

Dispatch

801.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the basic functions of Dispatch. It addresses the immediate information needs of the Department in the course of its normal daily activities and during emergencies.

801.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Fresno State Police Department to provide 24-hour telephone service to the public for information and for routine or emergency assistance. The Department provides two-way radio capability providing continuous communication between Dispatch and department members in the field.

801.3 DISPATCH SECURITY

The communications function is vital and central to all emergency service operations. The safety and security of Dispatch, its members and its equipment must be a high priority.

Access to Dispatch shall be limited to Dispatch members, the Shift Sergeant, command staff and department members with a specific business-related purpose.

801.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

801.4.1 MANAGER OF POLICE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

The Chief of Police shall appoint and delegate certain responsibilities to a lead dispatcher. The lead dispatcher reports to the Support Operations Manager or the authorized designee.

The responsibilities of the Support Operations Manager include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Overseeing the efficient and effective operation of Dispatch in coordination with other supervisors.
- (b) Scheduling and maintaining dispatcher time records.
- (c) Supervising, training and evaluating dispatchers.
- (d) Ensuring the radio and telephone recording system is operational.
 - 1. Recordings shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule and as required by law.
- (e) Overseeing requests for copies of Dispatch information for release.
- (f) Maintaining Dispatch database systems.
- (g) Maintaining and updating Dispatch procedures manual.
 - 1. Procedures for specific types of crime reports may be necessary. For example, specific questions and instructions may be necessary when talking with a victim of a sexual assault to ensure that his/her health and safety needs are met, as well as steps that he/she may take to preserve evidence.

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2. Ensuring dispatcher compliance with established policies and procedures.
- (h) Handling internal and external inquiries regarding services provided and accepting personnel complaints in accordance with the Personnel Complaints Policy.
- (i) Maintaining a current contact list of State personnel to be notified in the event of a utility service emergency.

801.4.2 ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

The Support Operations Manager should establish procedures for:

- (a) Recording all telephone and radio communications and playback issues.
- (b) Storage and retention of recordings.
- (c) Security of audio recordings (e.g., passwords, limited access, authorized reviewers, preservation of recordings past normal retention standards).
- (d) Availability of current information for dispatchers (e.g., Shift Sergeant contact, rosters, member tracking methods, member contact, maps, emergency providers, tactical dispatch plans).
- (e) Assignment of field members and safety check intervals.
- (f) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) instructions.
- (g) Requesting external services (e.g., fire suppression, ambulances, aircraft, tow trucks, taxis).
- (h) Protection of essential equipment (e.g., surge protectors, gaseous fire suppression systems, uninterruptible power systems, generators).
- (i) Protection of radio transmission lines, antennas and power sources for Dispatch (e.g., security cameras, limited access).
- (j) Handling misdirected, silent and hang-up calls.
- (k) Handling private security alarms, if applicable.
- (l) Radio interoperability issues.

801.4.3 DISPATCHERS

Dispatchers report to the Support Operations Manager. The responsibilities of the dispatcher include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Receiving and handling all incoming and transmitted communications, including:
 - (a) Emergency 9-1-1 lines.
 - (b) Business telephone lines.
 - (c) Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/Text Telephone (TTY) Service.
 - (d) Radio communications with department members in the field and support resources (e.g., fire department, emergency medical services (EMS), allied agency law enforcement units).

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- (e) Other electronic sources of information (e.g., TiPNow, digital photographs, video).
- (b) Documenting the field activities of department members and support resources (e.g., fire department, EMS, allied agency law enforcement units).
- (c) Inquiry and entry of information through Dispatch, department and other law enforcement database systems (CLETS, DMV, NCIC).
- (d) Monitoring department video systems.
- (e) Maintaining the current status of members in the field, their locations and the nature of calls for service.
- (f) Notifying the Shift Sergeant or field supervisor of emergency activity, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Vehicle pursuits.
 - 2. Foot pursuits.
 - 3. Assignment of emergency response.

801.5 CALL HANDLING

The Fresno State Police Department is a 24 hour public safety answering point for 9-1-1 assistance.. In addition the non-emergency line is available for calls 24 hours a day.

