

# COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Policy and Procedure Manual

### RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

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**Approved By:** Geoffrey Jones Chief of Police

**CALEA 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Standard:** 81.2.1; 81.2.2; 81.2.3; 81.2.4; and 81.2.7

#### **302 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **302.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this written directive is to establish guidelines and procedures for radio communications, which includes utilizing two-way radios. These guidelines and procedures also include:

- a. Specifications of the methods and circumstances requiring communications by field personnel;
- b. The recording of the status of field personnel when out of service;
- c. The methods used for identifying field personnel during communications;
- d. The methods and guidance for communication with interacting agencies;
- e. Criteria for the assignment of the number of field personnel in response to an incident;
- f. Circumstances that require the presence of an on-duty supervisor at the scene for the purpose of assuming command; and,
- g. Guidance on responding to a field personnel emergency request for assistance or activated emergency alarm.

##### **302.2 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Columbia Police Department that all members of the department involved in radio usage, which includes the use of two-way radios and any associated equipment, adhere to the guidelines set forth in this written directive.

##### **302.3 DEFINITIONS**

Two-way radio – A two-way radio system consists of multiple radios on a system that enables equipped personnel the ability to communicate back and forth; each can talk to and hear each other. A two-way radio system includes a base station and one or more mobile or portable radio(s), along with the required antennas, cables, and related items.

The two-way radio system used by the Columbia Police Department is a shared system with Boone County Joint Communications and other emergency services operating within Boone County. The term "mobile radio" is given to the radio equipment mounted in a vehicle. The term "portable radio" is given to the small radios that are issued to and carried by each officer, Community Service Aid (CSA), or Crime Scene Investigator (CSI).

##### **302.4 COMMUNICATIONS COMPONENT AND FUNCTION (81.2.1; 81.2.2)**

The communications component and function of the Columbia Police Department is provided through a cooperation with Boone County Joint Communications, which is a Boone County department that is funded and managed independent of the Boone County Sheriff's Department.

Boone County Joint Communication's function and responsibility includes but is not limited to the operation of emergency systems of telephone, radio, and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD). Boone County Joint Communications is responsible for 24-hour radio and telephone communications related to calls for service

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for the Columbia Police Department. This responsibility includes communications between citizens, Columbia Police Department personnel, and numerous other first responder agencies/entities, as well as coordinating with various local, state, and federal agencies/entities.

Boone County Joint Communications provides 24-hour, toll-free, "9-1-1" voice and TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf - aka TTY) telephone access for emergency calls and dispatches calls for service related to any emergency calls received that are within the geographical response area for the Columbia Police Department.

Unless the nature of their assignment is not conducive to doing so, on-duty Columbia Police Officers or other personnel issued two-way radios as part of their official duties will maintain continuous two-way communication capability with Boone County Joint Communications through the use of their assigned portable and mobile radios.

#### **302.5 GENERAL PROCEDURES**

- a. The safety of department personnel is dependent upon radio communications and shall be of paramount concern for all personnel.
- b. The guidelines outlined in this written directive are designed to ensure efficient and professional use of the two-way radio system.
- c. Use of the two-way radio system is for official business only.
- d. Efficient and professional use of the two-way radio system is imperative. In depth discussion, disagreements, or conversations should not take place via radio communications and are best handled over the phone or in person.
- e. All calls/assignments from Boone County Joint Communications that are not contrary to the policies and procedures of this department are to be viewed as an official order. Supervisors do maintain the authority to countermand an assignment for justifiable cause.
- f. Each officer is responsible for monitoring the priority channels/frequencies and responding appropriately when called on those channels/frequencies. These include Main Law and CPD Channel 2 for regular patrol and assignments or any specially designated channels/frequencies for special assignments or details.
- g. False calls, false or fraudulent distress signals, superfluous and unidentified communications, and obscene, indecent, and profane language, and the transmission of unassigned call signals are specifically prohibited.
- h. Words and voice inflections that reflect irritation, disgust, or sarcasm must be avoided while transmitting over the two-way radio. Users should present a neutral attitude with immediate and decisive replies to calls and other transmissions directed to them.
- i. Lengthy messages should be broadcast in segments. It gives the receiver an opportunity to request that a part of the message be repeated, if necessary, and also allows other officers to interrupt with urgent traffic.
- j. Non-repeated channels/frequencies used as "talk around" channels allow for less formal radio communications; however, all communication on these channels will remain professional. The mere fact that they are non-repeated "talk around" channels does not allow for loose talk, cursing, or profane language.
- k. Supervisors should monitor radio traffic to ensure their subordinates are properly monitoring and responding to radio traffic. Each officer is responsible for immediately responding when called by radio. If an officer fails to acknowledge multiple radio transmissions within a short time period, the

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supervisor should intervene by answering the radio traffic or by requesting that Boone County Joint Communications hold or reassign the call as appropriate. The supervisor should also investigate as to why the officer is missing and/or not responding to radio transmissions directed to them.

