



JOB FACTS SHEET

REGIONAL EMERGENCY DISPATCH CENTER

DISPATCHER POSITION

Joining the Regional Emergency Dispatch Center means you'll never stop growing, learning and improving. You'll work in a fast paced, challenging, and exciting environment. You'll receive a competitive salary and excellent benefits package. Most of all, you can make a real and positive difference in peoples lives.

THE ATTACHED PAGES CONTAIN A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE POSITION OF DISPATCHER AND OUTLINE THE DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, NEW-HIRE TRAINING PROGRAM, AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF THE POSITION.

ALL APPLICANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CAREFULLY READ AND FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THE INFORMATION ON THE ATTACHED PAGES.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL JOB TASKS:

The Dispatcher's primary responsibility is to answer emergency, non-emergency and administrative voice & TDD telephone calls for service while simultaneously entering the information into a computer-aided dispatch system. Based on the information obtained, the Dispatcher determines the nature of the call, what type of assistance is needed and dispatches the appropriate units, via a radio console, according to established procedure, priority and availability of field units. The Dispatcher is additionally responsible for recording and monitoring the activity of units and for retrieving and accurately relaying to requesting field units, information contained in Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS), the County computer system (CJIS), and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.

TRAINING

Dispatchers undergo a rigorous, formalized, new-hire training program that is approximately 20 weeks in duration. Included are classroom lectures, assigned readings, work simulations, scenarios and closely-supervised on-the-job instruction. The training program will include frequent written, verbal and performance-based testing. Dispatcher trainees can expect to receive regular reminders and correction of errors and will be expected to learn from these mistakes. Upon successful completion of the training program, Dispatchers remain on probationary status for the first six-months of employment with the R.E.D. Center.

During training, Dispatcher trainees must learn and correctly use police, fire and public safety-related terminology. Dispatcher trainees must be able to read and understand large volumes of written materials (Dispatcher Training Manual, R.E.D. Center Policy & Procedure Manual, etc.) while consistently applying these complex policies and procedures.

Dispatcher trainees must learn to simultaneously and in rapid succession operate several computers, use complex radio systems and answer multiple phone lines.

On-the-job performance will be constantly monitored during the training period. Failure to consistently perform up to established performance standards, excessive tardiness, unexplained absence or other policy violations will be grounds for progressive disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

PERFORMING ON THE JOB

Dispatchers receive pass-down at the start of their work shift, which includes a large amount of information regarding workday activity, equipment status and procedural matters. Dispatchers are expected to retain and use this information for as long as necessary.

Dispatchers rotate work stations during their scheduled work week, each with potentially different responsibilities and duties. Dispatchers must qualify through the initial new-hire training program to be able to successfully perform each different duty within the Communications Unit.

Dispatchers continuously weigh and evaluate large volumes of information. Dispatchers must consider numerous factors in determining the appropriate responses to requests. Among these are: the nature of the incident, geographic location of incident, the proper agency response, availability of resources and safety of the caller, as well as response personnel. Dispatchers must accurately and rapidly interpret disjointed information while making decisions concerning response of appropriate units or referral to other agencies. Life safety of the public as well as response units may be dependent upon these decisions.

Dispatchers must be able to quickly and accurately recognize letters, numbers, addresses, names and license numbers received by radio, telephone or on a computer monitor. Data is often presented simultaneously or in rapid succession and has to be relayed to the appropriate field units promptly.

Dispatchers must control conversations and obtain needed information in an accurate, timely and assertive manner. This may be complicated by callers who are often aggressive, distraught, confused, profane, impaired by mental defect, under the influence and sometimes nearly incomprehensible.

Dispatchers must maintain high professional standards and attitudes when obscene language is directed at them, while handling emergency situations and in managing large numbers of nuisance, hang-up or non-emergency calls. Dispatchers are expected to make appropriate decisions based on training, experience, judgment and established procedures. Dispatchers' decisions are subject to constant review. Errors in judgment and decision-making may result in constructive critique, correction, criticism and/or formal disciplinary action.

Dispatchers must have sufficient verbal and written communications skills. Radio communications must be concise and to the point while providing accurate information (incident type, suspect description, etc...) to the response units.

Any call may require the Dispatcher to perform several activities simultaneously. Examples include: maintaining contact with a 9-1-1 caller while calling the appropriate response agency, updating incident information while monitoring radio traffic or speaking with a caller while determining response unit availability. Dispatchers are often unlikely to follow-up on and learn the final resolution of calls received earlier in their shift.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The R.E.D. Center is housed in a non-smoking facility. Dispatchers often work at a very rapid pace over which they have little control due to workload and the nature of incidents. Dispatchers are unable to leave their work stations for any time during a shift other than meal or brief breaks as the workload allows.

