alignment with the Department's Mission, Vision and Values dispatchers shall be courteous, patient and respectful when dealing with the public.

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

# Elk Grove Police Department

## Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

### *The Dispatch Center*

---

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 five key questions:

- (a) Where?
- (b) What?
- (c) When?
- (d) Who?
- (e) Weapon?

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 the Dispatch Center, the dispatcher should immediately connect the LEP caller to the authorized interpreter.

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

#### **802.5.2 NON-EMERGENCY CALLS**

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

#### **802.6 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:

# Elk Grove Police Department

## Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

### *The Dispatch Center*

---

- (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 Supervisor 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.

#### **802.6.1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION COMPLIANCE**

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

#### **802.6.2 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 or number, and identify the department member by his/her 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 call sign.

#### **802.7 DOCUMENTATION**

It shall be the responsibility of the Dispatcher 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 officer and assist in anticipating conditions that may be encountered at the scene. Desirable information would include, at a minimum:

- (a) Date and time of request.
- (b) Name and address of the reporting person, if possible.
- (c) Type of incident reported.
- (d) Synopsis of incident including description of people and property involved.
- (e) Involvement of weapons, drugs and/or alcohol.
- (f) Time lapse and direction of travel, if applicable.
- (g) Location of incident reported.
- (h) Identification and location changes of members assigned as primary and backup.
- (i) Time of dispatch.
- (j) Time of the responding officer's arrival.

# Elk Grove Police Department

Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

## *The Dispatch Center*

---

- (k) Time of officer's return to service.
- (l) Disposition or status of reported incident.

Dispatchers will monitor the main radio channel and Sacramento Regional Hotline at all times. Auxiliary channels will be monitored when staffing allows, or upon the request of an officer. Officers are to use EGPD3 or a TAC channel for unit to unit traffic relevant to a specific call.

Officers will utilize the in car computer systems to the full extent the software allows. Officers finding that emergency or safety conditions do not allow for the use of the in car computer systems shall broadcast information over the main radio channel. The dispatcher assigned to the radio channel will update information into the CAD event on behalf of the officer, and will take appropriate action.

### **802.8 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information that becomes available through the Dispatch Center may be confidential or sensitive in nature. All members of the 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.

Notwithstanding the generality of the above, this section 802.8 will not be interpreted, applied, or enforced so as to infringe on EGPD employees' right to engage in collective action as protected by the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act ("MMBA," Gov. Code § 3500 et seq.)

### **802.9 TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

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