#### **302.6 RADIO EQUIPMENT (81.2.2)**

Each officer, CSA, and CSI should be equipped with a portable radio at the beginning of their shift unless otherwise directed by a supervisor. Additionally, all vehicles assigned to officers for routine patrol, as well as most other department assigned vehicles, are equipped with a functioning mobile radio. These portable radios and mobile radios will ensure that each officer has continuous two-way communication capability with Boone County Joint Communications, other personnel on-duty, and other agencies as needed.

Each officer is responsible for making the appropriate checks to ensure their assigned portable radio and/or mobile radio is functioning properly. These checks should be performed at the beginning of each shift.

Any defects or issues with assigned radio equipment are to be immediately brought to the attention of the officer's supervisor or shift supervisor. The equipment will be repaired or replaced as necessary to ensure that each officer is properly equipped with properly functioning two-way radio equipment.

#### **302.7 ASSIGNED RADIO UNIT CALL SIGNS (81.2.4)**

All employees authorized to use portable or mobile radios will have an assigned radio unit call sign.

All Columbia Police Department radio unit call signs (a.k.a. radio numbers) will begin with a 1, 2, 3 or 4. This first number identifies the agency within the multi-agency two-way radio system and the shift of the CPD officer or employee. 1 = first shift, 2 = second shift; 3 = third shift; and 4 = fourth shift.

The second character (e.g. 1P10), and possibly the 3<sup>rd</sup> character if a supervisor (e.g., 1SD4), of the Columbia Police Department radio unit call signs designate the assignment. The assignment designations are as follows:

- a. A = Administration – Chief of Police, Assistant Chiefs, Accreditation Manager, and Internal Affairs Supervisor and investigator.
- b. L = Lieutenants
- c. S = Sergeant
- d. P = Patrol
- e. B = Downtown Unit/Court Security
- f. K = Canine
- g. C = Community Service Aid (CSA)
- h. D = Detective
- i. R = School Resource Officer
- j. T = Traffic
- k. O = Community Outreach Unit
- l. E = Special Assignment

When a supervisor is assigned to a specialty, the second character will designate the rank and the third character will designate the assignment. For example, 1SD4 would indicate the officer is a sergeant who is assigned to a detective assignment.

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The last two numbers (e.g., 1PXX) of a radio number for a unit assigned to patrol designate the district to which the unit is assigned. This includes radio numbers with the P or S designation.

#### **302.8 RADIO FREQUENCY ASSIGNMENTS (81.2.4)**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) assigns frequencies, enforces certain operating practices, and generally attempts to promote effective use of the radio spectrum.

Columbia Police Department personnel will use issued two-way radios to exchange information, request assistance, transmit orders or instructions, and to respond to calls for service. All personnel shall follow the rules and regulations of the department related to radio transmissions and all radio operations will be conducted in accordance with FCC procedures and requirements.

Columbia Police Department personnel will use radio frequencies assigned to the Columbia Police Department, as well as frequencies assigned to other agencies with the permission of those agencies.

Columbia Police Department personnel will use the Main Law channel/frequency as the primary law enforcement channel and are responsible for monitoring this channel for dispatched calls for service during regular enforcement assignments and activities. The Main Law channel/frequency is an interoperability channel/frequency that allows for direct communications between Joint Communications and various local law enforcement agencies. Boone County Joint Communications will dispatch calls for service on the Main Law channel/frequency unless the frequency is restricted or busy with high priority radio traffic.

Columbia Police Department personnel will use CPD Channel 2 frequency for services related radio traffic, which includes, but is not limited to, transmissions related to traffic stops, registration checks, driver's license checks, and warrant checks.

Columbia Police Department personnel may use CPD Channel 3 for communications between officers when the communication is less formal and/or when there is no need to use a repeated channel.

With prior authorization, a radio channel/frequency will often be designated as the primary channel/frequency for special assignments. A radio channel/frequency may be assigned by supervisory personnel or Boone County Joint Communications.

Officers may use the other channels/frequencies available as needed and as appropriate; however, the majority of the available frequencies are available to Columbia Police Department Personnel for monitoring purposes and/or for special circumstances/assignments.