When a call for service is received, the dispatcher will reasonably and quickly attempt to determine whether the call is an emergency or non-emergency, and shall quickly ascertain the call type, location and priority by asking four key questions:

- Where?
- What?
- When?
- Who?

If the dispatcher determines that the caller has a hearing and/or speech impairment or disability, he/she shall immediately initiate a connection with the individual via available Telephone Relay Service (TRS), as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If the dispatcher determines that the caller is a limited English proficiency (LEP) individual, the dispatcher should quickly determine whether sufficient information can be obtained to initiate an appropriate response. If language assistance is still needed, the language is known and a language-appropriate authorized interpreter is available in Dispatch, the dispatcher should immediately connect the LEP caller to the authorized interpreter.

If no authorized interpreter is available or the dispatcher is unable to identify the caller's language, the dispatcher will contact the contracted telephonic interpretation service and establish a three-party call connecting the dispatcher, the LEP individual and the interpreter.

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Dispatchers should be courteous, patient and respectful when dealing with the public.

801.5.1 EMERGENCY CALLS

A call is considered an emergency when there is an immediate or potential threat to life or serious property damage, and the timely arrival of public safety assistance is of the utmost importance. A person reporting an emergency should not be placed on hold until the dispatcher has obtained all necessary information to ensure the safety of the responding department members and affected individuals.

Emergency calls should be dispatched immediately. The Shift Sergeant shall be notified of pending emergency calls for service when department members are unavailable for dispatch.

801.5.2 NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

A call is considered a non-emergency call when there is no immediate or potential threat to life or property. A person reporting a non-emergency may be placed on hold, if necessary, to allow the dispatcher to handle a higher priority or emergency call.

The reporting person should be advised if there will be a delay in the dispatcher returning to the telephone line or when there will be a delay in the response for service.

801.6 DOCUMENTATION

It shall be the responsibility of Dispatch to document all relevant information on calls for service or self-initiated activity. Dispatchers shall attempt to elicit, document and relay as much information as possible to enhance the safety of the member and assist in anticipating conditions that may be encountered at the scene. Desirable information would include, at a minimum:

- Incident control number.
- Date and time of request.
- Name and address of the reporting person, if possible.
- Type of incident reported.
- Involvement of weapons, drugs and/or alcohol.
- Location of incident reported.
- Identification of members assigned as primary and backup.
- Time of dispatch.
- Time of the responding member's arrival.
- Time of member's return to service.
- Disposition or status of reported incident.

All available information shall be entered into the Records Management System (RIMS) via the appropriate methods in the CAD module.

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801.7 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

The police radio system is for official use only, to be used by dispatchers to communicate with department members in the field. All transmissions shall be professional and made in a calm, businesslike manner, using proper language and correct procedures. Such transmissions shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Members acknowledging the dispatcher with their radio identification call signs and current location.
- (b) Dispatchers acknowledging and responding promptly to all radio transmissions.
- (c) Members keeping the dispatcher advised of their status and location.
- (d) Member and dispatcher acknowledgements shall be concise and without further comment unless additional information is needed.

The Support Operations Manager shall be notified of radio procedure violations or other causes for complaint. All complaints and violations will be investigated and reported to the complainant's supervisor and processed through the chain of command.

801.7.1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION COMPLIANCE

Fresno State Police Department radio operations shall be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements.

All personnel assigned to radio operations functions have access to the FCC's current rules and regulations via the FCC website (shortcut to website located on primary Dispatch computers).

801.7.2 RADIO IDENTIFICATION

Radio call signs are assigned to department members based on factors such as duty assignment, uniformed patrol assignment and/or member identification number. Dispatchers may identify themselves on the radio with the department name or number, and shall identify the department member by his/her call sign. Members should use their call signs when initiating communication with the dispatcher. The use of the call sign allows for a brief pause so that the dispatcher can acknowledge the appropriate department member. Members initiating communication with other law enforcement or support agencies shall use their entire radio call sign, which includes the department name.

801.8 PROCEDURES

801.8.1 COMMUNICATIONS

Critical circumstances which require radio communications to and from field personnel:

- (a) Officer needs assistance
- (b) Crimes in progress
- (c) Life-saving situations
- (d) Vehicle or foot pursuits
- (e) Responding to a call "Code 3" (lights and siren)

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In the interest of officer safety, all police officers shall notify the dispatcher of their location and other relevant information on all traffic stops, pedestrian stops, foot patrols, security checks, and any time they place themselves into or take themselves out of service from the field. These statuses shall be logged/recorded via RIMS.

