


<b>STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>  	Type of Directive: <b>Policy and Procedure</b>	Updated: <b>07/31/2024</b>
	Title: <b>Communications Center Operations</b>	No. <b>3.1</b>
	Issuing Authority: <b>Chief Joseph McNeil</b>	Issued: <b>10-10-2018</b>
	Reference: AS - 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.10.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 3.1.6, 3.1.7  History: 04-25-23	

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures in order that the Communications Center may satisfy the immediate informational needs of the Stratford Police Department.

The Stratford Police Department shall maintain a Communications Center as part of the Patrol Division which shall be responsible for radio communications, telephone communications, teletype and automated data communications, alarm monitoring and other duties as determined by the Chief of Police.

### **POLICY:**

It shall be the policy of the Stratford Police Department to follow the procedures as set forth below.

### **PROCEDURE:**

All radio operations of the Stratford Police Department will be in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirements (**2.1.1**). The Stratford Police Department will maintain a 24-hour two-way radio capability providing continuous communications between the Communication Center and officers on duty. All on duty officers performing law enforcement duties should be equipped with a portable radio (**1.1.1**).

The Communications Center, which includes all communications systems, computer terminals, and electronic components stored within, shall be designated as a "Physically Secure Location." The Communications Center shall also comply with the COLLECT system security policy. Designation as a physically secure location with restricted access is due to the sensitive nature of access to Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) and the critical infrastructure of telecommunications equipment and systems, to include servers and routers (**1.10.2b**, **2.1.4b**).

Access to the Communications Center will be restricted to sworn officers of the Stratford Police Department and those necessary personnel authorized by the Chief of Police or his/her designee (**2.1.4a**).

The primary tower antenna used for police radio transmission is located at Fire Headquarters. A secondary tower antenna is located at the Oronoque Lane Fire Station. A locked fence protects both antennas on the property of the Stratford Fire Department (**2.1.4d**).

The Department will have and maintain a fossil fuel-powered generator to provide an alternate source of electrical power that is sufficient to ensure continued operation of emergency communications equipment in the event of the failure of the present power source **(1.1.4, 2.14c)**.

The following maintenance procedures will be maintained with regard to the generator:

- Tests will be conducted in conformance with manufacturer specifications and documented **(1.1.4a)**;
- An operational test under full load will be conducted at least once per year **(1.1.4b)**;
- Maintain record which documents anytime the generator is put into service **(1.1.4c)**; and
- Maintain a record of all maintenance and repair activities **(1.1.4d)**.

## ELECTRONIC RECORDING OF RADIO TRANSMISSIONS AND TELEPHONE CALLS

A recording of emergency communications can serve as critical evidence in the even of litigation. These recordings are also an indispensable source for criminal investigations, internal investigations, training, and audits of the agency's service delivery system. Therefore, access to recordings shall be limited to the Records Division Commander and or Communications Center Supervisor.

Every radio transmission and emergency telephone conversation within the Communications Center will be recorded and retained for 30 days unless tagged as evidence **(1.10.2a)**.

All telephone and/or radio transmissions will be available for immediate play back through the recording system at the Communications Center. Playback capabilities shall not interrupt the continuous recording function **(1.1.2)**.

Recorded conversations are public information and are open to the general public unless the recordings are part of an ongoing investigation or are otherwise restricted by FOI laws. Requests for copies of recordings will be submitted in writing to the Records Division Supervisor and/ or the Communications Center Supervisor who will **(1.10.2c)**:

- File the written request, which shall include the requestor's name and reason for the request with the related incident file or FOI request file within the records Division.
- Maintain the date that the requested recordings were turned over to the person(s) making the request.

## COMMUNICATION CENTER RESOURCES

The Communications Center will utilize the COLLECT system and the NCIC system, as well as the Stratford Police Department Computer, to provide current criminal justice system information to officers of the Stratford Police Department **(2.1.2)**.

The Town of Stratford shall maintain a 911 emergency access telephone system. The system shall allow for the transfer of misdirected 911 calls to the proper agency.

