



TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Subject: Dispatch and Communication Procedures | | General Order Number: 410.00 |
| Section: 400 – Service Support Operations | | Subsection: 10 – Dispatch/Records |
| Amends/Supersedes: 11-2 | | |
| Effective Date: 08/18/2020 | Revised Date: 08/18/2020 | Review Date: As Needed |
| Per Order Of: Patrick W. Jones, Chief of Police | | |
| RIPAC: 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 14.7, 14.8, 14.9, 14.10 | | |
| Distribution: All Department Members | | |

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Tiverton Police Department, and is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

I. PURPOSE

To establish and maintain guidelines for employees regarding telephone and radio communications systems, as well as information storage and retrieval.

II. POLICY

The basic function of the department's communications system is to satisfy the immediate information needs of the department in the course of its normal daily activities and during emergencies. However, the latter situation places the greatest demands upon the communications system and tests the capability of the system to fulfill its function.

The communications system conveys information from the public to the department through dispatch personnel, to officers responding to calls for assistance, to other law enforcement and public service agencies, and to information storage and retrieval subsystems.

The department recognizes that the speed and accuracy with which information flows through each system are measures of the department's capability to respond to the needs of the community. The policy of the Tiverton Police Department to maintain and operate a modern communications system that provides for efficient and effective public services.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Radio Procedures

1. All radio operations shall be consistent with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements, as well as department policy.
2. Radio communications by field personnel shall be limited to official, law enforcement-related business.

3. Examples of authorized radio communications include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Responses to supervisory/communications center inquiries;
 - b. Acknowledging communications center notifications;
 - c. Advising of officer status;
 - d. Providing investigative information to other officers;
 - e. Making requests for emergency assistance from other agencies/services, and;
 - f. Making requests for non-emergency assistance from other agencies/services.
 4. Dispatch personnel shall record the status of officers when they are “out of service” in the department’s Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.
 5. Whenever possible, radio communications shall be transmitted on the department’s channel 1 (TPD DISP).
 - a. Employees shall notify dispatch personnel prior to switching from channel 1 to alternate channels, and then notify dispatch personnel of their return to channel 1.
 - b. Dispatch personnel shall acknowledge employees’ return to channel 1.
 6. Whenever possible, radio communications, to include communications with interacting agencies, shall be routed through the communications center, unless prompt “car-to-car” communications are necessary or when an emergency exists.
 7. Plain speech is the preferred method of communication, however “10 codes” shall be utilized during investigations of a sensitive nature or when officer safety is a concern.
 8. Personal commentary, slang, officer’s first names, angry remarks, or lengthy messages are unacceptable.
 9. Employees are not authorized to provide emergency first aid services over the telephone or radio.
 10. Employees shall use the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) phonetic alphabet (spelling alphabet) when letters are broadcast over the air. This is an “over the air” communication used for properly understanding a broadcast of letters in the form of easily understood words.
- B. Officer Identification
1. Dispatch personnel shall contact employees for whom a radio communication is intended by using assigned identification numbers.
 2. Dispatch shall be identified by the FCC call number, “WPMC285” or “285” when initiating or responding to radio communications.
 3. Sworn officers, reserve officers and special officers shall be contacted by identification numbers, also referred to as badge numbers.
 4. Employees shall identify dispatch personnel as “285” when initiating or responding to radio communications.
- C. Communications Center Procedures
1. Dispatch personnel, when answering incoming telephone calls emanating from outside the department, shall answer using the words, “Tiverton Police,” followed by their title and name.

- a. Employees answering transferred calls or calls received over the intercom system, in any area of the building, shall identify themselves by rank/title and name. Private lines are exempt from this provision.
2. Since a vast majority of calls for police services are requested by telephone, dispatch personnel shall gather as much relevant information as possible at the time of the initial telephone call.
3. Dispatch personnel shall determine early in telephone conversations the emergency or non-emergency nature of the call, as well as the incident location.
4. Dispatch personnel, during misdirected, emergency telephone calls, shall obtain all necessary information and immediately relay such information to the appropriate agency.
5. Dispatch personnel, during misdirected, non-emergency telephone calls, shall provide the caller with the proper telephone number or, if more practical, obtain all necessary information and immediately relay such information to the appropriate agency.
6. Once dispatch personnel have determined the emergency or non-emergency nature of calls, they shall dispatch sworn officers or animal control officers.
7. Dispatch personnel shall advise the caller of the nature of the department's response, (i.e.: immediate response, delayed response, referral to an appropriate agency, etc.).
8. Dispatch personnel shall obtain and record the following information regarding criminal and non-criminal service or self-initiated activity in the department's CAD system:
 - a. Dispatch call number (control number);
 - b. Date and time of service request/self-initiated activity;
 - c. Name and address of complainant, if possible;
 - d. Type of incident reported;
 - e. Location of incident reported;
 - f. Identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and backup;
 - g. Time of dispatch;
 - h. Time of officer arrival;
 - i. Time of officer return to service, and;
 - j. Disposition or status of reported incident.
9. Dispatch personnel shall continuously update officers' dispatch, arrival, and clear times, so that information related to their status will be readily available.
10. Officer Safety Alarm- when an officer arrives at a call, the CAD system will track how long the officer has been at the scene. The officer safety alarm will alert dispatch personnel that the officer has been at the scene for a pre-determined amount of minutes. When an officers safety alarm is tripped in dispatch the officer's name and call information will be highlighted in white on the status monitor alerting dispatch personnel that the officer has been arrived at the scene for the amount of time specified. Dispatch personnel will contact the officer via the radio and check the officer's status.