Assignment of officers and patrol supervisors. The following criteria for the assignment of the number of officers in response to an incident shall be employed:

- (a) All available units shall be assigned to the following calls that are deemed critical in nature. Dispatch will assign the primary and back-up units for handling. All other units shall respond, prepare to assist, and clear upon notification by the patrol supervisor. The presence of a patrol supervisor at the scene for the purpose of assuming command is also required at, but not limited to, the following calls:
 1. An officer-needs-help call
 2. A felony in progress call such as a robbery
 3. A life-threatening or serious medical emergency
 4. Critical Missing Persons
 5. Fire
 6. Hazardous material incident
 7. Bomb Threat
 8. Traffic accidents involving multiple injured citizens with serious bodily injuries
 9. Potentially volatile situations; or
 10. Major incidents requiring response of Investigators or outside agency personnel, such as homicides, suicides, riot or hostage situations.
 11. (Supervisor Response Only) Traffic accidents involving sworn on-duty personnel or department-owned patrol vehicles/property.

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- (b) For calls deemed serious in nature requiring additional units not readily available, notification of the Patrol Operations Lieutenant or in their absence, the Administrative Lieutenant, shall be made. The Patrol Operations Lieutenant's discretion shall be used to determine the number of units to be deployed. If it is determined that the situation requires additional officers to be called in for duty the Patrol Operations Lieutenant shall immediately notify the Chief of Police of the situation and proceed as directed.
- (c) Upon an emergency request for mutual aid by a field officer or patrol supervisor, the dispatcher shall, as directed, notify the appropriate agencies such as the Fresno Police Department, the Clovis Police Department, the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, or the California Highway Patrol.
- (d) To prioritize and assign a specified number of officers in response to incidents, the following criteria should be utilized:
 - 1. For 'cold' calls where no known or possible suspect is present: one officer minimum.
 - 2. For crimes in progress/just occurred where a suspect is possible: two officers.
- (e) When dispatching a primary officer, dispatch will assign the beat officer with the assigned beat during a given shift. Beat assignments (1-4) are assigned daily during shift briefing.
- (f) Dispatchers should not dispatch calls by requesting, "Any available unit," as calls are to be assigned to the appropriate beat officer. If the primary beat officer is on another call for service or is unavailable, dispatchers will have the discretion to assign other officer(s) to leave their beat assignments to handle the call for service outside their primary area of responsibility.
- (g) Shift supervisors/OIC's retain the authority to reassign dispatched field units they deem necessary to fulfill the mission and goals set forth in their daily operational plan.

801.8.2 ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Dispatch personnel shall have immediate access to the following resources:

- (a) Immediate contact with the on-duty Shift Sergeant or Officer in Charge (OIC) shall be maintained via radio or cellular telephone.
- (b) A current duty roster of all field personnel shall remain posted in the dispatch center at all times.
- (c) An updated listing of contact telephone numbers and residential addresses of every employed agency member shall be maintained in the dispatch center via RIMS.
- (d) Maps detailing the agency's service areas are to be displayed in the Communications Center and available in RIMS for quick reference by the dispatcher.
- (e) Officer status indicators shall be available to the dispatcher through the CAD/RIMS screen.

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The procurement of emergency and necessary external services to the agency shall be conducted by dispatch in the following manner:

