


**Department of Public Safety**  
**Police Division**  
**Policies and Procedures**

<u>Title</u>  <b>UCPD Communications Center</b>	<u>SOP Number</u>  <b>11.1.100</b>
<b>Approval Signature</b>  	
<b>Eliot K Isaac</b>	
<b>Reviewed/Revised by</b>	<b>Pages</b> 9
<b>Last Revision Date</b>  <b>March 31, 2026</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>  <b>August 14, 2018</b>

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

- I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to Communications Center personnel and to provide information regarding the Communications Center function within the University of Cincinnati Police Division (UCPD).
- II. **Policy:** It is the policy of UCPD to provide an effective and efficient Communications Center for the University of Cincinnati students, employees, and visitors during normal operations and emergencies.
- III. **Procedure:**
  - A. Communications Center Supervision and Structure
    1. The UCPD Communications Center is supervised by the Director of Emergency Communications, who reports directly to the Captain of Support Services.
    2. The Director of Emergency Communications is responsible for the overall leadership and management of the Communications Center.
    3. The Communication Center will be staffed at all times with a minimum of two (2) Emergency Communication Dispatchers.
  - B. FCC Requirements
    1. The UCPD Communication Center will operate following Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license procedures and requirements.
    2. UCPD Communications Center personnel shall have access to the FCC rules and regulations.
  - C. Documenting requests for service and personnel self-initiated activity
    1. UCPD Communications Center personnel will enter all calls for service into the UCPD Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and will include at a minimum:
      - a. Incident number
      - b. Date and time of the call
      - c. Name and callback number of the complainant (if possible)
      - d. Type of incident reported
      - e. Location and address of incident reported
      - f. Identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and backup units
      - g. Time of dispatch
      - h. Time of officer arrival
      - i. Time of officer return to service
      - j. Disposition or status of the reported incident
      - k. Suspect description (if applicable)
      - l. Weapons (if applicable)
      - m. Subject arrest time (if applicable)
      - n. Arrestee release time (if applicable)

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

- o. Document if a report/case was taken (if applicable)
- D. Radio communication with personnel
1. UC Public Safety Personnel in the field will communicate with the Communications Center via the established 800mz radio system.
  2. Records of these communications shall be logged on the agency's computer-aided dispatch system.
  3. Personnel will notify the Communications Center in the following situations:
    - a. When arriving at the scene of an incident
    - b. When unavailable due to a self-initiated call, including directive patrols
    - c. When available for service and/or clearing the scene
    - d. Any time they would be away from the cruiser for assignments, details, or breaks and when making stops with vehicles or pedestrians
    - e. When they need additional assistance or resources at the scene of an incident
    - f. When they are in a certain type of vehicle that will affect their ability to respond to certain types of calls for service
  4. Communications Center personnel shall record the status of field personnel when out of service by logging the information in the computer-aided dispatch system.
  5. An officer's assigned beat/car number will be used to identify field personnel on the radio.
    - a. In the event of a two-officer (or more) unit, the primary officer will identify over the radio as the beat/car number, and the second unit will identify with the beat number adding "A" at the end. A third officer would identify as "B", etc.
  6. During communication with other agencies, transmissions shall be in clear, concise plain English.
    - a. When communicating on area-wide frequencies, officers will identify themselves by agency name and car number, e.g. "UC Car \_\_\_ on city channel \_\_\_".
  7. The computer-aided dispatch system, which is the central reference for all dispatchers, will be programmed to recommend an appropriate amount of officers and personnel to respond to an incident based on an entered call type. This includes:
    - a. Calls recommending a single officer response
    - b. Calls requiring a multiple officer response
    - c. Calls where a police supervisor shall be dispatched to oversee operations
  8. Communications Center personnel will relay requests from UCPD personnel for emergency resources to mitigate the incident as soon as practical.

