

SAN JOSE POLICE COMMUNICATIONS
Basic Dispatch Academy
(7 hours)
LEARNING DOMAIN #104
TELEPHONE PROCEDURES
Lesson Plan Content
December 2019

I. Telephone Procedures

A. 911 History and Technology

1. Emergency telephone number originated in Great Britain in 1937 (999)
2. California was first to mandate statewide 911
3. Surcharge on phone bill
4. 1985 implementation
5. All centers have become PSAPs
6. No charge for 911 calls

B. The 911 System & Terminology

1. **PSAP**- Public Safety Answering Point
 - a. SJPD is our own Secondary PSAP.
 - b. SJPD is the alternative PSAP for Santa Clara County Comm as well as San Jose State University.
 - c. CHP is the primary PSAP for incoming cellular calls.
2. **ESN** - Emergency Services Number: [REDACTED]
 - a. The switching computer reads the ESN associated with the phone number and selectively routes the all to the responsible PSAP.
3. **MSAG** - Master Street Address Guide: Links up the associated phone number to [REDACTED] address.
 - a. Routing sheet forms are to be completed for any mis-routed ESN and MSAG corrections
4. **ANI** - Automatic Number Identifier (phone number)
5. **ALI** - Automatic Location Identifier
 - a. Enhanced 911 systems give both ANI and ALI. State requires that all centers must have Enhanced 911 (as of 1992).
 - b. ALI information includes:
 - 1) Caller's area code and phone number

- 2) Date & time (24 hour military time)
- 3) Street number/street name
- 4) Abbreviation of community
- 5) State & [REDACTED] ESN
- 6) Classification of phone service
- 7) Listed name of calling number (if number is not listed then there will be no name)
- 8) Callers law enforcement agency, fire department and EMS service.
- 9) Type of phone service received
 - a) BUSN – Business
 - b) RESD – Residence
 - c) CNTX – Centrex
 - d) PBX-Professional Business Exchange
 - e) COIN or PAY – Payphone
 - f) W911 – Phase 1
 - g) WPH2 – Phase 2 (with GPS)
 - h) VoIP – Voice over internet protocol (computer phone)

6. **TDD** – Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (play 911 tweedle tape)

- a. Ways to identify a TDD call when received
- b. TDD abbreviations (i.e. GA, SK, Q)

C. Abandoned calls

1. The Abandoned Call Administrator (ACA) is a function of the Intelligent Workstation (IWS) that tracks all incoming 911 calls. ACA is triggered when callers dial 911 and then hang up. ANI and ALI are automatically displayed and the call taker assigned to ACA function is responsible for making the “call back” [REDACTED]

D. Translation Services

1. AT&T Language Lab [REDACTED] – over 200 languages/dialects available. Translators receive basic instruction in criminal law, telephone techniques and the information that police dispatchers require.

E. Audio Recorders & Other Telephone Technology

1. Audio Recorders
 - a. All calls from and into the control room are recorded on all phone systems
 - b. Instant Playback
2. DBR: Database Recall
 - a. Formerly know as Query
 - b. Ability to determine the address from a landline

F. Roles in Call Taking

1. Primary
2. Secondary
3. TRAC

II. Telephone Protocol

A. Call Answering

1. Promptness
 - a. Begin the call with a good initial impression
 - b. Reduce answering times
 - c. Smile as you talk
 - d. Avoid dead air time
2. Primary lines should be answered as follows:
 - a. "San Jose Emergency"
 - b. "911 Emergency"
 - c. "Emergency Services"
 - d. Do not specify "police" or "fire."
3. Secondary lines should be answered as follows:
 - a. "San Jose Police"
 - b. "Police Services"

B. Customer Service

1. Putting callers on hold
 - a. Obtain permission first
 - b. Difference between putting caller on hold and covering the mouthpiece
 - d. Offer an adequate explanation upon return
 - e. Use an attention getting phrase upon return
 - 1) "I have that information now"
 - 2) Include the caller's name

C. Transferring calls

1. Tell the caller you will be transferring them
2. Offer the phone or extension number in case they are disconnected
3. If the number is busy, inform the caller and ask if they want to hold or call back later.

D. Explaining department policies/procedures and legal procedures to the public

1. Opportunity to educate the public on local policing policies and services
2. Provide background information as to why you will be transferring them, notify the recipient before transfer and provide them the number you are transferring them to if possible.
 - a. Be compassionate to caller's situation.