#### **302.9 BASIC RADIO USE AND PROCEDURES (81.2.3; 81.2.4)**

a. Notification of Status:

1. It is imperative that officers keep Boone County Joint Communications apprised of any changes in their status. Real time status change notifications allow Boone County Joint Communications to maintain the current status of each unit within the CAD system.
2. Officers are required to advise Boone County Joint Communications when they begin and end their tour of duty. This may be accomplished through radio transmissions, use of the mobile

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data terminal, use of a mobile CAD related application, and occasionally by telephone. This will enable Boone County Joint Communications to maintain a current roster of all personnel on duty at any given time, keep track of the on-duty supervisor or officer in charge, and record the current status of all field personnel.

3. Officers are responsible for advising Joint Communications each time they become involved in an activity other than routine patrol. This may be accomplished through radio transmissions, use of the mobile data terminal, and occasionally by telephone. Officers who are not assigned to uniformed duty assignments shall notify Boone County Joint Communications when they are out on an incident, follow-up, or investigation in the field and also when they are clear from the call.
4. Without exception, officers must notify Boone County Joint Communications through the use of the two-way radio, the mobile data terminal, or other acceptable method(s) when they self-initiate any activity that involves unknown risk or contact with a citizen based on reasonable suspicion that a law has been or is being violated. This includes but is not limited to crimes in progress, disturbances in progress, traffic stops, check subject calls, and suspicious vehicle calls.
5. Through the use of the two-way radio, the mobile data terminal, or other acceptable method(s), units should at a minimum communicate the following when responding to, handling, or clearing a call for service:
  - i. Acknowledgement of the receipt and understanding of all radio transmissions to them;
  - ii. Notification that they are responding or enroute to an incident, call for service, or assigned activity;
  - iii. Notification that they are arrival at an incident, call for service, or assigned activity;
  - iv. Location and nature when Boone County Joint Communications is unaware;
  - v. When changing locations or call nature during an active incident within CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch);
  - vi. Any other status changes that Boone County Joint Communications would need to maintain appropriate status tracking within CAD;
  - vii. When a subject is taken into custody/arrested;
  - viii. When transporting a citizen/prisoner; and
  - ix. When clearing from an incident, call for service, or assigned activity.

#### **302.9.1 TRANSMITTING PROCEDURES**

- a. It is important that all radio transmissions be clear, brief, and informative. The following list includes recommendations for the use of the two-way radio specific to transmissions:
  1. THINK before you transmit;
  2. Know what you want to say;
  3. Hold your microphone in the proper position, approximately two inches from the mouth and at an angle;
  4. Listen briefly to make sure no one else is transmitting;
  5. Press microphone button firmly, wait one second, and give your transmission. Release the microphone button as soon as you stop talking;
  6. Be as brief as possible, but don't rush your message;
  7. Speak clearly and distinctly; and

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8. Maintain a constant volume, but do not shout or yell into the microphone.
- b. When transmitting and initiating a radio dialogue, the officer should state their radio unit call sign first and then the radio unit call sign of the unit they are wishing to speak to. For example, if an officer is trying to contact Boone County Joint Communications, they should state their radio unit call sign and then identify Boone County Joint Communications (e.g., "1-SAM-50 to Boone County"). The officer will then wait until the unit they are calling acknowledges the call.
- c. Emergency radio traffic will take precedence over all other radio traffic.
- d. Except in urgent situations, officers will ensure that the radio channel/frequency is clear before transmitting. If there is an emergency or the radio traffic is urgent, an officer may break in by stating their radio unit call sign followed by "break", "break traffic", or "rush traffic". This will communicate to all units that the officer has urgent or emergency radio traffic.
- e. During radio transmissions, officers should be referred to by their radio unit call sign.
- f. Whenever possible, personnel will utilize "plain English" during communications using the two-way radio system.

#### 302.9.2 RADIO CODES

There are a few acceptable 10-codes that may be used. These codes include:

- **J4** – Deceased
- **10-12** – Person is within close proximity or officer transporting someone
- **10-15** – In Custody
- **10-20** – Location
- **10-55** – Intoxicated
- **10-99 J1** – Misdemeanor Warrant
- **10-99 J2** – Felony Warrant
- **10-99 J3** – Warrant/Use Caution May be Armed
- **10-99 J4** – Warrant/Use Extreme Caution
- **Caution Indicator 1** – Subject has prior criminal arrest record/conviction
- **Caution Indicator 2** – Subject is known to be armed and/or physically violent
- **Caution Indicator 3** – Subject is known to assault and/or obstruct law enforcement officers

#### 302.9.3 PHONETIC ALPHABET

In broadcasting information, spell the names out phonetically for accuracy.

