DISPATCHER

POSITION DESCRIPTION – PUBLIC SAFETY CIVILIAN DISPATCHER

DEPARTMENT - COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

REPORTS TO: COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE, POLICE CHIEF, OR OIC FOR THE POLICE DEPT. AND FIRE CHIEF OR OIC FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

SUMMARY: RESPONSIBLE FOR EMERGENCY DISPATCHING, RECEPTIONIST AND CLERICAL WORK IN MONITORING THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER FOR THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, HIGHWAY AND WATER DEPT.

EXAMPLES OF WORK: Responsible for manning the switchboard, with the possibility of 16 incoming calls at one time, four of which are E 9-1-1 calls. Monitor the Police Department radio, three Fire Department radios, and police and fire scanner. Monitor the Highway and Water Dept. radio during daytime as well as after hours in certain situations ex. winter storms, wind storms, hurricanes etc. Monitor alarm panel for town buildings. Monitor prisoners and act as matrons for female or juvenile prisoners. Answer and refer all incoming calls. Dispatch apparatus and personnel from fire station or tone during after hours to location of incident, fire or medical emergency. Responsible for calling in the services of paramedics, mutual aid ambulances and fire apparatus, medflight, BCI and the medical examiner. Dispatch cruisers to emergency as well as non emergency calls. Keep track of their status at all times to ensure their safety. Keep the SGT/OIC aware of all calls. Keep the Police Chief aware of any unusual incidents. Keep Plymouth County Control up to date of apparatus status. Maintain logs for all calls, incidents, board of probation checks, triple III checks, warrant recalls, warrant entries and dissemination using typewriter, computer or hand written reports. Maintain accurate and detailed records and logs of all calls for service, incidents, emergencies, alarm calls, alarm status, and animal complaints. Take complaints for the ACO and relay them. Fields calls for the Water Dept, Highway Dept, and the Cemetery Dept. during non-office hours as well as the days the offices are closed. Refer the calls to the proper personnel. Keep Water Dept aware of all power outages, or hydrant damage, Highway Dept aware of road conditions. Answer emergency calls for any town dept after hours and when the office is closed. Provide directions to callers, visitors and emergency vehicles from other towns. Serve as a receptionist for the Police Dept; respond to citizens requests for information or assistance, LTC permit applications, and FID applications. Assist the general public on the phone and/or in person, furnishing information or making appropriate referrals. Deal with public complaints on road conditions, snow removal, no school queries and town procedures. Enter and cancel warrant information into teletype, enter administrative messages, stolen plates, stolen M.V.’s, missing persons, breathalyzer refusals, breathalyzer test results, suicide checks and other general police information. Keep updated on teletype procedures; maintain certification for the National Crime Information Center Procedures, as well as the automated license and registration system. Adhere to the CORI Law. Monitor the fax machine and deliver faxes to appropriate Dept. Answer requests and issue burning permits. Sometimes over 100 a day during burning season.

RESPONSIBILITY: Maintain records, receive notification of emergencies and evaluate the problem. Request additional information from the caller; dispatch the proper personnel and equipment to deal with the situation. In some instances as in “in progress” calls keeping the caller on the line to keep updated on call until emergency services arrive. Keeping suicidal victims on the line and keeping them calm while trying at ascertain if they have any weapons until emergency services arrive. All the while answering telephone calls, and radio transmissions without help. Convey to responding units the proper information so that they will be able to cope with the situation upon arrival. Guide vehicles to the scene and inform them of any known traffic problems. Relay vital medical information given to dispatch by the EMT’s or paramedics to the proper hospital when C-Med is down, sometimes while handling other emergencies, non-emergency calls. Dispatchers must deal with people calling under stressful conditions and will be required to calm the caller and obtain adequate information. They must take control of the call by assuring the caller that help is on the way and by asking the important questions needed to assure a rapid and quick response.
The Fire and Police Depts. cannot do their job properly unless the proper and complete information has been gathered and relayed by the dispatcher. Dispatchers are to carry out routine tasks with little instruction, make quick and accurate decisions during emergencies. Work involves unrelated processes and methods requiring analysis. Dispatchers are required to work alone during scheduled shifts and may be forced to remain on duty for the next shift if coverage is not available or extra services are needed. Dispatchers may be forced over in emergencies without notice. No lunch or dinner breaks are provided. Dispatcher is unable to use the bathroom without leaving the dispatch center unattended while working alone, or calling in an Officer off patrol to cover the center. The primary concern of a dispatcher is the well-being of the individual requiring assistance. Dispatchers must exercise ingenuity and initiative to assure prompt and appropriate assistance to the victim. However they must recognize the responsibility to the caller, which is to instill confidence and calmness. This is done by actions such as recognizing the possible emotional agitation of the caller, assuring the caller that help is on the way, remaining calm and by expressing no hostility, even if the caller becomes hostile.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Works alone usually without an officer in the Police Station, under the supervision of the Police and Fire Chief, OIC, and/or Communication Committee.

