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81.2 Communications Section

- A. The Communications Section operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It handles the *Department's* 24-hour telephone service, receives all 911 calls and text-to-911 messages made or transferred to the *Department* answers the non-emergency contact number of (480) 948-7410, and using two-way radio communication dispatches *officers* to respond to those calls, as necessary. To facilitate access, the *Department* provides a 24-hour, toll-free voice, real-time text and *TTY/TDD* telephone access.
 1. All new communications personnel shall successfully complete a Communications Training Officer program and/or other accepted training.
 2. All employees appointed to conduct new communications personnel training shall complete a Communications Training Officer course.
- B. Telephone calls are to be answered courteously and as quickly as resources permit with 911 calls having first priority. The call taker should quickly gather all essential information from the caller, determine if the caller wants *officer* contact, and dispatch *the* call in accordance with *Department* priorities, provide the caller with the information requested, or provide the caller a referral to another agency.
- C. The Communications Section operates in accordance with the *Communications Section Standard Operating Procedures*, which shall be maintained and kept up to date by the *Communications Manager*. Among other things, the *Communications Section Standard Operating Procedures* shall specify a quality assurance program that supports operational expectations and how Communications *personnel* are able to have immediate access to the following departmental resources:
 1. The current *Department and Communications* organizational chart.
 2. The command structure for the *Department and Communications*.
 3. The on-duty *Department and Communications supervisors*.
 4. Duty roster of all *personnel*.
 5. Residential/cell telephone number of every agency member.
 6. Visual maps detailing the *agency's* service area.



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7. Officer status indicators.
 8. Written procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services to the *agency*.
 9. Tactical dispatching plans.
 10. Contingency plans for a back-up location (see *Communications Section SOP 2.1*).
- D. Services to *victims* and witnesses are of the utmost importance. Communications *personnel* will refer requests by *victims*/witnesses for information or services to the *on-duty* patrol supervisor.
- E. Communications *personnel* shall immediately relay information from misdirected emergency calls for service (including emergency medical dispatch) to the appropriate agency, either through direct line transfer for 9-1-1 and non-emergency calls or by calling the appropriate agency directly when the calls are received other than on the 9-1-1 system.
- F. First aid or emergency first aid will not be provided by Communications *personnel*, who shall instead immediately transfer and/or connect the person with the Fire Department. Communications *personnel* shall stay on the line to make sure the Fire Department is connected to the caller and the emergency nature of the call is communicated to the Fire Dispatcher. Officers will be dispatched to first aid/EMS calls unless cancelled by a supervisor.
- G. Alarms
1. Police Response to Alarms
 - a. **Burglar Alarms:** A silent or audible alarm that has been activated by an unknown source.
 - 1) Upon receipt of a *burglar alarm* call from a community member, an alarm monitoring company, or a Police Alarm Monitored (PAM) account Communications *personnel* shall ascertain the following information:



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- a) Address and the homeowner's name or name of the business and the phone number to the location.
 - b) Type of alarm: audible, silent, business, or residential.
 - c) Location of activation: front door, rear window, etc.
 - d) Suspect and/or suspect vehicle information, if available - to include direction of travel.
 - e) Responsible party information.
 - f) Complainant's name, address, and callback number.
- 2) Two (2) *officers will* be dispatched on all *burglar alarm* calls unless otherwise directed by an *on-duty patrol supervisor*. For *officer* safety reasons a second unit *should* continue to the alarm call until at least one unit is on scene and has advised that the scene is secure.
- 3) *Officers* responding to *burglar alarm* calls *shall* treat each call as a potential burglary in progress.
- b. **Panic Alarms:** A silent alarm device designed to be activated by a person as a means of alerting authorities that an emergency situation exists.
- 1) Upon receipt of a *panic alarm* call, Communications *personnel shall* obtain the following information:
 - a) Location and the homeowners' name or name of the business and the phone number to the location.
 - b) Any known information regarding occupants of residence or business, i.e., health problems.
 - c) Responsible party information.
 - d) Complainant's name, address, and callback number.



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- 2) Two (2) *officers will* be dispatched on all *panic alarm* calls.
- 3) *Officers* responding to *panic alarm* calls *shall* handle each call of this type as an unknown trouble call and *will* exercise every precaution when investigating the incident.
- c. **Hold-up Alarms:** A device designed for the detection of a robbery or commission of an unlawful act that has been intentionally activated by a person. Two *officers will* be immediately dispatched, and the call *will* be handled as a crime in progress call.
- d. **Storm Response:**
 - 2) During a severe storm or inclement weather conditions, the *on-duty patrol shift supervisor may* decide that there are not enough *officers*, or other resources, available to respond to certain *burglar alarms*. If this occurs, the *patrol shift supervisor may* direct the dispatcher to hold alarms by declaring a **Storm Response** until further advised.
 - 3) For dispatch purposes, please be aware that *Storm Response* does not mean that the *Paradise Valley Police Department will* not respond to alarms. It only means that the *Department* does not have the resources to respond to routine, single event, *burglar alarms* where there is a high probability that the alarm could be weather related. If there are other compelling factors relating to a *burglar alarm* as reported by the alarm company/monitoring center, the dispatcher *will* dispatch the call with all relevant information.
 - a) Examples of this would be multiple trip *burglar alarms* such as door entry with motion detector activation, or Sonitrol type systems where audible activity is occurring at the location of the alarm.
- 4) **Limited Response Notification:**

The dispatcher *shall* advise all alarm companies/monitoring centers of the limited response condition when they report an



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alarm and that we *will* attempt to have an *officer* check the premises when resources become available as determined by the patrol *shift supervisor*.