When spelling or using letters in radio transmissions, personnel should use the following phonetic alphabet:

<b>A</b> .....Adam	<b>N</b> .....Nora
<b>B</b> .....Boy	<b>O</b> .....Ocean
<b>C</b> .....Charles	<b>P</b> .....Paul
<b>D</b> .....David	<b>Q</b> .....Queen
<b>E</b> .....Edward	<b>R</b> .....Robert
<b>F</b> .....Frank	<b>S</b> .....Sam
<b>G</b> .....George	<b>T</b> .....Tom

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H.....Henry	U.....Union
I..... Ida	V.....Victor
J.....John	W.....William
K.....King	X.....X-Ray
L.....Lincoln	Y.....Young
M.....Mary	Z.....Zebra

#### 302.9.4 RESTRICTING RADIO CHANNELS/FREQUENCIES

Occasionally, the serious nature of a call will necessitate restricting a radio channel/frequency for the exclusive use by personnel assigned to that call. Any officer may request a frequency be restricted; however, Boone County Joint Communications is the authority to restrict or release a channel/frequency restriction.

When requesting a frequency/channel be restricted, personnel should be aware of what agencies are involved to ensure that all personnel involved in an incident have the ability to monitor and transmit on the restricted frequency. Most multi-jurisdictional calls for service that need a restricted channel/frequency will best be served by restricting the Main Law channel.

When a radio channel/frequency is restricted, Columbia Police Department personnel will not use the channel/frequency unless the transmission is related to the call for service for which the radio channel/frequency is restricted.

#### 302.10 CALL PRIORITY LEVELS AND PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

Boone County Joint Communications maintains a nature code list, which contains all of the various nature code options for all Columbia Police Department calls for service. Each nature code is programmed into the CAD system with the appropriate priority status and the personnel response assignment.

The location of the incident will dictate which units are dispatched based on the geographic location of the units (determined by GPS) and/or by the unit's assigned response areas.

##### 302.10.1 CALL PRIORITY LEVELS

Boone County Joint Communications utilizes the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) Police Priority Dispatch System (PPDS). Calls for service are prioritized by the PPDS system into one of six levels based on the circumstances (i.e., the information received). Each PPDS level is assigned a Dispatch Priority in the CAD system. Dispatch Priority 1 is the highest and Dispatch Priority 6 is the lowest. Calls with a priority level of 1, 2, or 3 will be color coded within the CAD system as red, yellow, or green respectively. These are generally defined as follows:

<u>PPDS Level</u>		<u>Dispatch Priority – Definition</u>
Echo	1	Urgent Priority
Delta	1 & 2	Urgent, High Priority
Charlie	3	High Priority
Bravo	4	Priority (Cold Call)
Alpha	5	Routine Priority



Omega

6

Low Priority (possible referral)

CAD prioritizes self-initiated incidents of low priority as level 7, 8 and 9 for incidents of low priority and documentation.

### **302.10.2 CALL ASSIGNMENT BASED ON NATURE CODE (81.2.4)**

The administration at the Columbia Police Department has evaluated the various nature codes used by Boone County Joint Communications and determined the appropriate minimum responses and personnel assignment for each nature code. These response standards are maintained in CAD to enable the proper dispatch recommendations when a call is entered into CAD.

The nature code list agreed upon by Boone County Joint Communications and the Columbia Police Department lists the number of officers and supervisors that must be dispatched for each nature code. For example, two officers and one supervisor must be dispatched to a call classified as a Death Investigation, which is a Level 2 incident.

The Columbia Police Department administration has determined certain calls for service that will automatically require an on-duty supervisor to be dispatched. This will ensure the supervisor is aware of an incident that may require their presence for the purposes of assuming command. The following types of calls will require the dispatch of the on-duty supervisor; however, the complete list of call types/nature codes will be maintained within the CAD system by Boone County Joint Communications.

Call types requiring the dispatch of the on-duty supervisor include, but may not be limited to:

- a. Death Investigations (other than expected deaths)
- b. Hostage Incidents
- c. Abduction Incidents
- d. Abandonment Incidents
- e. Assaults with Weapons (armed suspect)
- f. Home Invasions
- g. Burglary Incidents with Weapons (armed suspect)
- h. Disturbances with Weapons
- i. Explosions
- j. Missing Persons at Risk Incidents
- k. Officer Down Incidents
- l. Robberies with Weapons (armed suspect)
- m. Behavioral Problems with Weapons (armed suspect)
- n. Carjacking Incidents
- o. Suicidal Subject with Weapon Incidents (armed suspect)
- p. Suicide Attempt with Weapon Incidents (armed suspect)
- q. Thefts Involving Weapons (armed suspect)
- r. Active Assailant Incidents
- s. Aircraft Accidents
- t. Train Collisions
- u. Vehicle Collisions Involving Haz-Mat with Extenuating Circumstances
- v. Animal Attacks in Progress



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- w. Dangerous Animal Complaints
- x. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Incidents
- y. Bomb Threats
- z. Chemical Biological Radioactive Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents
- aa. Commercial Robbery Incidents

It is understood that not all calls will neatly fit within a specific nature code and response parameters. Officers and supervisors must continually evaluate known circumstances related to any call for service and monitor developing information to ensure an appropriate response. At their discretion, responding units may ask for additional units to assist. Supervisors maintain the authority to change the number of units on any call for service.

