

Desk Officer Duties

446.1 PURPOSE

To provide operational instructions for a Desk officer to handle calls-for-service and taking reports over the telephone and at the station.

446.2 POLICY

The Police Department maintains a desk officer for the following reasons:

- (a) Free up patrol officers from handling certain specified calls-for-service in order to allow increased time for proactive patrol activities.
- (b) Save time in handling calls-for-service by decreasing travel time to and from scenes of calls.
- (c) Make it more convenient for citizens to report police-related incidents.
- (d) Decrease radio traffic and Communications section workload.
- (e) Relieve pressure from patrol officers related to handling increased calls-for-service workload.
- (f) Reduce patrol officers' written workload.
- (g) Make better use of existing personnel resources, including the utilization of limited duty officers.

446.3 STAFFING

■	[REDACTED]	
	■	[REDACTED]
	■	[REDACTED]
	■	[REDACTED]
	■	[REDACTED]
■	[REDACTED]	
	[REDACTED]	
	[REDACTED]	
	■	[REDACTED]
	■	[REDACTED]
■	[REDACTED]	
	[REDACTED]	

South San Francisco Police Department

South San Francisco PD Policy Manual

Desk Officer Duties

446.4 AVAILABILITY

- (a) Any officer assigned to the front office desk duty shall assume a radio call sign and shall maintain a portable radio with him/her during the tour of duty.
- (b) The following procedure shall be utilized in maintaining a status record for the desk officer:
 - 1. Desk officer unavailable or away from the desk due to present call or other assignment, but still within the building.
 - (a) Any time the desk officer leaves the front office, s/he shall advise Records personnel of status and the nature of present duty.
 - (b) If the time of unavailable status is expected to exceed 15 minutes, and/or the desk officer would not be available by paging or radio call, s/he shall also notify Communications.
 - (c) When the call or other assignment is complete, the desk officer shall notify Records personnel and Communications (if previously notified as above), verbally or by phone, of completion and current status.
 - 2. Desk officer unavailable and away from the building.
 - (a) The desk officer will notify Records personnel, prior to leaving, of status and destination.
 - (b) The desk officer will notify the Communications dispatcher, via radio, of status.
 - 1. Nature of assignment or duty will be included in notification; i.e., 10-49, 10-7 or Code 7 or other activity. Initial broadcast shall also include vehicle number used or other officer's call sign, if with another unit.
 - 2. When destination is reached, location and status shall be broadcast.
 - 3. When duty is completed at destination 10-8, 10-19 status and arrival back at the station shall be broadcast.

446.5 STATION REPORT DESK DUTIES

Reports on the following types of calls-for-services will be taken over the telephone or at the counter unless there is a suspect known or present, and/or the crime is in progress, and/or an officer's presence is required at the scene for physical evidence purposes. Should there be suspects and contact can be made with them by phone without jeopardizing the case, there is no reason why the desk officer cannot take the report. Such report types shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Thefts
 - 1. 488
 - 2. 487 where the above does not apply (cold)

South San Francisco Police Department

South San Francisco PD Policy Manual

Desk Officer Duties

3. 459 vehicle (cold) - have RP bring vehicle to the station if possible, or take over the phone.
- (b) Malicious Mischief - misdemeanors only (cold)
- (c) Accidents
 1. Counter reports
 2. 20002 where victim vehicle has been driven. Cold - RP to bring vehicle to station.
 3. Insurance - RP to bring vehicle to station.
- (d) Lost Property
- (e) Found Property - Ask if the RP can bring property to the station. If not, send PST/Ofc. to pick it up. Desk officer will write 10-50 and tag property into evidence.
- (f) Missing Adults - no evidence of foul play.
- (g) Missing Juveniles - no evidence of foul play. A photo can be brought in by the RP. Supplements when they return. (Ofc. will respond to home of young juveniles who may be lost.)
- (h) Telephone Calls - obscene, threatening, harassing, etc. If a suspect is known, D.O. can call them to the station.
- (i) Disturbances
 1. Documentation of past disturbances.
 2. Cold disturbances where one of the parties has left.
 3. Where an officer's presence is not needed.
- (j) Suspicious Circumstances and Persons
 1. Cold - when they have left and nothing needs to be checked.
 2. Prowler calls that are reported 20-30 minutes later. (Can always have unit check area.)
- (k) Civil Cases: Those that do not require immediate intervention, parties are not together.
- (l) S.P.C.A. Cases
 1. Where contact does not have to be made with owners.
 2. Cold call where animal is out of area, owners are not known.
- (m) Dumping Complaints
 1. Where no evidence of who dumped it can be located in the debris.
- (n) Follow-up Investigations
 1. Calling for property list.
 2. Completing minor assignments on reports.
- (o) Juvenile Cases - Disturbances

