

FLORENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

Subject: <p style="text-align: center;">POLICE DISPATCH</p>	Procedure: General Order 35.1.1 CALEA 81.2	Total Pages: 9
Authorizing Signature: Original with Authorizing Signature on File	Effective: 2/22/18	
	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amended <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds	

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Florence Police Department to maintain an effective, efficient, and professional police dispatch center.

II. PURPOSE

This written order establishes guidelines for the effective day to day operations of police dispatch.

III. SCOPE

This written order is applicable to all personnel.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

All personnel are responsible for complying with this directive.

V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. **FEDERAL GUIDELINES:** All radio operations will be conducted in accordance with established Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements.
- B. **ORGANIZATION:** The Florence Police Department operates its own Police Dispatch Center. It comes under the direction of the Operations Bureau. The chain of command is as follows:
 - 1. Chief of Police
 - 2. Deputy Chief Support Services
 - 3. Patrol Operations Commander
 - 4. Patrol Operations Lieutenant
 - 5. Communications Supervisor
 - 6. Dispatchers

General Order 35.1
POLICE DISPATCH

NOTE: On duty patrol supervisors have the authority to direct and/or discipline dispatchers when necessary. However, if a situation does not need to be handled immediately, the listed chain of command should be followed.

- C. STAFFING: The Dispatch Center is staffed 24 hours a day. Each shift is staffed daily with adequate personnel to effectively handle the calls for service. The primary responsibility of these employees includes handling telephone calls for service, operating the Computer Aided Dispatch system, and the police radio.
- D. TELEPHONE ACCESS: The public shall be able to contact the Florence Police Department 24 hours a day to report crimes or request assistance through the emergency number, 911. Non-emergencies are handled by calling 256-760-6500. The non-emergency number is listed in the phone book. The Dispatch Center has a TDD machine but most hearing impaired calls are taken through a free nationwide relay service.

VI. RECORDING CALL INFORMATION

On each request for service from the public or officer self-initiated activity, the following information will be obtained and recorded, to include:

- A. A CAD generated event number;
- B. A case number;
- C. Date and time;
- D. Name and address of complainant, if possible;
- E. Type of incident reported;
- F. Location of incident reported;
- G. Identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and backup;
- H. Time of dispatch;
- I. Time of Officer arrival;
- J. Time of officer's return to service; and
- K. Disposition or status of reported incident.
- L. If the CAD system becomes disabled, this information will be recorded and tracked using established backup dispatching procedures.

VII. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES

- A. TEN CODES & SIGNALS: All units and dispatch personnel will use the designated ten code and signal format when communicating over the police radio. The exception to this rule is that during emergencies "plain talk" is acceptable.

General Order 35.1
POLICE DISPATCH

- B. UNIT DESIGNATORS: All personnel that use the police radio will be assigned call designator. This call designator will be used to announce the employee's identity when using the police radio.
- C. OFFICER/CALL STATUS: Units will report all changes in their availability status and/or any official police action over the radio. MDC's may be used to update an officer's status, except during traffic stops and emergency situations. Status changes include going in-service, going en route to a call, arriving at a call, completing a call, and/or going out of service. When updating their status, all units will use the proper ten code or signal format. During their radio transmission, units should provide enough information to clearly indicate to dispatch and other units what their status is; or what police action they are taking.
 - 1. OFFICER INITIATED ACTIVITY – Officers originating police activity will provide dispatch their location, the nature of their actions, and any description or details pertinent to that event by radio or MDC.
 - 2. DISPATCH INITIATED ACTIVITY – Officers receiving a call from dispatch requiring a police response will check in and out on the radio or on their MDC as their status changes, i.e. en route, on scene, completed call, etc.
- D. RECORDING STATUS: Dispatchers are responsible for properly recording the status of officers. This includes any changes in their status as when they are back in service or are out of service. These changes are made in CAD.
- E. INTERACTING AGENCIES: Agency personnel may need to communicate as needed with other agencies. When doing so, the officer may need to switch to another frequency, or may coordinate the communication through dispatch. If an officer travels to another police jurisdiction during official police action, the Florence Police radio channels will remain the primary channels for communication. However, an officer may temporarily switch to another frequency to communicate with those officers as needed. Officers should notify Florence Dispatch of their intention to temporarily switch frequencies when doing so.
- F. NUMBER OF OFFICERS REQUIRED TO RESPOND:
 - 1. Low priority calls that are not in progress require the initial assignment of only one officer. These are calls that, on the merits of the information available, would not reasonably pose a threat to an officer or require multiple officers to respond.
 - 2. High priority calls, or calls that are in-progress pose more risk to responding officers and should have at least a primary and backup unit assigned. This risk may be implied by the nature of the call,

General Order 35.1
POLICE DISPATCH

the area of the call, the number of subjects reported to be involved in the incident, or any other circumstance that would reasonably cause the dispatcher to believe that multiple officers may be needed.