- D. Assignments of Officers to Routine and Emergency Calls
1. Response to some calls may require several officers to deal effectively and safely with the problem. Types of situations requiring the response of at least two (2) officers are as follows:
 - a. Potential or actual battery on a police officer.
 - b. Possibility of or actual on-scene arrest for a felony or violent misdemeanor.
 - c. Crimes involving domestic violence;
 - d. Potential of or actual resistance to arrest.
 - e. Possibility of or actual use of force.
 - f. Crimes in progress.
 - g. Fleeing suspect(s).
 - h. Vehicular accident with injury.
 - i. Shots fired/active shooter/assailant
 2. Dispatch personnel shall ensure the dispatch of at least two (2) officers to the above listed calls. Officers finding the circumstances above shall request back-up assistance.
 3. Dispatch personnel shall dispatch the Patrol Shift Officer in Charge (OIC) to assume command at the following types of calls for service:
 - a. Felony crimes;
 - b. Collisions involving death or serious bodily injury;
 - c. Disturbances involving large crowds;
 - d. Collisions involving town vehicles;
 - e. Requests for a supervisor from officers on scene;
 - f. Requests for a supervisor from complainants/victims, and;
 - g. Other calls required by department policy.
- E. Emergency Messages
1. Emergency messages to the next of kin of deceased, seriously injured or seriously ill person(s) shall be made consistent with General Order 300.51 *Next of Kin Notifications*.
 2. Dispatch personnel shall accept all other emergency message information so that a detailed and accurate notification can be made.
 3. Dispatch personnel shall immediately notify the OIC when requests for the delivery of emergency messages are received.
 4. Every effort shall be made to have emergency messages delivered in person. However, this does not preclude the delivery of emergency messages by telephone when time is of the essence.
- F. Requests for Assistance
1. Back-up Units
 - a. The officer requesting a back-up unit shall specify the location, and only the unit dispatched shall respond as a back-up unit. The request shall be canceled if, prior to the arrival of the assigned back-up unit, it is determined that an additional unit will not be needed. Back-up units shall specify from where they are originating their back-up response, unless other radio traffic is a priority.

- b. The OIC shall ensure that only the appropriate number of back-up units is assigned to a given call, and that they are returned to service as soon as possible.
- 2. Officer Needs Assistance
 - a. The primary consideration in any "officer needs assistance" call is immediate, safe, and adequate response to the situation. The aim is to provide for the safety of officers and citizens while avoiding confusion and unnecessary disruption. In order to provide a reasonable response for the greatest effectiveness, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - (1) Dispatch personnel shall give a location and as much information as possible. Dispatch personnel shall immediately designate two units (if available) to respond to the location.
 - (2) Other units (if available) may be instructed to start toward the area. Units in close proximity to a call will advise the Communications Center of their location (radio traffic permitting) and may respond.
 - (3) When units are on scene and able to advise of the actual situation, an assessment of the need for additional units can be made. The OIC shall immediately advise the Communications Center that they are in-route. In cases where the OIC or a supervisor has not indicated he or she is in-route, dispatch personnel shall ensure that one is dispatched. The first units' on scene will provide an immediate update and direction regarding the response of further units.
 - (4) During an officer needs assistance response field units shall remain in service and off the radio unless they have emergency radio traffic.

G. Access to Resources

- 1. Dispatch personnel shall have immediate access to the following resources:
 - a. The Patrol Shift Officer in Charge (OIC);
 - b. Duty schedule for all field personnel;
 - c. Personnel roster containing the address and contact telephone number of every agency employee;
 - d. Visual depictions of the agency's current service area (this is provided through the "Active Calls" function of the CAD Mapping System);
 - e. Officer/employee status information;
 - f. Written procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services; and
 - g. Tactical dispatching plans.

