



Communication Officer

Job Description

Job Title: Communication Officer
Department: Sheriff
FLSA Designation: Non-Exempt
Reports to: Communications Supervisor
HR Approved: Lisa Seddon April 2024

Job Summary

To serve as the communications link between the citizens of and visitors to Marion County and the Public Safety Agencies which we serve answering emergency and non-emergency calls, dispatching Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS as the need arises via a multi channel radio, entering calls for service, conducting IOWA/NCIC checks, making necessary entries into the IOWA/NCIC system and assisting the Jail as needed.

Essential Functions and Responsibilities

The following duties are typical for this position. These are not to be construed as exclusive or all inclusive. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Emergency Call Taker: Answers 911 calls and obtain appropriate information for entry into the CAD system while at the same time interpreting ALI/ANI information and dispatching appropriate Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS agencies once jurisdiction is determined. Calm the caller and maintain contact with the caller until such a time the call can safely be terminated. Continuously assess the situation while discreetly handling sensitive information and providing responding units with all relevant information in an accurate, brief and clear manner. Respond to radio traffic from responding personnel.

Call Taker: Responsible for answering incoming calls on a 12 line phone system. Obtaining from the caller the appropriate details (name, address, call back number, reason for call / nature of complaint etc.) in order to determine the type of assistance or help they are wanting / needing and entering the information into the CAD system. Determine which agency or department needs to respond and directing the caller to the appropriate agency if other than the Sheriff's Office. Transfer calls to other departments within the Sheriff's Office. Transferring calls to voicemail or taking messages for deputies, officers, jail staff and other employees when they are unavailable to answer the phone. Respond to and answer questions caller may have or refer them to someone who can assist them.

Dispatching Calls: Obtain as much information as possible from the caller. Page / notify (via phone or radio) the appropriate responder(s) (Law Enforcement, Fire, EMS) providing them the location and nature of call using appropriate radio codes, terminology and procedures. Listen and respond to paged personnel and continue to relay information as it becomes available. Page / notify additional support units (responders) when requested to do so. Accurately log and maintain incoming / outgoing radio traffic to and from responding personnel.

Radio Communications: The Communication Center is equipped with two Zetron base radios and one CPI Remote radio. The base radios are programmed with channels that allow the Dispatcher to communicate with Deputies, Officers, State Patrol, DNR, Conservation Officers, US Corp of Engineer Officers, Fire, EMS, other Communication Centers and the National Weather Service. The radio is used to relay information from the Communication Center (Dispatch) to Deputies, Officers, emergency services and other responding personnel. Dispatch also relays communication between responding units when requested to do so. The radio is used as a means of communication between the Dispatcher and Deputies / Officers on traffic stops. The radio is also used to monitor the safety of Deputies and Officers by means of status checks. Dispatch is also able to monitor other agencies radio traffic to determine if a response from one of the agencies we server is needed. Dispatch maintains computer logs of incoming and outgoing radio traffic.

Operation of the Iowa/NCIC System: Entry of data into the IOWA/NCIC System in a specified format to obtain information requested via the “switch” which routes data to the appropriate database (IDOT, ICIS, GSIS, IOWA, NCIC and NLETS) or agency. Communicate with other agencies to relay or obtain information. Analyze information received and relay to appropriate personnel in an accurate, brief and clear manner. (This information includes but is not limited to the following: vehicle information driver’s license information, wanted person information, missing person information, criminal history information and stolen vehicles, boats, guns, articles or securities information.) Obtain information necessary to enter into the system, in the correct format, wanted and missing persons, stolen vehicles, boats, guns, articles and securities as requested by deputies and officers. Monitor all information received and if relevant relay to appropriate personnel.

Operation of the CAD System: The CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system contains various applications used by the Communications Center. The Call Taker screen is where the process begins. Entries are made into this log of all calls received that require a response from Law Enforcement, Fire or EMS. Also entered are calls of an informative nature which may be useful for later shifts. After obtaining and entering necessary information the appropriate personnel are dispatched. Within the Call Taker screen is the Call List, which is a list of all calls entered, the CAD Log is a log of all dispatching transactions entered into the system, the Vehicle Entry is information on vehicles, towed vehicles, impounds or wanted vehicles, the Vehicle List is a list of vehicles records that have been entered into CAD. The Status Monitor displays the status of the on-duty units and pending calls. Additional programs used by Communication Officers and accessed though the same computer are TRACS, the accident program where Communication Officers enter information from Deputies accident reports and transmit the information to the Department of Transportation; the No Contact List which is used to track both in and out of County valid No Contact (Protective) Orders; the Press Release file used daily to notify the media; the internet which enables Communication Officer to do their job more effectively by allowing them to monitor weather radar in times of severe or threatening weather, reverse look-up of phone numbers and addresses for subjects officers / deputies need to contact, DOT driver’s license picture file, Iowa Courts on Line, Iowa road conditions, paging service, and training and recertification for Communication Officers; RMS a comprehensive Records Management System that provides for the data collection, reporting and administrative needs of the office.