### **302.10.3 SPECIAL ALERT TONES (81.2.4)**

Boone County Joint Communications uses radio alert tones to signify the dispatch of in-progress or just-occurred crimes, as well as for other incidents of a serious or significant nature. Officers should be familiar with the meaning of each of the tone categories below and be prepared to respond appropriately.

- a. One (1) Tone
  - 1. Minor crime in progress (e.g., theft, vandalism, etc.);
  - 2. Minor crime occurred within past 15 minutes with suspect information;
  - 3. Bank alarm during business hours; and
  - 4. Human activated alarm (e.g., panic, duress, and hold-up alarms).
- b. Two (2) Alert Tones
  - 1. Major crime in progress (e.g., robbery, burglary, etc.);
  - 2. Major crime just occurred (within past 15 minutes); and
  - 3. Disturbance with any weapon(s).
- c. Three (3) Alert Tones
  - 1. Officer needs emergency assistance.
- d. One (1) Warble Tone
  - 1. Motor vehicle pursuit / foot chase; and
  - 2. Channel restricted.

### **302.10.4 EMERGENCY BUTTON ACTIVATION (81.2.4)**

Each portable radio is equipped with an emergency button that is programmed to send an emergency notification to the two-way radio system. When an emergency button on a portable radio is activated, Boone County Joint Communications will check the status of the officer assigned to that portable radio.

Additionally, units may enter a key sequence of QQQ within the MCT program on the mobile computer terminal to activate an emergency notification and request for assistance. This emergency activation is tied to the unit

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and their GPS location, which will allow Boone County Joint Communications and other units to see the location of the unit in need of assistance as well as their identity.

When either emergency notification is received by Boone County Joint Communications, they will attempt to check the status of the identified unit over the radio. If the unit fails to respond or responds that they need emergency assistance, Boone County Joint Communications will send out a three (3) tone alert and dispatch units to assist the unit in need of assistance.

#### **302.11 COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER AGENCIES (81.2.4)**

Columbia Police Department personnel have radio access to communicate directly with other agencies through the use of a large programmed frequency bank in both portable and mobile two-way radios. These other agencies include but are not limited to most first responders (e.g., law, fire, and EMS personnel) operating within Boone County and numerous law enforcement agencies in counties surrounding Boone County.

When communicating with any other agency on shared local channels/frequencies (e.g., Main Law, BCSD Channel 2, CPD Channel 2, etc.), personnel will only need to identify themselves with their radio unit call sign. When communicating with other agencies on their frequency or a state-wide frequency (e.g., Centralia PD, Mutual Aid, etc.), personnel should identify themselves by agency and radio unit call sign and identify the unit they are calling by agency and radio unit call sign (e.g., "CPD 1P50 to MSHP").

#### **302.12 AUDIO RECORDINGS OF RADIO TRAFFIC AND CALLS FOR SERVICE (81.2.3; 81.2.7)**

Boone County Joint Communications records all 911 calls, radio communications, and incoming calls for service. As such, they have the capability of immediate playback of the recorded telephone and radio conversations, even while maintaining continuous recording of radio transmissions and emergency telephone conversations within the communications center.

All recordings of telephone calls and radio transmissions are securely saved, handled, and retained on a secure server for at least one (1) year in accordance with the Missouri Secretary of State's Record Retention Schedule and may be provided upon request. These recordings are the sole property of Boone County Joint Communications and access to them is limited; however, they may be obtained as needed through a specific procedure.

Should an officer need a recording of a telephone call or radio traffic related to an incident for evidentiary purposes, they must complete a Boone County Joint Communications Inter-Agency Information Request form which may be found on [Boone County Joint Communication's website](#). If the request is approved, a copy of the requested recording(s) will be provided to the requesting officer.

Any request for recordings other than for investigatory or evidentiary purposes must be approved by a supervisor prior to making the request as an Inter-Agency Information Request. These types of requests may include, but not be limited to, requests for recordings due to a concern for the quality of service provided.