CMRECC

Central Massachusetts Regional Emergency Communication Center

Central Massachusetts Regional 911 District

Emergency Communications Specialist Job Description

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER (CMRECC)

Job Title: Emergency Communications Specialist
Department: Central Massachusetts Regional Emergency Communications Center
Reports To: Communications Supervisor
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

GENERAL SUMMARY
Emergency Communications Specialists are front-line public safety professionals and first-responder communications personnel whose duties are integral to the immediate protection of life and property, responsible for receiving and managing emergency requests for police, fire, and EMS services across multiple jurisdictions. Specialists independently evaluate, triage, and prioritize incidents in real time, provide pre-arrival emergency medical instructions, and coordinate multi-agency response and resource deployment through radio, CAD, and NG911 systems.

This position routinely involves high-risk, high-liability emergency incident management and requires the ability to maintain operational command, accuracy, and composure during life-threatening and violent events, including (but not limited to) active threats, cardiac arrest, severe trauma, structure fires, suicides, missing children, domestic violence, in-progress crimes, and mass-casualty incidents. Work is performed in an environment characterized by unpredictable call volume, continuous exposure to traumatic content, and time-critical decision-making where errors may result in loss of life, serious injury, or significant property damage.

WORK SCHEDULE
Emergency Communications Specialists work a full-time, rotating 24/7 shift schedule that includes nights, weekends, holidays, and mandatory overtime. Due to the emergency nature of operations, employees may be required to remain on duty beyond scheduled hours, have shifts extended, be held over, or be recalled without notice to manage staffing shortages, system failures, disasters, critical incidents, or events involving imminent risk to life or public safety.

This position requires the ability to work prolonged and irregular hours under emergency conditions, including sustained, high-stress incidents and extended critical events, while maintaining accurate communications, situational awareness, and decision-making responsibilities.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

- Participation in assigned work schedules, including shift extensions, mandatory overtime, emergency call-backs, and operational staffing adjustments necessary to maintain uninterrupted emergency communications services.
- Receive, triage, and prioritize 911 calls, texts, and video communications using NG911 technology and multi-line systems.

- Rapidly determine and verify incident type, severity, caller safety, and exact location through structured, focused questioning.
- Provide Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and pre-arrival lifesaving instructions (CPR, choking, childbirth, bleeding control, airway/AED guidance) consistent with approved protocols.
- Use crisis communication and caller-control techniques to stabilize callers experiencing panic, trauma, mental health emergencies, suicidal ideation, or violent situations.
- Dispatch and coordinate police, fire, EMS, mutual aid, and specialty resources using CAD, radio alerting systems, including multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional operations.
- Operate and manage multiple radio channels simultaneously, maintaining responder accountability, status tracking, and time-critical updates.
- Support Incident Command by relaying operational intelligence, hazards, staging information, responder safety threats, and tactical updates.
- Conduct emergency dispatch operations during high-risk events, including structure fires, active threats, barricaded subjects, pursuits, hazardous materials incidents, mass-casualty incidents, missing persons/search and rescue operations, and responder-in-trouble or responder injury events.
- Serve as the communications hub during active threats, structure fires, responder-in-trouble or responder injury events, mass-casualty incidents, and other significant public safety operations.
- Disseminate time-sensitive information such as suspect descriptions, BOLOs, safety advisories, hazards, weather alerts, and tactical updates.
- Notify and coordinate air assets, specialty teams, mutual aid strike teams, and regional task forces as requested.
- Gather and relay critical intelligence to field personnel and command staff.
- Notify and coordinate with external entities (DPW, utilities, state police, hospitals, trauma teams, etc.).
- Accurately document all calls, actions, unit activity, hazards, and incident details in CAD and associated systems in accordance with CMRECC standards.
- Monitor and manage security systems, fire alarms, cameras, radio networks, and emergency alerting platforms.
- Maintain strict compliance with CJIS, HIPAA, confidentiality rules, and applicable state/federal regulations, including appropriate handling of protected and sensitive information.
- Participate in ongoing training, continuing education, proficiency assessment, and QA/QI review to maintain readiness for emergency operations.
- Maintain professionalism and emotional resilience while exposed to traumatic events, graphic content, and prolonged high-stress emergency situations.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- High school diploma or equivalent.
- Demonstrated ability to work in high-stress, multitasking environments with frequent interruptions.
- Must possess and maintain a valid Massachusetts Driver's License.
- Must successfully complete a comprehensive background investigation.
- Transfers must be in good standing with no prior or sustained disciplinary actions and a documented record of satisfactory performance demonstrating reliability and sound judgment.
- Prior experience in emergency communications, dispatching, or other public safety emergency response environments preferred.
- Familiarity with CAD systems, radio operations, multi-line phone systems, and other public safety technologies preferred.
- Experience with Microsoft Office, CJIS, or similar software applications preferred.
- Knowledge of local geography, jurisdictional boundaries, and public safety protocols preferred.

