	ANDOVER POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER	Number: O2902
		Page: 1 of 6
		Distribution: All

Title: Text to 9-1-1 and TDD		Section: Communications
Issued: 06/12/2018	Effective: 06/20/2018	Revised: 08/11/2023
Rescinds: All Previous		Amends:
CALEA References: LE 81.2.4e, 81.2.9, 81.2.11; COM 6.2.3, 6.2.5, 6.2.6, 6.5.2, 6.5.6, 6.7.1		
Review: Annual	Authority: Chief Buck Buchanan	

I. Purpose

The purpose of this General Order is to establish the guidelines for the handling and accepting of TDD and text messages to 9-1-1 in the event a voice call is not possible due to a speech or hearing impairment, or when the caller's physical safety would be in jeopardy by making a voice 9-1-1 call.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Andover Police Department to further serve the public by establishing and maintaining a uniform method of handling Text to 9-1-1 calls using the Text Control Center (TCC).

III. Definitions

A. **Text Message:** A short, electronic message between two cellular phones, portable devices, or other web-based or cellular device over a phone or data network.

B. **Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTY/TDD):** TTY/TDD is an acronym for Text Telephone, which allows Communication Officers to freely communicate with the deaf, hearing, and voice-impaired callers.

C. **Text Control Center (TCC):** Telecommunication System is a proprietary, web-based product, that allows text messages sent to 911 to be received by the local 9-1-1 center. This is the current method and system used by the telecommunications section.

D. **Short Message Service (SMS):** The transmission of a short text message to and from a mobile phone, fax machine, and/or IP address. Messages must be no longer than 160 alpha-numeric characters and contain no images or graphics. SMS may be referred to as "texting".

E. **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):** Standard Operating Procedures establish methods to be followed routinely for the performance of designated operations or in designated situations.

F. **Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP):** Public Safety Answering Point is a call center responsible for answering calls to an emergency telephone number for police, fire, and ambulance services.

G. **MIS Reporting System:** Management information system (MIS) refers to the processing of information through computers and other intelligent devices to manage and support managerial decisions within an organization.

H. **Kansas Open Records Act (KORA):** Kansas Open Records Act is the Kansas version of the federal Freedom of Information Act. It allows for public inspection and copying of some records maintained by public entities. Not all records are available for public inspection.

I. **NG 9-1-1 Phone:** Next Generation 9-1-1 phone.

IV. Regulations

(This section is intentionally left blank).

V. Procedures

A. Preparing to Receive Text Messages

1. There will be a Communications Officer signed on with their unique login and password to Position One in the Dispatch Center 24 hours a day, seven days a week, unless there is equipment failure.

2. Communications Officers will receive text messages 24 hours a day unless advised otherwise by the Communications Director or their designee (LE 81.2.9; COM 6.5.6a).

B. Processing Text Messages

1. Text to 9-1-1 calls are considered emergency calls and will receive priority response.

2. All Text to 9-1-1 calls received by the Andover Communications Center will generate a call for service in the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) program (COM 6.5.6a&b).

3. A new text message will be indicated by an audible signal and a phone number will appear in the "Text Calls" window on the NG 9-1-1 phone.

4. When the Communications Officer double-clicks on the phone number in the "Text Calls" window, the text message will appear in the "Text Conversations" window.

5. All text to 9-1-1 calls will be answered with the preprogrammed automated response: *"Andover 9-1-1, what is the location of your emergency?"*.

6. In the situation of a non-response from a caller, the Communications Officer will repeat with the preprogrammed automated response, *"Andover 9-1-1, what is the location of your emergency?"*. If there is no message to indicate it might be

a legitimate 9-1-1 text, the Communications Officer should text back *"If you have an emergency, text or call 9-1-1"*. The Communications Officer will leave the conversation open until the line is disconnected by the caller or timed out by the NG 9-1-1 phone system (COM 6.2.6).

7. The Communications Officer should inquire with the caller if they can call in by voice, if it is safe to do so.

8. Communications Officers will obtain and verify the following information:
   a. Street address or intersection, business name, and apartment or suite/unit name (if applicable);
   b. Name of the street (by spelling if necessary) with directional designation;
   c. Street type;
   d. Name of the community for the address, (If the caller provides the street address without including the name of the town, the call taker must text the caller, *"In what town?"* rather than providing a community name to the caller and asking them to provide verification.);
   e. Telephone number.

9. In the event the caller does not know the address, they should be queried about the name of the street, closest intersection, business/landmark, and community information.

10. The Communications Officer must then determine the nature of the problem by texting the phrase *"Ok, tell me exactly what happened?"*
    a. This phrase will be employed on all calls (police, fire, medical).
    b. This question does not have to be asked if the caller reveals the nature of the problem prior to this step in the call-handling process.

11. If the Communications Officer does not understand the caller's question or response, the Communications Officer should seek clarification.