IV. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

A. Communications Center Security

1. Access to the Communications Center shall be limited to authorized sworn and non-sworn employees. *THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THIS AREA.*
 2. Unless providing temporary relief for dispatch personnel, employees entering this area shall make their visit brief and free of any distractions to dispatch personnel.
 3. The Communications Center door shall be closed whenever unauthorized persons, (i.e.: complainants, media personnel, prisoners, etc.), are present in the Uniform Division.
 4. Only those employees who have received proper training shall be permitted to operate Communications Center equipment.
 5. Security for the Communications Center computer systems is outlined in *General Order 300.70 Computer Systems.*
- B. Dispatch Services
1. The department provides 24-hour Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) to the public utilizing the following telephone numbers; 401-625-6716, 401-625-6717, 401-625-6722 (Police) and 401-625-6740, 401-625-6741 (Fire/EMS). This service is toll free within the department's jurisdiction. The Communications Center can also be contacted through the State 911 service, which is also toll free.
 2. The department provides 24-hour, two-way radio capability between the Communications Center and on-duty field personnel.
 3. The Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Speech-Disabled people may utilize the State 911 system by a Relay Service. The Relay Service is an operator service that allows them to place calls to standard telephone users. The system transcribes messages to an audio message for the hearing and an audio message to a visual message for the hearing impaired.
- C. Emergency Generator
1. The department's emergency generator is located on the west side of the police station, next to the cruiser parking area. The emergency generator shall provide sufficient power to operate communications and all other vital equipment during a power failure.
 2. Dispatch personnel shall immediately notify the Patrol Shift Officer in Charge (OIC) whenever the emergency generator has been activated due to a power failure. The incident date, time, and duration of the alternate power system's operation during the failure shall be documented in the CAD system.
 3. The operational readiness of the generator shall be tested monthly. This test shall be conducted by the department mechanic/maintenance employee and shall be documented.
 4. An annual test of the alternate power source under a full load shall be conducted annually by the department mechanic/maintenance employee and shall be documented.
- D. Audio Recordings
1. The department shall maintain a continuous recording of radio transmissions and emergency telephone conversations within the Communications Center while having the ability to immediately play back radio and telephonic conversations.

- a. Recordings shall be maintained for a minimum of thirty (30) days.
 - b. Recordings shall be maintained in digital format on the department's server. Officers and dispatch personnel shall have access to recordings for twenty four (24) hours. Access to recordings outside of twenty four (24) hours shall be restricted to authorized personnel. Authorized personnel shall include:
 - (1) Chief of Police;
 - (2) Captain;
 - (3) Detective Lieutenant;
 - (4) Detective Sergeant;
 - (5) Other Employees specifically authorized by the Chief of Police.
- E. Criminal Justice Information Systems
- 1. All officers and other employees required to access the Rhode Island Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (RILETS) and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) criminal justice information system shall maintain proper certification as required. The Records Division shall maintain all needed records to verify employees have met the standards of each system including initial certification, periodic recertification as required, and updating approved user access.
 - 2. Criminal justice information systems contain confidential information.
 - a. All criminal justice information systems shall be used for official law enforcement business only.
 - b. Any employee with knowledge of unauthorized use of criminal justice information systems shall immediately notify a supervisor.
 - c. All employees shall be responsible for knowing and understanding the rules and regulations that govern the use and distribution of this information and will be held accountable for failure to comply with said rules and regulations.
 - 3. The Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) produces a comprehensive security policy to establish a minimum set of security requirements for access to FBI CJIS systems and information and to protect and safeguard criminal justice information. The department shall adopt this security policy and shall adhere to the requirements therein.
 - 4. The Department shall establish the following positions to comply with the CJIS security policy. The positions shall assume all roles and requirements as established in the CJIS security policy.
 - a. Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC): The TAC serves as the point-of contact at the Department for matters relating to CJIS information access. The TAC administers CJIS systems programs within the department and oversees compliance with CJIS systems policies. The TAC position for the department shall be the Senior Records Clerk.
 - b. Local Agency Security Officer (LASO): The LASO shall be assigned by the Chief of Police. The LASO shall have the following responsibilities:

- (1) Identify who is using the RILETS approved hardware, software, and firmware and ensure no unauthorized individuals or processes have access to the same.
- (2) Identify and document how the equipment is connected to the state system.
- (3) Ensure personnel security screening procedures are being followed as stated in this policy.
- (4) Ensure the approved and appropriate security measures are in place and working as expected.
- (5) Support policy compliance and ensure the Rhode Island State Police Technical Services Unit is promptly informed of security incidents.

V. PROVISIONS

- A. Employees are prohibited from using alternate communication devices or cellular telephones, in lieu of radio communications, to call in or out of service or to notify of on-scene arrivals or departures from incident scenes.
- B. Radio communications transmitted on any Tiverton Police Department Radio Frequencies shall be consistent with the procedures contained in this General Order.