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

9. Upon receipt of an activated emergency banner from an officer's radio or mobile data computer, the dispatcher will immediately attempt to check up on the officer. If there is no response from the officer, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast an "officer needs assistance" notification over all police talk-groups, dispatch units to the last known time and location of the officer, and notify the patrol supervisor. Once the "officer needs assistance" is canceled by the requesting officer or supervisor on the scene, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast a cancellation message over all police talk groups.
  10. Upon receipt of a verbal request for emergency assistance from an officer, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast an "officer needs assistance" notification over all police talk-groups, dispatch units to the last known location of the officer, and notify the patrol supervisor. Once there is adequate assistance on the scene and/or the officer in trouble call is canceled, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast a cancellation message over all police talk groups.
- E. Access to Division and External Resources
1. The agency has a 24-hour two-way radio capability providing continuous communication between the communications center and officers on duty.
  2. Every officer is assigned a portable transceiver.
  3. Each mobile and portable radio transmits a push-to-talk identification and has an emergency banner.
  4. Communications personnel will have immediate access to departmental resources.
  5. The supervisor of the on-duty patrol shift will be available via radio or telephone at all times.
  6. Communications personnel will have access to the UCPD personnel roster containing the address and contact telephone number of every agency employee. Communications personnel will have access both electronically and in hard copy in the Communications Center.
  7. Visual maps detailing the agency's service area are posted in the communications center and available online through the Computer Aided Dispatch system.
  8. Officer status indicators are displayed on the CAD status monitor.
  9. The UCPD Critical Incident Response Plan contains the procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services to the agency and is available on the department's intranet and in hard copy form in the communications center.
    - a. Telephone numbers for other emergency service agencies are maintained in the "cardfile" of the computer-aided dispatch system as well as the speed dial listing on the communications center telephone system.

## **UCPD Communications Center**

10. Communications Personnel has immediate access to Tactical Dispatching Plans to address critical incidents and crimes in progress such as bank robberies, pursuits, and/or tactical operations.

### **F. Calls for Information or Service procedures**

1. When Communications Center personnel answer a telephone call or other communication device, the employee will apply non-escalation and de-escalation techniques throughout the contact. The employee will:
  - a. Greet the person with an appropriate universal greeting in a courteous manner to include:
    - 1) Identify themselves by rank (if applicable), name, and agency.
    - 2) Ask a relevant question (i.e. how may I be of assistance).
  - b. Attempt to obtain complete and accurate information from callers requesting law enforcement or other assistance.
  - c. Accurately classify and prioritize requests for assistance and determine if it is an emergency or non-emergency requests.
  - d. Notify the caller of the basic expected response (UCPD personnel and/or referral to another agency)
  - e. Continuously obtain and accurately relay information that may affect the safety of responders and/or persons at the scene.
  - f. If necessary, apply de-escalation training to reduce any conflict, crisis, or combativeness.
  - g. Refer calls to patrol supervision when a request from the public is outside the purview of normal operations but could be addressed by the Department of Public Safety or a caller requests clarification on policy or procedure.

### **G. Victim/Witness requests procedures**

1. Referral information for victim/witness assistance is available 24 hours daily from Communications Center personnel by calling the Communications Center.
2. Communications Center personnel will provide victim services information following UCPD policy 13.3.100 Victim Services and the [Ohio Crime Victim's Rights booklet](#).

### **H. Emergency Messages**

1. Messages of an emergency nature, such as dealing with the health and welfare of persons and/or their property, death notifications, and messages dealing with attempts to locate individuals, will be logged in the computer-aided dispatch system by communications personnel and relayed as soon as possible to on-duty supervisors for direction and disposition.

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

- I. Communication Center Emergency Misdirected Calls, Hang-up, or incomplete 911 calls
  1. If the Communications Center receives an emergency call for another jurisdiction, the Communications Center dispatcher will keep the caller on the line and attempt to transfer the caller to the proper jurisdiction. If the dispatcher can make voice contact with the proper agency, the dispatcher will announce; "This is the UC Police Communications Center; I have a call for your jurisdiction" and then disengage from the call.
  2. If the caller calls back after the transfer, attempt to reestablish contact with the destination department/jurisdiction.
  3. If the Communications Center receives an emergency hang-up call, the Communications Center dispatcher will attempt to call the phone number back if available.
  4. If there is no answer, if there is a location available, the Communications Center dispatcher will generate a call for service and dispatch two officers to the location.
  5. If the Communication Center receives a "Cad-Card" from another jurisdiction for an incomplete 911 cellphone call, the Communications Center dispatcher will dispatch an officer to the nearest location provided.
  6. If no officer is available, the Communications Center dispatcher will notify the on-duty patrol supervisor for the disposition of the Cad-Card.
  
- J. First Aid Instruction and Training
  1. UCPD Communications personnel will provide emergency medical pre-arrival instructions via telephone for medical emergencies after being certified to do so by Priority Dispatch Corporation.
  2. All communications personnel shall be trained and certified in PROQA protocol and shall receive ongoing training as prescribed by the PROQA.
  3. Communication Center will follow the Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) guidelines in the PROQA software.
  4. Copies of the PROQA pre-arrival instruction cards are available at every dispatch position and will be used only in the event of a CAD failure.
  