CERTIFICATIONS & LICENSURE
All required certifications must be obtained and maintained as a condition of employment. Recertifications must be completed in accordance with CMRECC and Massachusetts State 911 Department standards. CMRECC will cover the cost of required certifications and recertifications and will coordinate enrollment in approved training programs. Employees will be scheduled and supported in attending all mandated classes, including travel arrangements when applicable. Employees are expected to successfully pass all required certification and recertification exams; failure to pass may result in the employee being deemed not qualified for the position and may lead to separation from employment.

Required Within One (1) Year of Hire:

- Public Safety Telecommunicator I (PST1) Certification
- Massachusetts NG911 Certification
- CPR Certification
- Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) Certification
- Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) Certification
- ICS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System
- ICS-200: Incident Command System for Initial Response
- ICS-144.A: TERT Basic Course
- ICS-700: Introduction to the National Incident Management System
- ICS-703: NIMS Resource Management
- ICS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction
- ICS-904: Active Shooter Prevention
- ICS-907: Active Shooter: What You Can Do

REQUIRED SKILLS & ABILITIES:
Work is performed in a 24/7 emergency communications center involving continuous exposure to emergency radio traffic and traumatic content, including death, violence, severe injury, child endangerment, and high-risk incidents. The role requires sustained concentration, rapid task-switching, and decision-making under pressure, including during equipment failures, high call volume surges, and extended emergencies.

- Ability to maintain emotional resilience, composure, and professional communication while exposed to traumatic or graphic events, including violence, death, critical injuries, suicides, emotionally distressed callers, and in-progress emergencies, consistent with first-responder operational demands.
- Strong crisis-communication and caller-control skills, including de-escalation, calming techniques, and maintaining command presence under pressure.
- High-level situational awareness and sustained attention to monitor multiple active incidents, radio channels, alarms, screens, and communication platforms simultaneously while maintaining operational readiness.
- Ability to rapidly synthesize complex information and make immediate, high-consequence decisions in a high-liability environment where actions directly impact public and responder safety.
- Familiarity with the Incident Command System (ICS) and tactical operations, with the ability to support high-risk, multi-agency responses.
- Capacity to work extended and irregular hours in a high-stress, high-volume emergency communications center, including prolonged incidents, while maintaining accuracy, focus, and emotional stability.
- Ability to sit for extended periods while maintaining posture, focus, and physical endurance during prolonged or complex incidents.
- Ability to perform repetitive motions and rapid keyboard input with speed and accuracy.

- Ability to speak, read, write, and communicate clearly and effectively across all communication platforms.
- Ability to comprehend, retain, and accurately relay information in fast-moving, high-pressure situations.
- Visual and auditory acuity necessary to monitor multiple screens, radio transmissions, and audio sources simultaneously.
- Hearing and speech sufficient for effective communication in person, over the phone, and via radio.
- Ability to lift, push, pull, or move equipment weighing up to 30 pounds as needed.
- Manual dexterity and mobility sufficient for efficient operation of dispatch consoles, keyboards, headsets, and related equipment.

SUPERVISORY CONTROLS
Works under the direction of the Emergency Communications Supervisor.

Adheres to CMRECC SOPs, Massachusetts General Laws, APCO/NENA standards, and State 911 Department policy. Errors in judgment, delayed decision-making, or failure to maintain operational control may result in loss of life, responder injury, system compromise, significant property damage, or major legal and operational liability.

DISCLAIMER
This job description is not an employment agreement or contract. It describes the general duties, responsibilities, qualifications, and expectations of the position and is not intended to constitute an exhaustive list of all functions that may be required. Duties and responsibilities may be modified based on CMRECC operational, organizational, training, or service needs.

Due to the life-safety responsibilities and operational intensity of emergency communications work, continued qualification for the position is contingent upon the ability to perform the essential functions of the position and consistently meet established performance standards.

The position requires sustained cognitive performance, emotional resilience, technical proficiency, sound judgment, and the ability to make rapid, high-consequence decisions under stressful and time-critical conditions.