12. Once the emergent or non-emergent nature of the problem is determined, the Communications Officer should (COM 6.2.3b):
    a. Transfer all calls requiring EMS response to the appropriate agency immediately;
    b. Following the appropriate line of questioning, SOP if established;
    c. Classify calls for service:
       i. Priority 1 – High: Call in progress, with a high possibility of personal injury to reporting party or others;
       ii. Priority 2 – Medium: Call in progress, no threat to personal safety of reporting party or others but some degree of risk to property;
       iii. Priority 3 – Low: Call in progress, nuisance calls, no threat to personal safety or property;

        iv.   Priority 4 – Non-Priority: Not in progress, information only, or other reports after the occurrence.

   d. Communications Officers shall use their best judgment from all information presented by the reporting parting in determining at what level to classify the call. These priorities are pre-populated in CAD based on the Nature of the Call, but may be overridden as needed by Communications Officers (COM 6.2.3a).

   e. Communications Officers will dispatch one unit to routine calls for service to maximize police resources and respond to calls for service in the shortest amount of time. Some calls require the response of more than one officer. Such calls shall include, but are not limited to (LE 81.2.4e; COM 6.5.6b):

       a. Any felony crime in progress;

       b. Any aggravated crime;

       c. Resisting arrest;

       d. Fleeing suspect;

       e. Officer requesting assistance;

       f. Any call involving physical or verbal confrontation;

       g. As requested by a supervisor; and

       h. As otherwise directed by other department General Orders.

   f. Whenever a serious incident occurs, which necessitates the response by the Watch Commander, the Watch Commander shall be dispatched to the scene, and they shall then assume command of the incident and coordinate response by other officers or agencies (COM 6.5.6b).

13. No caller is to be offered a specific time frame for the response of police or fire personnel to the scene of an incident. If a caller inquires as to how long it will take for an officer or firefighter to respond, they are to be advised that the responding unit(s) will be there as soon as possible (COM 6.2.3d).

14. Communications Officers will ensure that all scene-safety information is obtained to ensure that bystander and responder safety issues have been addressed.

15. All scene safety and any other pertinent information will be recorded and relayed to the responders as appropriate (COM 6.5.6b).

C. Transferring calls to other Emergency Dispatch Centers (COM 6.2.5, 6.5.6b)

   1. Any misdirected Text to 9-1-1 calls which should be directed to other jurisdictions shall be forwarded to the appropriate agency (LE 81.2.11; COM 6.2.3c).

   2. In the event that the caller needs to be transferred to another PSAP, click the "Dial Directory" button followed by the "Text Call Transfer" button. The

Communications Officer will then select which PSAP to transfer the text to 9-1-1 call to and click the corresponding button.

3. In the event that another PSAP does not accept the text messages, Communications Officers will call the other agency and relay all information to the appropriate agency.

D. Language and Abbreviations

1. At no time will a Communications Officer use 'texting' lingo, shortcuts, acronyms, or emojis. All correspondence from Communications Officers will be in full-length form, with the exception of common acronyms, which include, but are not limited to:
    a. St for Street;
    b. Rd for Road;
    c. Hwy for Highway;
    d. EMS for Emergency Medical Services;
    e. KS for Kansas;
    f. I-xx for Interstate Highways.

E. Disconnecting/Ending a Session

1. All text sessions will be kept open/active until responders have cleared the scene or until Communications Officers have determined that no response is needed (ex. 9-1-1 misdial). Once the text session has been terminated, Communications Officers no longer have the capability to text the caller.

2. To disconnect the text session, click the disconnect button on the screen. When the text call has ended, the caller will receive the following preprogrammed automated response: **"Thank you for contacting the Andover PD, please contact us again when necessary"**, followed by the preprogrammed automated: **"The 911 operator has ended your text session"**.

F. Testing of TDD/TTY Equipment and Text to 9-1-1

1. Documented monthly testing shall be completed by all Communications Officers by the tenth of each month (COM 6.5.2d).

2. Testing should consist of answering a text to 9-1-1 call placed by a department member and text several questions followed by transferring the call to another PSAP.

3. Prior to performing their monthly test, the Communications Officer should coordinate with the agency the test call will be transferred to prior to performing the test to ensure they are not preoccupied with emergency calls.

4. At the conclusion of every quarter (January, April, July, October) the Communications Director will audit and verify the completion of the monthly testing of text to 9-1-1.

G. Training for TDD/TTY

1. All Andover Emergency Communications personnel will receive training on the NG 911 phone system during their initial training (Com 6.5.2b).
2. Communication Officers shall be retrained every six months to include any changes to the TDD/TTY phone system (COM 6.5.2c).

H. Release of SMS Messages

1. The content of SMS Messages to or from the Andover Communications Center are subject to KORA guidelines, and are subject to open record requests. Releasing of SMS Messages will follow the guidelines established in General Order M1118 – Records – Administration (COM 6.7.1b).
2. All requests for SMS Messages will be directed to the Communications Director for approval (COM 6.7.1a & b).
3. Contents of SMS Messages to/from the Andover Communications Center are securely accessible via username and password via the MIS reporting system, ECats, https://ks.ecats911.com/ (COM 6.5.6c, 6.7.1a).
4. ECats has an indefinite retention of the content of SMS Messages. (COM 6.5.6d).