RELATIONSHIPS: Contacts with other department employees in a close working situation, and with the general public in a moderately structured setting. Contacts are to receive or provide information or assistance, and are often under extremely stressful situations. Employee may be required to calm caller down in order to obtain the proper information. Employee serves as department’s initial contact with the public on the phone, and in the station.

MANAGEMENT OF OTHERS: Work does not normally include any supervisory responsibility.

WORKING CONDITIONS: During busy times, dispatchers may be required to sit at the dispatch console for long periods of time, and often under stressful conditions, the dispatcher works alone and most often the dispatcher is the only one in the Police Station having to deal with any walk-in business or emergencies. Work includes some walking, standing, bending, and carrying light items. Discomforts include not being able to eat lunch or dinner without constant interruptions. During busy shifts you may not get time to eat at all. You may not be able to use the bathroom without calling in an officer off the road or leaving the dispatch center unmanned.

PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCHER – QUALIFICATIONS:

The Public Safety Dispatcher should have the following minimum qualifications;

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- Ability to actively listen to others for understanding of their needs & situations.
- Ability to read and understand written correspondence, memoranda and directives.
- Ability to write legibly and accurately, using proper English grammar and structure.

DECISION MAKING/PROBLEM SOLVING

- Ability to act in a decisive manner, using good judgment (common sense).
- Ability to maintain objectivity in the decision-making process.
- Ability to effectively prioritize situations and information and make appropriate decision based on information received.
- Ability to learn and apply new information.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Ability to handle objectionable contacts with tact and diplomacy.
• Ability to contribute to a pleasant work environment by maintaining a positive attitude when carrying out duties and complying with Institute policies.
• Ability and willingness to accept criticism and/or discipline.
• Ability and willingness to accept responsibility for actions.
• Ability to act in a mature, dependable fashion.
• Ability to present a courteous, helpful, accurate and business-like attitude in all telephone and personal contact.
• Willingness and ability to respect private, confidential information.
• Willingness and ability to support and carry out management and/or Board directives.

QUALITY OF WORK

• Ability to provide high quality, accurate work.
• Ability to adjust to new or unique situations.
• Ability and willingness to show initiative in completing work assignments.

REQUIREMENTS:

• High School graduate or GED
• Ability to train and certify in E-911
• Ability to train and certify in APCO Telecommunicator
• Ability to train and certify in LEAPS/CJIS
• Must have minimum computer skills
  Windows XP
  Windows based CAD
  Internet search skills
• Ability to operate fax/copying equipment

Dispatching is a very rewarding job if you are the type of person who feels self-satisfaction in helping others. You are not always directly thanked by the person you assisted, but by knowing you have made someone’s burden lighter, or helped prevent further harm coming to a person, you know you and your job are very important.

The current pay scale once you are working independently is $15.46 an hour. The 4-12 and 12-8 shift receives a shift differential of 1.00 cents an hour. You also receive an extra half hour pay every shift instead of a break.

The dispatch center is a twenty-four hour, seven days a week operation. You will be required to be available for all shifts open because of sick, personal, or vacation time. Sometimes you will be called for these shifts on short notice.

After testing and your final interview you will be given 60 hours of dispatcher training and certification in E 9-1-1, at which you will be compensated at MA minimum wage, which is $8.00 per hour. You will be required to attend the basic APCO Telecommunicators Course, which consists of a 40-hour week. This will also be paid at a training rate of MA minimum wage if you attend class prior to working independently. Within six months you must be certified in LEAPS/NCIC.

NOTE: If additional training is needed at the end of your training schedule, you will be expected to do this training without compensation.