

GENERAL ORDER

August 2017

Immediately

III-02

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **DISPATCH AUTHORITY**

Index as: Communications Procedures

Dispatch of Mobile Units

Event Priorities

Accreditation Standards: 41.2.1, 81.2.2, 81.2.4

Cross Reference: G.O. II-17, Computers and Software

I.O. V.5:5, Radio Communications Procedures

Replaces: G.O. III-2, Dispatch Authority (May 23, 2008)

This Order details the authority of the Emergency Communications Division to dispatch and direct police mobile units and explains basic dispatch procedures and responsibilities. The Order consists of the following sections:

- I. Dispatch Authority
- II. Event Priorities
- III. Dispatch of Priority 1 and 2 Events
- IV. Dispatch of Priority 3 and 4 Events
- V. Self-dispatch, Accepting an Event
- VI. Officer Initiated Events
- VII. Out of Service

I. DISPATCH AUTHORITY

A. The voice or electronic dispatch of all mobile units shall originate in the Emergency Communications Center, with the exception of special units under the control of a remote base station, as may be authorized by the Chief of Police.

B. All assignments voice or electronic, directed by the Emergency Communications Center are, in effect, orders from the Chief of Police which require prompt compliance by the assigned unit.

C. Emergency Communications Center personnel may direct employees to perform official police tasks anywhere within the City limits without regard to geographic assignment, division, or functional assignment of the employee.

D. The Emergency Communications Dispatcher is responsible for assigning a back-up unit or units based on established protocols. They may query the assigned unit regarding necessity of a back-up, cancel unnecessary units or, if appropriate, delay response until a back-up is available. Dispatchers will defer to the officer's judgment regarding the need for additional units.

E. Units are considered available for routine assignment until fifteen (15) minutes prior to check-off time. Emergency assignments may be made at any time.

F. Responsibility for a specific assignment may be changed by the Emergency Communications Center personnel or a street supervisor. Any employee may request a change under unusual circumstances.

II. EVENT PRIORITIES

A. Calls for police services shall be classified as high priority (an emergency) or routine in nature, based on protocols followed by the Emergency Communications Center personnel.

B. Higher priority calls shall be given priority over calls of a lesser priority. Calls for service are assigned one of four (4) possible priorities:

1. Priority 1: Forcible felonies, or calls of a life-threatening nature where prompt apprehension is possible, or calls where serious injury has occurred or is threatened.

2. Priority 2: Calls generally of a non-life-threatening nature, involving crimes against persons, or felony crimes against property where prompt apprehension of a suspect is possible, or where presence of the police can keep a situation from escalating.

3. Priority 3: These incidents are routine, non-urgent calls for police service, where there is no immediate threat to the safety of persons or property, and where the call-screening process has determined they are not considered to be priority 1 or 2.

4. Priority 4: Requests for police service which, based on Emergency Communications Division protocols, are common or routine in nature, and, by determination of the Emergency Communications personnel, can be placed at the end of the queue of calls awaiting police response.

III. DISPATCH OF PRIORITY 1 AND 2 EVENTS

A. Emergency Communications Center personnel shall voice dispatch Priority 1 and 2 events. Emergency Communications Center personnel shall initiate all computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system entries related to the initial response, relieving the officer of that responsibility.

B. Voice dispatch of emergency calls may be preceded by an alert tone, depending upon the nature of the event. If an alert tone is used, patrol units will be told to "copy" and then given the nature and location of the incident in clear speech.

C. When no alert tone is sounded, a specific unit will be told to "copy a priority" and then given the nature and location of the incident in clear speech.

D. Back-up units will be assigned as Emergency Communications Center protocol and/or CAD defaults indicate, or as requested by patrol units.

E. All units assigned to Priority 1 and 2 events will verbally acknowledge the Dispatcher with their unit designator and location, and will verbally advise their arrival at the scene or other assigned location.

IV. DISPATCH OF PRIORITY 3 AND 4 EVENTS

A. All aspects of Priority 3 and 4 events will be handled electronically via the MPS system.

1. The Dispatcher shall use silent dispatch to ship the event to the assigned unit(s) and the Officer(s) shall acknowledge electronically.

2. The assigned Officer(s) is/are responsible for all necessary electronic event updates; e.g., on-scene, entry of remarks, editing event information, issuance of a case number, clearing the event with a disposition code, and returning to available status, etc.

B. In the event the MPS becomes unavailable, Emergency Communications Center personnel will revert to voice dispatch.

1. A specific unit will be told to "copy." That unit will respond with its designator and location.

2. The nature and location of the incident will be broadcast in clear speech, without codes or ten signals.

3. Backup units will be assigned, if necessary, or when requested by the assigned unit or a supervisor.

4. All units will advise Emergency Communications Center personnel of their arrival at the scene or other assigned location.

V. SELF-DISPATCH, ACCEPTING AN EVENT

A. Officers may self-attach to Priority 3 and 4 events only.

B. Officers are expected to monitor calls for service waiting in the pending assignment queue; and based on their availability, zone assignment, familiarity with the event (address, complainant, etc.), voluntarily self-attach to handle the waiting call for service. They need not advise by voice of that action.

VI. OFFICER INITIATED EVENTS

A. It is important for Officer safety and for workload analysis that events initiated by Officers be accurately recorded as to time, location and type of incident.

B. Whenever an event presents a potential Officer safety situation, it shall be initiated via voice communication and the dispatcher will acknowledge the information and create the event in CAD. Examples include, but are not limited to; traffic stops, checking suspicious persons or vehicles, etc. These types of events shall be cleared by voice communication with the Dispatcher.

C. For a routine "field event"; e.g., training, court, an approved meal break, attending a meeting, etc., where there is little likelihood of encountering an officer safety situation, officers will electronically place themselves out of service at a designated location where they will be unavailable. When doing so, Officers should ensure the actual address of the event is displayed, as the default automatic vehicle location information may not depict where the officer actually is or intends to be located.

VII. OUT OF SERVICE

An Officers with a take-home vehicle will change their pending mobile status to "out of service" upon arrival at their home.

Anthony Holloway
Chief of Police