- a) The dispatcher *will* not provide the alarm company with any ETA.

5) **Fire and Medical Alarms:**

The dispatcher *shall* continue to take appropriate action on all fire and medical alarms. When a Fire/Medical alarm is received, the dispatcher *will* notify the Fire Department as soon as possible.

- a) If the Fire Department requests a Police response with them to an alarm, a CFS *will* be started, and the patrol *shift supervisor will* be advised. If the patrol *shift supervisor* advises the dispatcher to disregard it, such *will* be noted in the narrative of the CFS assigned to the alarm, the Fire Dispatch *will* be advised and the CFS *will* be closed with the appropriate disposition.

6) **Panic Alarms:**

If the alarm is a Panic or Distress type alarm, the dispatcher *will* start a CFS and dispatch the closest available *officer*. If the patrol *shift supervisor* advises the dispatcher to disregard the alarm, such *will* be noted in the narrative of the CFS and the CFS *will* be closed with the appropriate disposition. If the patrol *shift supervisor* advises the dispatcher to hold the call, the dispatcher *will* then do so, noting such in the narrative and the CFS *will* not be closed until proper disposition is made by patrol.

7) **Call For Service (CFS) Record:**

- a) Anytime the patrol *shift supervisor* advises the dispatcher that patrol is in *Storm Response*, a CFS *will* be started using the CFS Type: **Storm Response**. The dispatcher *will* record the name of the patrol *shift supervisor* who made the declaration in the narrative. This



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CFS *will* be kept open, and the appropriate entries *will* be made as outlined below.

1) **Time Period:**

a) The *Storm Response* *will* be for a period of time **not longer than** one hour. All alarm companies/alarm monitoring centers that call in with a single event *burglar alarm* during this time *will* be advised of the limited response to *burglar alarms* AND the estimated time remaining for the curtailment.

b) At the end of the one-hour period, the dispatcher *will* alert the patrol *shift supervisor* and determine if he/she wishes to continue under *Storm Response* conditions. If the patrol *shift supervisor* indicates to continue, the dispatcher *will* enter the *shift supervisor's* name in the narrative of the CFS and the one-hour time period begins once more.

c) At the end of the storm, or inclement weather, and when the patrol *shift supervisor* directs that patrol again respond to *burglar alarms*, such *will* be noted in the narrative of the CFS.

8) **Unchecked Reported Alarms:**

a) During the period of time that patrol is in *Storm Response*, the dispatcher *will* continue to enter a CFS for each reported alarm

b) The CFS *will* include the address, alarm location or zone (i.e.: rear door, bedroom window, etc.), owner's name and telephone number, and alarm company (or PAM). **When in a *Storm Response*, rapid entry is essential, and it is



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often not possible for all information to be added or verified, therefore, obtaining the address and coverage is acceptable. If time permits, adding homeowner contact and Alarm Company is helpful.

- c) Once patrol is back to normal operations, *officers will* begin responding to any pending alarms by self-dispatching to them via *MDC*. The *officer will* then update the CFS with the type of premise check conducted (drive by, walked, etc.), what was found, etc., and *will* be closed with the appropriate disposition.
- d) If there are any alarm locations that are not checked for any reason, the CFS number *will* be noted in the narrative of the *Storm Response* CFS. Once all the unchecked alarm locations are entered, the CFS *may* be closed.

81.2.1 Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)

A. CAD is used to manage the activities of field units and for obtaining and recording relevant information regarding police services, including both dispatched and self- initiated activity. The system records the following information, either automatically or as entered:

- 1) *report* number.
- 2) date and time of request.
- 3) complainant's name and address.
- 4) type of incident.
- 5) location.
- 6) identification of *officers/personnel* assigned as primary and backup
- 7) time of dispatch.
- 8) time of officer's arrival



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9) time officer returns to service.

10) disposition code.

11) out-of- service status.

- B. Any request for service, no matter how received (phone, text-to-911, self-initiated, etc.), will be entered by Dispatch into CAD with as much information as possible to inform the responding officers of what may be encountered at the scene.
- C. The CAD system is linked to several local, state, regional, and federal databases, primarily through the *Arizona Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIS)*. Usage of the *ACJIS* system and the procedures governing its use are specified in the *Communications Section Standard Operating Procedures*. The *Records Management System (RMS)* and *Mobile* software also permits officers to run their own basic information requests (licenses, plates, warrants, etc.) for authorized purposes.