- (a) Critical Police Emergency – Coordinate the necessary mutual aid deployment with the appropriate Patrol Operations Lieutenant, Chief of Police, or other available command staff member. If the Chief of Police or command staff member are unavailable to address the issue, discretion of the shift supervisor, senior field officer, or dispatcher (in the chain of command) may be employed, particularly in situations in which officer safety has been compromised.
- (b) Medical emergency requiring paramedics – Initiate or transfer a call to the Fresno Fire Department/EMS.
- (c) Campus-wide Emergency – In the event of a major disaster or campus-wide power outage, and provided radio communications are operational, the Dispatcher shall conduct a role-call of all units. If radio communications have been compromised, the field officers are to check in with the dispatcher as soon as they are able by either telephoning or going to the police station to determine the welfare of the dispatcher(s) and the status of the station. The Chief of Police shall be immediately advised of the situation and the patrol shift supervisor and appropriate Patrol Operations Lieutenant are to report to the dispatch center as soon as possible to assess the situation. If it is determined that the police dispatch center is inoperable, the shift supervisor will provide transportation of the dispatcher to the emergency operations trailer or designated EOC.
- (d) Physical Plant/Housing Maintenance Facilities Emergencies – When it is determined that the safe operation of a building or the safety of the occupants in a building is compromised, and after appropriate police and fire notifications have been made, the Dispatcher shall notify the appropriate Facilities personnel. For a serious incident that compromises building operations Facilities emergency contact lists (located within Dispatch) shall be utilized to notify the appropriate individuals during regular or after business hours.
- (e) The telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services, shall be maintained and secured in the Communications Center (via RIMS Telephone Directory) for immediate use by the dispatcher or personnel assigned to support dispatch during an emergency.

Tactical Dispatch Plans:

- (a) Tactical dispatch plans and procedures are to be compiled by the Support Operations Manager and maintained secured within the Dispatch/Communications Area. This information will be contained in a binder entitled FSPD Tactical Dispatch Plan.
- (b) The Plan should include:
 - 1. The procedures to be followed in directing resources and for obtaining information on crimes in progress, pursuits and/ or tactical operations;

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2. Ground plan drawings of campus buildings and high risk areas (maintained via RIMS database)
3. Identification of staging areas for emergency equipment; and
4. The University Emergency Operations Plan (condensed version) shall also be made readily available in the dispatch center. The emergency management coordinator will maintain this document in up-to-date form.

801.8.3 CALLS FOR SERVICE AND VICTIM/WITNESS REQUESTS

Dispatch personnel are most often the first to respond to a victim, witness, or other community member's call requesting information or services. When a call is received, whether it is an initial or subsequent request, the dispatcher shall:

- (a) Determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required;
- (b) Determine if a response is warranted, and if so, the call shall be dispatched as prescribed
 1. Considerations in level of response required include:
 - (a) Immediate threat present or not present;
 - (b) Demeanor of the victim;
 - (c) Request from the victim for immediate assistance;
 - (d) Past contact, if any, with the victim;
 - (e) Any information known by the Dispatcher relative to the victim and the offense.
- (c) If the victim, witness, or other community member's request is for information only, transfer them to the appropriate party's extension/voice mail (i.e., Investigations, Records, LiveScan, Parking, etc.). For services or information handled outside the scope of those performed by the Department, the dispatcher shall assist the caller in determining who best to contact to meet their needs.
- (d) Inform the caller of the agency's response, be it direct law enforcement service and/or a referral to other appropriate agencies for support services. This would include any of the following as appropriate:
 1. The name of the department employee who will be responding to the call, in person or by telephone;
 2. Campus department who will be notified (e.g., Student Health Center); and
 3. Outside agency service to be contacted (e.g., law enforcement agency, counseling service, etc.).

It will be the standard practice to have a victim, witness, or reporting party file a report of a crime or incident in person. In those circumstances where it may not be possible due to extenuating circumstances, to file a report in person or the reporting party adamantly declines responding in person, a report may be taken by an officer over the telephone, provided the incident does not

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require the physical collection of evidence. In addition, certain reports may be completed by the reporting party online via Coplogic.

Dispatchers are required to assist victims and witnesses who are requesting victim/witness information and/or services upon their initial and ensuing requests in accordance with this policy as well as the Policy on Victim and Witness Assistance.

An updated list of victim/witness referrals is to be maintained by the Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police and made available to patrol officers and dispatchers to be used in the course of their duties in providing victim/witness assistance.

801.8.4 EMERGENCY MESSAGES

Emergency messages/notifications shall be conducted with the utmost sensitivity. All guidelines pursuant to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) must be followed.

