

# Asheville Police Department Policy Manual

**Chapter:** 15 - Support Services

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**Policy:** 1500 - Communications

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## Associated Directives

[Policy 601 - Detainee Search & Transport](#)

[Policy 2002 - Secondary Employment](#)

[SOP 3301 - Records Unit Incident Reports](#)

## Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish effective guidelines for the safe and efficient operations of communications between field units, the public, and the department.

## Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Asheville Police Department (APD) to [efficiently utilize communications equipment for the delivery of law enforcement services](#).

## Rules and Procedures

### 1500.1 Responsibilities

- A. The Buncombe County Communications Center has the authority to direct field units to calls for service within the City of Asheville; however, patrol supervisors are authorized to modify call responses when necessary. Only sworn department supervisors are authorized to modify the response to a call for service.

- B. The on-duty watch commander or designee will have final authority for dispatching and/or holding calls for service.
- C. Department personnel are generally responsible for the following:
  - 1. On-duty department field supervisors or their acting designee will remain available by radio or telephone.
  - 2. Patrol and on-duty field officers must notify the communications center of the beginning of their tour of duty and end of duty by radio, phone, or computer. [81.2.4 a]
  - 3. Officers working secondary employment assignments must notify communications at the beginning of their shift of the location and duration of their assignment and again after the extra-duty shift (see [Policy 2002 - Secondary Employment](#)) by radio, phone, or computer. [81.2.4 a]
  - 4. Officers must notify communications when arriving at a call-for-service, clearing a call for service, or of any vehicle or pedestrian stops by radio. [81.2.4 a]
  - 5. Officers will provide a location and reason when checking in or out of service or other important changes in status to the communications center by radio or phone. [81.2.4 b]
  - 6. Officers will record mileage in the dispatch notes or by radio to the communications center at the beginning and end of transporting detainees or passenger escorts; see [Policies 601 - Detainee Search & Transport](#) and [803 - Escorts](#).

### **1500.2 General Operations**

- A. Law enforcement communication equipment is to be used for official business only.
- B. Only authorized equipment will be used for law enforcement communications.
- C. The department will maintain access to the NCIC, the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems (NLETS), the North Carolina Division of Criminal Information (NC DCI), the Buncombe County Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), and other necessary criminal justice information systems. Access and use will be governed by the rules and procedures established by each system. [81.2.8]

1. Per the Servicing Agreement between the Asheville Police Department and the Buncombe County Emergency Communications Center, all NCIC entries should be entered as completely as possible and in a timely manner. All entries into NCIC must have a second-party check for accuracy and completeness documented in the Records Management System.
2. Buncombe County Emergency Communications personnel are responsible for responding to all hit confirmations received on behalf of the Asheville Police Department. These hit confirmations must be responded to according to the specific time frame NCIC requires.

### **1500.3 Radio Operations**

- A. Agency field personnel will use department-assigned radio call numbers to identify themselves when communicating via radio. [81.2.4 c]
- B. Department members will utilize plain language and the phonetic alphabet designated by the department. Limited use of authorized radio codes (ten codes) is permitted in certain situations for officer safety and/or confidentiality. Only plain speech will be used when communicating with outside agencies. [81.2.4 d]
- C. Radio transmissions must be clear, precise, and concise. Professionalism should guide the verbiage and tone of language.
- D. Employees will utilize the military twenty-four (24) hour time system in all radio transmissions.
- E. Employees will provide a disposition code when clearing a call for service.
- F. Officer-initiated calls for service will be made by radio on the primary police dispatch channel. The type of call, the location, and any pertinent information will be given. [81.2.4 a]

### **1500.4 Emergency Messages [81.2.10]**

- A. Delivering emergency messages is a legitimate law enforcement function and will be handled as a call for service.
- B. Any emergency that requires a law enforcement notification because of distance, the need for timely delivery, unavailability of telephone service, or when there is an indication that the person receiving the message may be adversely impacted by the message and require assistance, may qualify for an emergency delivery. The following may be considered notifications of an emergency nature:

1. Notification of next of kin in the event of death or serious illness, or injury.
  2. Notification of a person to make an emergency phone call.
  3. Other situations, as approved by a department supervisor.
- C. Next-of-kin notifications will be made per [Policy 1800 – Victim-Witness Assistance](#).

#### **1500.5 Recording of Information**

- A. A unique, department-specific case number may be assigned to a call for service record or generated by the communications center for report-taking purposes as established within the CAD and Records Management System (RMS). [82.2.3]
- B. Field personnel [may](#) check in or out of service via [mobile data terminals, which will be recorded](#) and reflected accurately in the CAD system. [81.2.4 b]

#### **1500.6 Recordings and Data**

- A. Authorization for remote digital access to review department telephone and radio recordings will be restricted to designated communications center personnel, the Administrative Services Manager, or others as approved by the chief of police or the Administration Bureau Commander. [81.2.7 c]
- B. Recordings of [Asheville Police Department](#) telephone conversations or radio recordings will not be delivered to any person outside of the communications center except for the following authorized persons:
  1. To department members as needed for the discharge of their official duties.
  2. Other persons at the direction of the chief of police, the Administrative Services Manager, or the chief's designee.
  3. As directed by a court order.
  4. A member of the public pursuant to a public record request as directed by North Carolina General Statutes.
  5. District attorney's office for discovery purposes.
- C. Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) requests will be released by the [Data Accountability Section](#) or designee to lieutenants or above as needed for [departmental](#) purposes.

By order of:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ML LH', positioned above the printed name of Michael Lamb.

Michael Lamb  
Chief of Police