3. Nothing in this section will prohibit officers or supervisors in the field from increasing or decreasing the number of officers responding to a call. Such an adjustment may be based on new information, an officer's prior knowledge of the situation, or other such circumstances.

G. INCIDENTS REQUIRING A FIELD SUPERVISOR:

1. A supervisor should be notified and respond to any incident where circumstances exist which would render the situation beyond the scope of an officer's authority or ability to control or manage. Such incidents might include, but not be limited to: tactical situations, incidents involving the use of force, allegations of police misconduct, incidents which would subject the department to extraordinary liability or scrutiny, crime scenes requiring an investigator, or other such incidents which would require supervisory oversight of the scene.
2. This section shall not relieve a supervisor from the responsibility to respond to any incident as deemed necessary by other applicable written directives. Nor does this directive limit the ability of a supervisor to respond to any type of call.

H. OFFICER NEEDING ASSISTANCE:

1. Code 4 – An officer needs an additional officer at the scene, but no emergency exists, the officer can request "Code 4." In such instance, an officer responding to provide help should respond without lights and sirens, unless otherwise directed.
2. 10-3 – An officer advises "10-3" if an emergency exists and the officer needs immediate assistance. In such instance, officers responding to help may respond using lights and sirens.
3. 10-00 – If an officer needs all available assistance due to the size and/or nature of the emergency, an officer advises "10-00" (double zero). Officers responding should use lights and sirens to expedite their response.
4. 10-14 – If an officer requests "10-14", dispatch will sound a tone, and officers will maintain radio silence until the officer advises that his situation is Code 1. 10-14 is the code used to "clear the air" for emergency radio traffic only.

VIII. RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO DISPATCH PERSONNEL

- A. **SHIFT SUPERVISOR:** Dispatch may contact a shift supervisor at any time throughout a shift as needed.
- B. **SHIFT DUTY ROSTER:** A shift supervisor will provide dispatch with a shift duty roster at the beginning of each shift.
- C. **CONTACT NUMBERS FOR AGENCY EMPLOYEES:** Dispatch is often required to contact employees both on and off duty. Dispatch therefore has access to, and the authority to contact agency members at home or by cell phone when necessary. Officers are therefore required to keep their contact information up to date in Spillman.
- D. **SERVICE AREA MAP:** Dispatch personnel are provided a map of the agency's service area through Spillman. They also have a written copy of the streets and cross streets in order to provide directions when necessary.
- E. **OFFICER STATUS INDICATORS:** Dispatchers and officers have access to officers' status within CAD. Both officers and dispatch are required to update an officer's status as it changes. By monitoring an officer's status, other officers and dispatchers know where and how long an officer has been out on a call, and who is available for service.
- F. **PROCEDURES FOR PROCURING ADDITIONAL SERVICES:** Dispatchers are often required to request assistance from other agencies such as fire, rescue, ambulance, or animal control. The phone numbers for these agencies are readily available to dispatchers in order to expedite necessary notifications. Upon request from an officer, dispatch will make the required notifications by phone or radio.
- G. **EMERGENCY DISPATCH OPERATIONS:** Emergency/tactical dispatching plans are available to on duty dispatchers at all times. Emergency dispatch operations are the same procedures as those used for high priority calls for service.

IX. CALLS FOR SERVICE

- A. **DETERMINE NATURE OF THE CALL:** Dispatch personnel will receive all calls for service, gather the necessary information, and determine the nature of the police response. The "necessary information" is previously outlined in this directive. "Nature of the police response" will fall into one of the following categories:
 - 1. **EMERGENCY CALL FOR SERVICE:** Emergency calls for service involve a real emergency, perceived emergency, or the potential for an emergency exists. These types of calls normally require an emergency response by more than one officer. Emergency calls include, but are not particularly limited to:
 - a. Crimes in progress;

General Order 35.1
POLICE DISPATCH

- b. Hold-up alarms;
 - c. Wrecks with injuries, or possible injuries;
 - d. Situations where the potential for injury exists;
 - e. In progress, Domestic Violence calls.
2. NON-EMERGENCY CALL FOR SERVICE: Non-emergency calls for service do not involve emergency situations. These types of calls normally require a “Code 1” response by a single officer. Generally, these types of calls include, but are not particularly limited to:
- a. Crimes not in progress;
 - b. Wrecks without injury;
 - c. Situations involving the damage or loss of property, where the offender is not believed to be present;
 - d. Traffic or parking violations.
3. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Some types of calls do not require a police response; rather they are only calls requesting information. Dispatch will have access to the phone numbers for community service organizations, and will refer or transfer victims to the appropriate agency as necessary. In the event the request is beyond the capability of a dispatcher, a police officer will be instructed to respond to assist the victim.
- B. INFORMING CALLER OF RESPONSE: When possible, dispatchers should inform the victim/witness about the police response for information and/or services to include initial and subsequent requests. This could include telling the victim/witness that the police are on the way immediately, that an officer will be dispatched as soon as one is available, or that police and other emergency services are en-route to the scene.