Female Transport/Matron: When necessary ride along with law enforcement personnel when transporting females on committals or female inmates between facilities. Remain aware of subject movements and actions and act as a witness to all interactions during transport. Pat down all female inmates entering the jail to ensure they are not hiding contraband. Monitor females while they are changing clothes to ensure they are not hiding contraband in or on their person.

Voice Date Recorder: Used to retrieve information previously recorded including incoming and outgoing telephone calls, 911 calls and all radio traffic. Obtain the date and approximate time then enter this information in the format specified. Select the channel or channels needed, listening until the desired traffic is located. Record traffic needing using a micro cassette recorder.

Courthouse Panic Alarms: There are currently 16 panic alarms in various locations at the Courthouse. When activated the alarm goes out simultaneously over both County Repeater and KPD Repeater giving the location of the alarm. It is the responsibility of the Communication Officer to make sure that Deputies and Officers on-duty are aware of the alarm and the location of activation.

Civil Department Panic Alarm: The Civil Department of the Sheriff's Office is equipped with a panic alarm. When activated a series of beeps sound in Dispatch alerting the Communication Officer that assistance is needed.

Back-Up For Master Control: The Communication Center is equipped and training provided so that in a time of need Communications may assume control of the secure area of the LEC. Jail staff will inform the Communication Officer(s) that control is being switched to Communications and Dispatcher(s) will take control assisting the Jail until such time that it is appropriate to return control to Master Control Center.

Administrative Security: The Communication Center is equipped with security monitors so that Dispatchers may monitor the activities of persons entering, leaving and within the public areas of the LEC.

Training: Communication Officers having demonstrated a high knowledge of the position and an ability to perform the job in an exemplifying manner shall be used to train new employees. Training shall include both verbal and written instructions to aid the new employees in learning all office procedures properly.

Minimum Education and Experience Required to Perform Essential Functions

- High school diploma or General Education Degree (GED).
- General knowledge of commonly used rules, procedures, operations, practices or routines such as could be acquired in one year of prior experience.

Certificates, Licenses, Registrations

- Telecommunicator Certification from Iowa Department of Public Safety
- Technology Service Division within first six months of employment.
- BIST – Basic Iowa System Training – within first six months of employment.
- BASIC – Beginning Telecommunicator Training within first year of employment.
- Continuation Education – 8 hours annually
- Notary Public

Mental and Physical Competencies Required to Perform Essential Functions

Language Ability

Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions and procedure manuals. Ability to write routine reports and correspondence. Ability to speak effectively.

Mathematical Skills

Ability to add and subtract two digit numbers and to multiply and divide with 10's and 100's. Ability to perform these operations using units of United States money and weight measurements, volume and distance.

Cognitive Demands

Ability to apply principles of logical or scientific thinking to a wide range of intellectual and practical problems. Ability to deal with nonverbal symbolism in its most difficult phases. Ability to deal with a variety of abstract and concrete variables.

Physical Demands

Office environment involving sitting, walking, occasional bending, lifting and carrying paper and related light objects generally weighing 10 pounds or less. Horizontal and vertical reaching motion is required. Aptitudes required are those typically associated with clerical operations including clerical, numerical and forms perception, clarity of vision 20" or less to view computer screens, legal documents and property description cards; eye/hand/foot coordination, hand and finger dexterity, motor coordination, hearing and conversation skills

Environmental Adaptability

Work is performed in a typical office environment and has no unusual exposure to environmental issues.

Equipment Used

- Various Computers Systems including CAD and 911
- Multi-Channel Radio
- 12-line Telephone System
- Multi-Functional Copier, Printer, Scanner, Fax
- Voice Data Recorder
- Jail and Administrative Security Monitors

I have carefully read and understand the contents of this job description. I understand the responsibilities, requirements, and duties expected of me. I understand that this is not necessarily an exhaustive list of responsibilities, skills, duties, requirements, efforts, or working conditions associated with the job. While this list is intended to be an accurate reflection of the current job, the Employer reserves the right to revise the functions and duties of the job or to require that additional or different tasks be performed as directed by the Employer. I understand that I may be required to work overtime, different shifts, or hours outside the normally defined workday or workweek. I also understand that this job description does not constitute a contract of employment nor alter my status as an at-will employee. I have the right to terminate my employment at any time and for any reason, and the Employer has a similar right.

Employee Signature

Date

Department Head Signature

Date

Marion County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the County will consider reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and encourage prospective employees and incumbents to discuss potential accommodations with the Employer.