South San Francisco Police Department

South San Francisco PD Policy Manual

Desk Officer Duties

1. When the juveniles are gone and no contact can be made.
- (p) Damage to Private Property
 - (q) Cold 314s that are not going to require searching the area and suspect is not known.
 - (r) 10851s at the counter.
 - (s) All counter reports that are not going to involve investigations or the desk officer having to leave the station.
 - (t) Reports for insurance purposes that do not require investigations or the desk officer having to leave the station.
 - (u) Reports for insurance purposes which do not fall into the preceding categories, regardless of dollar amount, and where some information can be obtained over the phone or at the station as at the scene, and no useful purpose will be served by sending an officer to the scene.
 - (v) All cross reports from C.P.S. that do not require investigation

446.6 OTHER DESK OFFICER DUTIES

Desk Officers shall have the following additional duties and responsibilities:

- (a) Greeting people at the front counter.
- (b) Answer/direct public's needs.
- (c) Cover officers in station handling prisoners/suspects, unless the desk officer is on light duty.
- (d) Station security.
- (e) Searching/checking the front office lobby and bathrooms when the front office doors are locked and closed to the public.
- (f) Inspect the holding facilities for contraband and fresh damage to the cells. Also check and re-stock forms if needed.
- (g) Check and re-stock the forms in the report writing room.
- (h) The desk officer's first and foremost priority deals with time and attention to the Station Report Desk to handle Teleserve requests.
- (i) The desk officer shall immediately refer all citizen complaints regarding officer conduct to the Watch Commander.

446.7 OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (a) Communications dispatchers shall screen and evaluate carefully each telephone call received in the Communications Center to determine if the report can be taken by phone (per the above specified criteria).
 1. If it can be taken by phone and a desk officer is on duty, the dispatcher will:

South San Francisco Police Department

South San Francisco PD Policy Manual

Desk Officer Duties

- (a) Transfer the call to the Station Report Desk if the call is on a transferable phone line; or
 - (b) Take the RP's name and phone number and advise the RP that the desk officer will call him/her back. The dispatcher will then relay the RP's information to the Station Report Desk via an in-house line.
- 2. If the desk officer is temporarily occupied, the dispatcher will:
 - (a) Advise the complainant that s/he will be called back by the desk officer as soon as possible or at a time when the dispatcher knows the desk officer will be available (up to four hours).
 - (b) If the complainant will not be available for the return call, advise him/her to re-contact the desk officer (giving appropriate phone number) between 0700-2100 any day of the week to complete the report.
- 3. If a dispatcher is asked a question regarding a matter s/he is not able to answer and a police officer could answer the question, transfer the call to the Station Report Desk. Many times this will save an officer from being dispatched simply to answer a question.
- 4. If the dispatcher believes a call can be taken via phone but the complainant initially insists that an officer be dispatched, the dispatcher should politely advise the party that a desk officer is available to take his/her call. If after such advisement, or after the desk officer has actually spoken with the complainant, and the RP still insists a unit (officer or PST) respond to the scene, one will be dispatched according to the "Call Prioritization and Call Back" procedure.
- (b) Records personnel should follow the applicable procedures herein specified for referring persons (by phone or at the counter) to the Station Report Desk.
- (c) The desk officer will be handling requests for police service through contacts with the public at the front counter; and, over the telephone, largely through the result of referrals from Communications dispatchers.
 - (a) The desk officer will evaluate all initial contacts and re-evaluate all telephone referrals to determine if the requests for service can be handled at the Station Report Desk, without dispatching a patrol unit (utilizing criteria specified in Section II.A above).
 - (b) If a public contact results in any type of report, the desk officer shall minimally have Communications create an incident in RIMS and then add incident notes.
 - (c) If the type of incident dictates, then the desk officer should complete a formal report according to existing department guidelines.
 - (d) When making the return calls, if the desk officers do not get answers, they should add notes to the RIMS incident, making note of the times they attempted to re-contact the complainant. This will help alleviate accusations that the return calls were not made.
 - (e) All reports completed at the Station Report Desk shall be forwarded to the Shift Supervisor's office for normal approval and routing.

South San Francisco Police Department

South San Francisco PD Policy Manual

Desk Officer Duties