X. INSTANT PLAYBACK RECORDER

- A. Each console within the Dispatch Center will be equipped with an instant playback module. This equipment records active conversation and maintains a memory that allows for instant playback.
- B. Instant playback allows the call taker/radio operator to play back conversation which could not be repeated or was too difficult to understand.
- C. Recordings of radio and telephone traffic are maintained for at least ninety (90) days.

General Order 35.1
POLICE DISPATCH

- D. In order to maintain security and proper storage, access to the recordings is limited. The recordings are available only through proper supervisory authorization.
- E. REVIEW OF DISPATCH RECORDINGS:
 - 1. Tape reviews will be restricted to authorized personnel who have a “need to know”, relative to an official investigation or inspection.
 - 2. Tapes may be reviewed by any supervisor responsible for conducting an internal investigation or for the investigation of a complaint against agency personnel.
 - 3. Tapes may be reviewed by investigators as part of a criminal investigation, when appropriate.
 - 4. Tapes may be reviewed as part of a staff inspection or a service audit by an authorized supervisor.
 - 5. Requests by outside personnel to review tapes will be granted ONLY pursuant to approval of the Chief of Police or his designee.
- F. REVIEW PROCEDURES: Authorized agency personnel may contact either the Dispatch Supervisor, or the Commander of the Technical Services Division to request a review. Tape reviews will be arranged with consideration to the availability of personnel authorized to pull the recordings.
- G. Access to the recordings is only granted to those personnel trained in procedures for pulling the recordings and the proper operation of the equipment. These authorized personnel may either make a copy of the recording or arrange for authorized persons to listen to the recording directly.

X. EMERGENCY MESSAGES

- A. An officer will be dispatched to deliver emergency messages if at least one of the following criteria is met:
 - 1. Next of kin notifications for deaths or seriously ill or injured persons.
 - 2. A parent or caregiver is needed for anyone at a school or daycare facility, medical facility, or any other reason deemed to be emergent.
- B. An emergency message that is to be delivered to a law enforcement officer or member of a LEO's family shall be delivered by a supervisor or his/her designee.
- C. Emergency messages will be dispatched in accordance with the call prioritization utilized by Communications personnel.

XI. MISDIRECTED EMERGENCY CALLS

- A. The telephone and radio system provide dispatchers the ability to promptly relay any information to the appropriate agency in the event a misdirected call is made to the Florence Police Dispatch. If a telephone call received in police dispatch requires other emergency services in addition to, or in the place of police services, the call will be immediately transferred to the 911 center.

XII. EMERGENCY FIRST AID OVER THE TELEPHONE

- A. Agency personnel are not trained nor authorized to provide emergency first aid over the telephone. In the event an emergency of this type is called into Florence Police Dispatch, the phone call should be immediately transferred to 911. If a police response is required, dispatch should send the appropriate unit on the call.

XIII. SECURE ACCESS TO DISPATCH

- A. Access to Dispatch is limited to authorized personnel only. The door to Dispatch is equipped with a card reader that only gives access to authorized personnel. All non-police personnel visiting dispatch will be approved by a supervisor and constantly escorted by police department personnel.
- B. All equipment utilized by dispatch is protected by being located in a secure area of the department.
- C. In the event of a power outage, a backup generator will activate in order to keep all of the computer and radio electronics running continuously. This back-up generator will be tested monthly and receive yearly maintenance. The monthly tests and annual full load tests will be documented.
- D. Transmission lines are securely located underground, while antennas and the back-up generator are kept secure by means of locks and security cameras.

XIV. TELEPHONE SYSTEM

- A. Emergency calls transferred from 911 utilize the incoming phone lines in dispatch. Should one of the phone lines be busy, the call rings down to the next available phone line.
- B. Incoming administrative or non-emergency phone calls come through the police desk.

XV. MOBILE/PORTABLE POLICE RADIOS

- A. All police officers are issued a portable police radio that is capable of two-way operation. These radios are programmed with other Shoals area, law

General Order 35.1
POLICE DISPATCH

enforcement frequencies. When out of the vehicle, officers are to keep their portable radio on at all times.

- B. These radio channels provide 24-hour, two-way radio capability permitting continuous communication between dispatchers and officers.