Dispatchers work within a structured organization. Dispatcher trainees have no choice on which days or shifts they must work and may not receive consecutive days-off. Dispatchers may encounter the following situations with no advance notice: work schedule changes, forced overtime, required to report during severe weather or disasters, as well as other emergency situations. These situations can arise at anytime regardless of personal considerations or childcare needs.

Dispatchers must be able to concentrate on their jobs for extended periods of time while other Dispatchers are taking calls, people are walking around them and conversations are taking place in close proximity to them.

SCHEDULING (Hours, Shifts, & Breaks)

The Regional Emergency Dispatch Center is staffed with Dispatchers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Work shift hours vary within the R.E.D. Center. Typical Dispatcher work weeks are 5 days on-duty/2 days off (8 hour shifts). The 3 shifts are Days (6:30-14:30), Afternoons (14:30-22:30) and Midnights (22:30-06:30). There are also certain other work shift combinations that may vary with the operational needs of the R.E.D. Center. Because the Center must be staffed 24 hours a day, Dispatchers will be required to work a

high percentage of nights, weekends and/or holidays. A full-time Dispatcher may choose one of these shifts, based on seniority, every six months.

All scheduled open shifts are offered to part-time Dispatchers, voluntarily to full-time Dispatchers and what fails to be filled is then forced overtime assigned to full-time Dispatchers in a reversed seniority order. Dispatchers must be prepared to remain in the Center for an entire work shift.

Dispatchers must not be late to work, since each position must be covered at all times. An employee who is late causes an outgoing person to be assigned to work overtime to cover the position. Excessive lates are subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

TRANSPORTATION

Dispatchers must have reliable transportation available, which will allow them to get to work for any assigned shift work including shifts scheduled on weekends and holidays, as well as periodic short-notice forced overtime assignments and during periods of inclement weather or disasters.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS & ABILITIES:

Must be able to type a minimum of 30 Words per Minute

Must have the ability to handle objectionable contacts with tact & diplomacy, the ability to retain emotional control, honesty & productivity while under pressure from irate or abusive callers, shortage of time, personal problems or other sources.

Must have the ability and willingness to adapt to new and/or unique situations.

Must have the ability to learn and apply new information; the ability to remember and recall numerous details (excellent memory retention and recall).

Must have ability to act in a decisive manner, using good judgment (“common sense”) and the ability to maintain objectivity in the decision-making process.

Must have the ability & willingness to accept criticism and/or discipline, as well as accepting responsibility for your actions.

Must have the ability to contribute to a pleasant and productive working environment by maintaining a positive attitude when carrying out duties and complying with R.E.D. Center policies and procedures; the ability to work cooperatively with supervisors and establish cohesive, effective working relationships with peers (i.e. positive team-worker skills & abilities).

Must have ability to perform multiple tasks simultaneously and still remain focused under stress.

Must have the ability to respect and maintain confidential information.

Must have the ability to hear and understand simultaneous sound sources coming through a communications headset and/or radio speaker(s) and/or standard telephone receiver.

Must have the ability to hear and understand other outside sound sources while wearing a communications headset (i.e. the ability to hear sound sources not coming through the headset; the ability to hear out of both ears).

Must have the ability to speak English clearly, fluently and articulately using vocabulary appropriate to the audience.

Must have the ability to write English legibly, use proper English grammar, spelling, punctuation and structure.

Must have the ability to record names & numbers accurately (i.e. not transpose numbers and/or letters).

Must be able to read and understand written communications; the ability to read & discern visual images on a variety of media.

Must have the ability to remain seated at the same work station for up to 16 hours at a time.

SUPERVISION

The Dispatcher works under the direct supervision of a Communications Supervisor and/or the Assistant Director & Executive Director.

The Dispatcher must conduct duties and act in accordance with established policies, procedures, rules & regulations. In view of the infinite number of special and unusual circumstances that can be present in this work, the Dispatcher is also expected to regularly exercise reasonable judgment, work experience and discretion on a consistent basis.

CANDIDATES PROCESS FOR APPOINTMENT

Candidates meeting the minimum qualifications for the position will be required to complete a typing test with a minimum 30WPM score. Those passing the typing test will receive a "Job Facts Sheet" and be invited to attend an applicant orientation session. Following the orientation session, a written assessment battery designed to determine the applicant's compatibility with the essential & prerequisite skills & abilities required for successful performance in this position will be administered.

Candidates receiving a passing score on the written assessment battery may be invited to appear before an oral interview board. Those applicants selected by the interview board to continue on in the process will undergo an extensive personal and criminal background/security investigation and maybe subject to a polygraph examination, psychological assessment, physical examination and drug screen.

Progressive advancement thru each phase of the hiring process is dependent upon successful completion of each previous phase.

Candidates that do not show for any scheduled testing or interview sessions during the selection process will be eliminated from further consideration for the position.