81.2.2 Dispatch Guidelines; Call Priority System

- A. The *Chief of Police* shall establish a call priority system and timeframes for when calls for service shall be dispatched. The dispatcher *will* escalate or de-escalate individual call priorities based on established guidelines, as follows:

- 1) **Priority 1:** Is the highest level of priority, representing in-progress, or just occurred, with life threatening circumstances where there is a presence of weapon or dangerous instrument, or significant loss of life, major injury, or immediate apprehension of suspect.

All life-threatening *Priority 1* calls are dispatched to the beat unit and closest backup using the alert tone with the nature of the incident and the location provided.

Non-life-threatening *Priority 1* calls are dispatched to the beat unit and closest backup with the nature of incident and location provided.

The alert tone is not an authorization for PVPD Officers to respond Code 3.



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- 2) **Priority 2:** Crime reports occurring within the past 30 minutes or minor in progress calls with threats to property, or in progress calls with no threat to life.

The Dispatcher will dispatch a Priority 2 call to available officers according to beat.

- 3) **Priority 3 – Routine:** Priority three calls include any incident not in progress or just occurred, no expected chance for immediate apprehension of suspect.

The Dispatcher will dispatch a Priority 3 call to available officers according to beat.

- C. The priority of a call, the size and scope of the incident, *officer* safety and the number of *officers* available for response *shall* determine the number of *officers* and *supervisors* initially assigned to a call. *Officers* or *supervisors* may request additional or fewer *personnel* as appropriate.
- D. All *employees* who are provided with a radio and/or mobile computer *shall* continuously monitor the assigned equipment for transmissions while *on duty*, even when out of the assigned vehicle, and *shall* respond promptly.
- E. **Dispatch Times**
- 1) *Priority 1* calls *will* be entered into CAD within 60 seconds of determining the location and nature of call. *Priority 1* calls *will* be dispatched within one minute of entry into CAD.
 - 2) *Priority 2* calls *will* be entered into CAD within two (2) minutes of determining the location and nature of call. *Priority* calls *will* be dispatched as soon as feasible but will not be held long than three (3) minutes before assignment to an available officer.
 - 3) *Priority 3* calls *will* be entered into CAD as soon as possible and *will* be dispatched to the beat unit when available. *Priority 3* calls *will* not be held longer than 7 minutes before assignment to an available officer.
- F. If dispatch time limits are exceeded, the *on-duty supervisor* will be notified that the call has been holding for an excessive time period. The *on-duty supervisor*

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will advise the *Dispatcher* of how the call *should* be dispatched:

- 1) The *on-duty supervisor* may ask the *dispatcher* to assign another *officer*, take the call, or have the *dispatcher* continue to hold the call.
 - 2) If possible, the *dispatcher* *should* call the initial caller to advise of the delay.
 - 3) The *dispatcher* *will* make a comment in the CAD if requested to hold the call and the responsibility for the hold is with the *on-duty supervisor*.
- G. Communications *should* be notified in advance for any pre-planned event that may impact dispatch *personnel* (search warrant service, demonstrations, parades, etc.).

81.2.3 Communications During Response to a Call for Service

- A. The dispatcher *will* be advised if an *employee* observes on-sight activity that requires immediate attention while in route to a dispatched call. Depending on the priority of the original call, the *employee* *will* either request the dispatch of another unit to the original call or respond to the on-sight activity.
- B. *Employees* may request other resources or back-up when necessary. Patrol *supervisors* shall monitor the radio and may cancel or delay calls or call response as necessary. If a call is cancelled or delayed, the *supervisor* *must* advise the complainant of the delay or cancellation.

81.2.4 Recording and Playback

Communications *personnel* have the capability of obtaining immediate playback of recorded telephone and radio conversations, to and from the communications center. These recordings:

- A. *Will* be retained as required by law.
- B. *Will* be securely stored and handled according to the *Communications Section Standard Operating Procedures*.
- C. *May* only be reviewed when authorized and done in accordance with the *Communications Section Standard Operating Procedures*.



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81.2.5 Emergency Messages

- A. The acceptance and delivery of emergency messages is an important and legitimate law enforcement function. The level of service we provide to the community *will* directly impact the *Department's* reputation within the community. For example, acceptance and delivery of a message at an accident scene can leave a lasting impression on the involved parties and, in the case of delivering a message to a person's employer, *may* even save a person's job. In deciding which messages *should* be accepted and delivered, *employees should* consider that the primary *mission* is public service and, as such, requests *should* be refused only due to extreme workload. Even in those cases *employees should* make every effort to complete the request or assist the person by transporting them to a telephone or driving them to a residence to deliver a message to someone that does not have a telephone.
- B. Delivery of messages regarding seriously injured, ill, or deceased persons *will* be accomplished in accordance with G.O. #41.4.
- C. Communications *personnel* and/or the *on-duty supervisor shall* determine, on a case-by-case basis, the appropriate response to other requests of an "emergency" nature.