A computer-generated numbering system will be utilized for obtaining and recording relevant information to record requests for service in the CAD (computer aided dispatch) system and will record the following information **(3.1.2)**:

- Call for Service Number (CFS) **(3.1.2a)**;
- Date and time of request **(3.1.2b)**;
- Name, address, and phone number of complainant if possible (will be requested by dispatcher with refusal being noted) **(3.1.2c)**;
- Type of incident will be reported **(3.1.2d)**;
- Location of incident, including specific address and where applicable, name of business **(3.1.2e)**;
- Identification of Officer(s) assigned as primary and backup responder **(3.1.2f)**;
- Time of dispatch **(3.1.2g)**;
- Time of Officer(s) arrival **(3.1.2h)**;
- Time of Officer(s) return to service **(3.1.2i)**, and other services dispatched (fire EMS, etc.);
- Disposition or status of reported incident **(3.1.2j)**;
- Every complaint, request for service, report of criminal activity, or other reportable activity will be classified by dispatch using the computer aided dispatch incident code system;
- Registration of vehicles involved in the incident;
- Identification of dispatcher.

The Communications Center will be equipped with a listing of telephone numbers of emergency service agencies, which will be immediately available to communications personnel.

Communications personnel will have access to the following departmental resources:

- Patrol Shift Commander **(3.1.4a)**;
- Duty roster of all personnel **(3.1.4b)**;
- Residential telephone number of every agency member **(3.1.4c)**;
- Visual maps detailing the agency's service area **(3.1.4d)**;
- Officer status indicators **(3.1.4e)**;
- Written procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services to the agency **(3.1.4f)**; and
- Tactical dispatching plans **(3.1.4g)**.

#### PROCEDURES FOR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS TO AND FROM FIELD OFFICERS

- Dispatchers will communicate with all field officers, detectives, and supervisors by utilizing the police radio communication network **(3.1.3a)**;
- When Patrol Officers will be out of service, they shall notify dispatch via the police radio for the purpose to record when Officers are out of service. The dispatcher will record the information and show the officer status as out of service. **(3.1.3b)**;
- Police radio procedure to identify officers during radio transmissions **(3.1.3c)**:
  - Patrol units are deployed by beat/district;
  - Midnight patrol units are identified as ALPHA units;
  - Dayshift patrol units are identified as BRAVO units;
  - Evening patrol units are identified as CHARLIE units;
  - Animal Control units are identified as HOTEL units;
  - Civilian Parking Enforcement units are identified as TANGO units;
  - Detectives are identified as KILO units, followed by their assigned badge number (ex. K123);

- Sergeants are identified as DELTA units, followed by their assigned badge number (ex. D123);
- Lieutenants are identified as ECHO units, followed by their assigned badge number (ex. E123);
- Captains are identified as SIERRA units based on their seniority at this rank (ex. S-3 to S-6);
- Deputy Chief of Police is identified as SIERRA-2 (S-2);
- Chief of Police is identified as SIERRA-1 (S-1).
- Communications with interacting agencies: When an incident involves units from other jurisdictions the Dispatcher or Field Supervisor will determine the appropriate radio channel to assure coordination and control of all field units (**2.1.3, 3.1.3d**):
  - Fairfield and New Haven County “Hot Line” radio;
  - Fairfield County Police Chiefs radio network “FAPERN”;
  - UASI Systems Communications.
- Some calls may require response by several field units if the problem is to be dealt with effectively and safely. The Dispatch Center personnel will obtain enough information from the caller to categorize the call for service and will assign additional field units to an incident if there is reason to believe they may be needed to handle the situation (**3.1.3e**).
- Telephone Complaints: Telephone calls received by Dispatch Center personnel will be turned over to the division that normally would investigate the complaint. If no Officer is available, enough information should be obtained so that an Officer can telephone the complainant, witness, etc. back when available (**3.1.7**).
- Mail or Email Complaints: All mail complaints received by the Records Division or by Command Staff will be turned over to the appropriate Division Commander that normally would investigate the complaint, for distribution to their personnel (**3.1.7**).
- Requests for Service from Victims or Witnesses - Dispatch Center personnel may receive calls for assistance from victims or witnesses involved in ongoing Stratford PD cases. When such calls are received the call taker will (**3.1.5**):
  - Determine whether the call requires an emergency or non- emergency response (**3.1.5a**);
  - Take down all applicable information and forward to the dispatcher to assign an officer for follow- up and/or referral to other agencies (**3.1.5b**).