- K. Communication Center Alternate Power Source
  1. The Communications Center shall utilize an uninterruptible power source to provide a minimum of six hours of battery power to ensure continued operations of communications equipment in the event of the failure of the primary power source.
  2. The communications center and primary radio transmitter site utilize backup generators to maintain power during extended commercial power outages.

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

3. The Director of Emergency Communications shall ensure a documented inspection and test of the generator systems is conducted monthly, or in conformance with manufacturer recommendations.
  4. The Director of Emergency Communications shall ensure the generator system is tested or operated under “full load” at least once per year.
- L. Emergency and Non-emergency Phone Numbers
1. UCPD Communication Center maintains a 911 call line for emergency calls.
  2. UCPD also maintains two published non-emergency 10-digit call for service lines and a non-emergency 10- digit office line to separate emergency from non-emergency calls.
  3. The communications center phone system is designed to route emergency calls with a higher priority than non-emergency calls.
  4. Outgoing calls from the agency are accomplished using dedicated outbound phone lines.
- M. 24-Hour Emergency Phone Services
1. The agency may be contacted on all campuses toll-free on a twenty-four-hour basis for emergency calls by dialing 911. The hearing-impaired community can contact the UCPD twenty-four hours a day through the Rave Guardian application.
- N. Continuous Communications with Field Personnel
1. The agency has a 24-hour two-way radio capability providing continuous communication between the communications center and officers on duty.
    - a. Every officer is assigned a portable transceiver.
    - b. Each mobile and portable radio transmits a push-to-talk identification and has an emergency banner.
- O. Communication Center Recordings
1. All radio talk groups and all emergency telephone lines used by the Communications Center are continuously recorded on a multiple-track digital audio logging recorder. In addition, Communications Center closed-circuit television cameras are video recorded.
  2. Instant recall recorders are provided at each dispatch position to allow immediate playback of primary radio channel(s) and telephone conversations to confirm the accuracy of information obtained, without interrupting the recording of other calls or radio transmissions.
  3. All recordings are retained for a minimum of ninety (90) days.
  4. The recordings of telephonic communications, radio transmissions, and recorded video will be considered as CONFIDENTIAL material and may be

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

reviewed by supervisory or investigative personnel for situations including, but not limited to:

- a. Criminal Investigations
  - b. Administrative Investigations
  - c. Approved Public Records Requests
  - d. Training Purposes
  - e. Customer Service Audits
5. Only the Director of Emergency Communications, designated UCPD personnel, and Technology Services personnel can access recording media that are secured in the server room in the communications center.
- a. The digital audio logging recorder utilizes a password protection system to restrict access to only authorized personnel.
6. Agency personnel who wish to review or obtain copies of audio recordings shall make their request in writing to a communications supervisor via a [CC Audio/Video Recording Request, Form 11B](#), and include the reason for the request.
- a. Communications Center Audio/Video Recording Request Forms will be submitted to the Director of Emergency Communications or designee for processing.
  - b. Public requests for any recordings will be handled following UCPD policy 12.3.400 Public Information and Social Media.

### **P. Help Phones**

1. The University of Cincinnati utilizes Help Phones throughout the University property.
2. The Administrative Sergeant shall ensure a documented inspection and test of help phones are completed at least quarterly.
3. These inspections shall be documented on the Help Phone Inspection checklist and forwarded to the Administrative Sergeant.
4. The Administrative Sergeant will notify DTS of any needed repairs.

### **Q. Panic Alarms**

1. The Department of Public Safety has panic alarms located at the front desk (lobby in Edwards 3), the Keys & Badges desk in Edwards 4, and in the UCPD Detainee Interview Room.
2. The Community Engagement Unit Lieutenant is responsible for ensuring that these panic alarms are inspected and tested quarterly, with the inspection documented on the Building Safety Inspection form, which is maintained in the Community Engagement office.
3. At least once every two (2) years, the Community Engagement Lieutenant will

## ***UCPD Communications Center***

evaluate the security situation that prompted the installation of the panic alarm to ensure the security need remains relevant and is being met.

### Reference

UCPD policy 12.3.400 Public Information and Social Media

UCPD policy 13.3.100 Victim Services