

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER -

Distinguishing Features of the Position

This position performs entry-level technical work on assigned shifts in the Northampton County Sheriff's Office Communications Center answering emergency calls, verifying the callback number and address of the emergency, determining the nature of the emergency, and transferring the call or dispatching the appropriate emergency response unit(s) as required. Duties require computer terminal operation, radio operation, communications skills, record keeping, filing, reporting, and knowledge of public safety and communications procedures. Additional non-emergency public safety communications duties are also required.

Work is performed under the general supervision of the Sheriff in accordance with well established methods and procedures, and is reviewed through conferences, observations, and analyses of results. Performance during the initial period of employment is coupled with both formal and informal training, on-the-job performance training and evaluation, and feedback to assure independent performance and thorough knowledge of operational policies and procedures.

Typical Duties and Responsibilities (May Not Include All Duties Performed)

Receives calls for emergency assistance on emergency and non-emergency telephone lines; responds calmly and tactfully to callers who may be upset, frightened, or highly emotional; obtains complete and accurate information including the type, nature and location of emergency, and the name and phone number of the caller.

Records information received accurately using manual and computerized records; maintains records of calls for service, dispatched incidents, and response data via computer and agency forms.

Reviews emergency call information; determines priority of call and dispatches most appropriate and/or closest unit(s) to the scene of the emergency; uses defined radio terminology and radio channels; relays pertinent information to responding units and/or agencies; maintains radio contact to relay additional information and to respond to requests.

Transfers calls for law enforcement assistance to appropriate law enforcement agencies. Provides logistical support to law enforcement agencies in coordinating multi-agency responses, verifying emergency locations and directions, and providing backup communications.

Refers callers to appropriate agencies for non-emergency requests. Refers emergency calls outside local jurisdictions to appropriate response or dispatch agency.

Performs other duties as assigned.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Considerable knowledge of the methods and procedures of operating a communications system.

Knowledge of Eastern Shore geography and location of important buildings.

Ability to speak distinctly, clearly, and concisely.

Ability to understand and follow detailed directions.

Ability to act quickly and effectively during emergencies.

Ability to operate complex telecommunications equipment.

Ability to deal with the public effectively under trying conditions.

Ability to type accurately at a reasonable rate of speed.

Ability to use computer terminal for computer aided dispatch and applications.

Physical Requirements

This is sedentary work requiring the exertion of up to 10 pounds of force occasionally and a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to move objects; work requires standing, walking, sitting, speaking or hearing, reaching, fingering, grasping, feeling, and repetitive motions; vocal communication is required for expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word and conveying detailed or important instructions to others accurately, loudly, or quickly; hearing is required to perceive information at normal spoken word levels and to receive detailed information through oral communications; visual acuity is required for preparing and analyzing written or computer data, operating machines and observing general surroundings and activities; the worker is subject to moderate noise and is not subject to adverse environmental conditions

Minimum Qualifications

High school diploma or equivalent, including or supplemented by coursework or experience in typing or keyboarding.

Desirable qualifications include two years experience in police, fire, or emergency medical services, and/or in public safety dispatching.

Applicants selected for employment will be subject to a criminal history background investigation and drug screening.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

General Definition of Work

Performs intermediate technical work receiving and processing calls for service and either dispatching the appropriate personnel or transferring callers to the appropriate service provider; performs related work as required. Work is performed under the regular supervision of a Supervisor.

Essential Functions/Typical Tasks

The following tasks are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

Receiving, classifying, processing and dispatching emergency service calls; receiving, recording and forwarding non-emergency service calls; preparing and maintaining computerized and other records and files.

Receives emergency and non-emergency phone calls, determines the caller's needs and appropriate course of action.

Dispatches appropriate Sheriff, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services' personnel and equipment using radios and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) equipment and assists responding units as needed.

Monitors radio transmissions, follows up with callers, and, as needed, stays in telephone contact with caller and provides emergency medical instructions over the phone to callers.

Provides non-emergency callers with needed information or transfers callers to appropriate service providers in the community.

Searches for and retrieves information needed to respond to callers utilizing telecommunications equipment and computer terminals.

Types and files incident cards on calls received and maintains various logs, charts, and databases for the purpose of providing a record of all emergency and non-emergency actions.

Operates and maintains emergency and non-emergency equipment such as the VESTA telephone system, the CAD system, radios, and computer terminals required to dispatch public safety units and monitor telephone calls and radios.

Maintains library of emergency reference materials such as policy manuals, computer manuals, maps.

Performs related tasks as required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

General knowledge of the methods of operating the communications system; general knowledge of radio and communications procedures; general knowledge of the geography of the counties and location of important buildings; ability to type and enter data at a reasonable rate of speed; ability to speak distinctly; ability to solve problems within scope of responsibility; ability to operate communications equipment; ability to deal courteously with the public under stressful conditions; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with associates and the general public.

Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent with certifications as indicated in Special Requirements section and experience and/or training in emergency services, fire services or law enforcement or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Physical Requirements

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