EMERGENCY MESSAGES - Requests for delivering emergency messages received from outside agencies and/or private citizens will generally be accepted. Emergency messages will normally be limited to (**3.1.6**):

- Notification of illness or death;
- Checking on the welfare of an individual unable to be contacted by a family member or friend (i.e. attempts to locate);
- Notification for outside agencies regarding ongoing investigations.

Any questions regarding the appropriateness of a specific request will be directed to the shift supervisor for review and authorization.

Attempts to locate for private citizens and notifications for outside agencies regarding criminal matters will be assigned a call for service number and will be documented by the assigned officer.

Notifications for outside agencies regarding non-criminal matters will be recorded as call for service numbers in NexGen (3.1.6).

#### PROCEDURES FOR MISDIRECTED CALLS (1.1.5)

If a misdirected "911" call is received: Emergency Operations Center Personnel shall transfer such calls to the appropriate agency and shall stay on the line until the agency answers or in case the caller disconnects before being connected.

If a misdirected routine call is received: Emergency Operations Center Personnel shall direct the caller to the appropriate agency by providing the appropriate phone number to the caller.

When an emergency (911) call is received for service outside of Stratford, the appropriate agency will be contacted: The 911 dispatcher shall obtain as much information as possible from the complainant and will relay it to the proper agency. Under no circumstance shall personnel tell a caller to redial in an emergency situation (1.1.5).

#### PROCEDURES FOR FIRST RESPONDER NOTIFICATIONS (3.5.13)

This directive applies to all personnel responsible for emergency response, communications and incident management within the Stratford Police Department. It covers notification procedures for law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services (EMS), and other relevant emergency response units such as Public Works.

#### Definitions

- **Emergency Situation:** Any incident requiring immediate intervention from first responders to protect life, property, or public safety.
- **Primary Responder:** The first unit dispatched to the scene based on incident classification.
- **Communications Center (CC):** The designated dispatch unit responsible for facilitating notifications and coordinating emergency response efforts.

#### Notification Circumstances

First responder notifications must be initiated under the following conditions:

- **Medical Emergencies:** Life-threatening medical conditions, mass casualty incidents, cardiac arrest, and severe trauma cases.
- **Fire Emergencies:** Structure fires, wildfires, hazardous material incidents, and rescues requiring fire department intervention.
- **Law Enforcement Emergencies:** Violent crimes in progress, armed suspects, officer needs assistance calls, and large-scale public disturbances.
- **Hazardous Conditions:** Gas leaks, structural collapses, major roadway accidents, and situations posing an environmental risk.

#### Notification Procedures

##### A. Initial Reporting

- Emergency reports must be communicated to the CC via radio channel POLICE 1E.
- The report must include the location, nature of the emergency, severity assessment, and involved parties, if known.
- CC personnel must confirm receipt and dispatch the appropriate first responders promptly.

## **B. Multi-Agency Coordination**

- If an emergency requires multiple first responder units, the supervisor on-scene shall notify the CC to coordinate further response by notifying all relevant agencies.
- In cases of mutual aid requests, CC personnel must liaise with external agencies for resource deployment.
- Continuous updates must be provided to responding units until the scene is secured.

## **C. Notification Hierarchy**

- **Priority 1:** Immediate dispatch for life-threatening situations (e.g., active shooter, cardiac arrest).
- **Priority 2:** Urgent response for escalating threats or major incidents requiring rapid intervention. (e.g., person acting aggressively, fleeing suspect)
- **Priority 3:** Routine dispatch for situations requiring standard emergency response measures.

## **5. Documentation & Compliance**

- All emergency notifications must be logged with relevant case numbers and timestamps.
- CC personnel must verify compliance with federal, state, and local emergency response protocols.