Classification of circumstances that may require emergency notifications include:

- (a) Medical Emergency – a situation in which an individual is ill, injured and/or a situation that requires immediate medical assistance;
- (b) Family Emergency – a situation in which a member of the person's immediate family should be notified due to a serious incident involving people or situations as: a family member, home fire, water leak, auto accident, etc.;
- (c) Death Notifications – notification of the death of an immediate family member, significant other, close relative or friend; and
- (d) General Emergency – any other situation in which emergency circumstances exist and that is considered grave in nature by the dispatcher or a police officer.

For an emergency notification the police dispatcher shall:

- (a) Obtain all pertinent information from the caller to determine if an emergency notification is appropriate based on the above criteria;
- (b) The name of the person to be notified;
- (c) The location of the person, if known;
- (d) The status of the person to be notified such as student, faculty, or staff;
- (e) The date of birth of the person to be notified, if known;
- (f) Notify the shift supervisor/OIC of the emergency notification request; and
- (g) Access necessary resources to locate the person to be notified:

For all emergency notifications, Police Department personnel shall:

- (a) Respond promptly to the location;
- (b) For a student or faculty member, when possible, notify them at the beginning or end of the class;
- (c) For classes that are in session, notify the instructor of the emergency notification;

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- (d) Under all circumstances, exhibit professionalism and sensitivity when making an emergency notification;
- (e) Make the emergency notification in private when possible, by calling the person outside of the classroom when appropriate, causing the least amount of disruption to a class in session.

801.8.5 MISDIRECTED CALLS

Upon receipt of an abandoned or misdialed call via the 911 or blue light phone systems the Dispatcher shall:

- (a) Check the telephone number that appears on the 911 screen.
- (b) A police unit shall be immediately dispatched to the location of the 911 abandoned call.
- (c) Once the dispatcher has identified the callback number, a callback is to be placed to that number immediately.
 1. The dispatcher shall identify themselves and advise the person who answers the telephone that they received a 911 call from the location. The Dispatcher shall ask if there is any emergency at the location and verify the information on the 911 screen such as the address and telephone number.
 2. If the dispatcher has any indication that there may be a problem at the location, the responding police unit is to be immediately advised of the situation.
 3. Upon callback, if the dispatcher is unable to establish contact because of a busy line, he/she shall immediately advise the responding police unit that a busy signal was received during the callback.
 4. The dispatcher shall make additional attempts to establish contact with the caller's location during the police response.
 5. For abandoned calls that result in an open line, the dispatcher shall listen for background noises and advise the responding police unit of what is heard, if anything, over the open line.

Subsequent to any abandoned or misdialed emergency call, a complete CAD/RIMS incident entry using the "911AB" incident code shall be made, to include when possible, the name, address, and telephone number of the caller in the "caller" field along with a brief disposition of the call in the narrative field.

Under no circumstances will a dispatcher fail to assist a caller reporting an emergency, despite jurisdiction.

801.8.6 IMMEDIATE PLAY-BACK

The department utilizes a digital recording system to maintain a continuous recording of all emergency telephone conversations and Fresno State Police Department primary and secondary channel radio traffic within the communications center.

The immediate playback capability may be utilized by the police dispatcher when field personnel or a caller is difficult to understand or unable to repeat their information

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- (a) Recordings are retained for a minimum of 30 days and in accordance with system wide retention requirements.
- (b) The Support Operations Manager has the primary responsibility to ensure secure handling and storage of the recordings via standard log-in/authentication and physical security protocols.

Reviewing Recorded Conversations:

- (a) The dispatcher may immediately review recorded conversations utilizing the phone/radio transmission recall feature of the digital recorder.
- (b) Sworn personnel may review recordings associated to their related crime reports/investigations.
- (c) Written requests shall be made for all outside requests in accordance with the Records Maintenance and Release policy.

801.9 CONFIDENTIALITY

Information that becomes available through Dispatch may be confidential or sensitive in nature. All members of Dispatch shall treat information that becomes known to them as confidential and release that information in accordance with the Protected Information Policy.

Automated data, such as Department of Motor Vehicle records, warrants, criminal history information, records of internal police files or medical information, shall only be made available to authorized law enforcement personnel. Prior to transmitting confidential information via the radio, an admonishment shall be made that confidential information is about to be broadcast.

801.10 TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Dispatchers shall receive training consistent with minimum standards established by POST (Penal Code § 13510).