E. Effective Communication Skills

1. Speak clearly and use clear projection
2. Use proper projection and voice inflection
3. Sound confident
4. Use proper English
 - a. Should convey desire to be of service
 - b. Put a smile in your voice - sincere, courteous
 - c. It's not **what** you say, it's **how you say it**
 - d. Attitude, skill and discipline carry over to the officers and public.
 - 1) You may be the first/only contact the caller has with SJPD/SJFD
 - 2) Treat each call seriously – most callers feel their problem is important even if you find little importance in the situation.
 - 3) You set the tone
 - a) Show you care about caller's needs and what is important to them
 - b) Show you are willing to help; empathize
5. Active listening
 - a. Learn skill
 - b. Rate of speaking vs rate of thinking
 - c. Speaking rate 125 words per minute vs thinking rate of 500 words per minute.
6. Purpose and appropriate use of the phonetic alphabet
 - a. Purpose of phonetic alphabet is to ensure understanding of address, locations, and name spellings.
 - b. The phonetic alphabet should be utilized anytime information could be misunderstood.
 - c. EXAMPLE – “H St” and “8th St” sound similar. To minimize confusion, it is more appropriate to utilize the phonetic alphabet: H-Henry Street.
7. Types of callers
 - a. Hysterical
 - b. Angry
 - c. Confused
 - d. Frightened
 - e. Language barrier
 - f. 5150 or 1051
 - g. Young child

III. Interview techniques & Call Types

- A. Questioning techniques to obtain pertinent information from all reporting parties.

1. Questions (the 5 Ws) Primary Information

- a. What – is happening
 - 1) Civil vs. Criminal
 - 2) Direct conversation through appropriate questions pertaining to relevant information.
- b. Where – is it happening
 - 1) Verify address, cross streets and telephone number on all calls.
 - 2) Ask for spelling on streets you are unsure of
 - 3) Residence to the left or the right. Color, lights, fences, landmarks and/or cars parked out in front/in driveway
 - 4) Is reporting party calling from the location of the occurrence?
- c. When – did it happen
 - 1) In progress?
 - 2) Just occurred?
 - 3) How long ago?
 - 4) Time element helps determine priority.

2. Suspect & Suspect Vehicle Descriptions Secondary Information

- a. Who – is involved
 - 1) RP's name, and name of anyone else involved in the incident
 - 2) Anonymous callers
- b. Suspect(s) Descriptions
 - 1) Name
 - 2) Head to Toe Physical description (top to bottom)
 - 3) Head to Toe Clothing description [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- c. Suspect Vehicle Description
 - 1) Color – Top/Bottom
 - 2) Year
 - 3) Make
 - 4) Body style
 - 5) Additional
 - 6) License Plate/Number
- d. Weapons – drugs and alcohol also
 - 1) What kind of weapon?
 - 2) Is suspect or RP in possession?

- 3) Where is weapon now?
 - 4) Any prior weapons crimes?
- e. Why – if possible and pertinent
- 3. Directing the conversation
 - a. Open ended vs specific questions
 - 1. Open-ended questions to determine the nature of the call and explore all implications.
 - 1) “What happened?” (I was robbed)
 - b. Ask specific closed questions that require only a yes/no response or a brief statement.
 - c. Clarify terms and phrases used by the RP. If you don’t know what a word or phrase means, ask someone.
 - 1. “Acting strangely”
 - 2. “Funny noises”
 - 3. “Doesn’t look right”
 - 4. “Looks suspicious”
 - d. Prioritize the call
- 4. Taking control
 - e. Be sensitive to RP’s fears and emotions
 - f. Interrupt when necessary, to get to the root of the problem.
 - g. Remain flexible. No one can tell you how to handle or deal with every caller.
 - h. Remember that you are a trained professional at obtaining information from citizens. They are not trained to report information, or react in a preprogrammed, unemotional manner.
- 5. Types of callers
 - a. Hysterical
 - b. Angry
 - c. Confused
 - d. Frightened
 - e. Language barrier
 - f. 5150 or 1051
 - g. Young child

B. Criteria to classify and prioritize multiple calls and requests for service.

- 1. All calls are prioritized by type of crime
- 2. Time element
- 3. Extenuating Circumstances

4. Life over property
5. Call Priorities
 - a. Life threatening
 - b. Non-life threatening, in progress
 - c. Property crimes
 - d. “Cold” crimes
6. When in doubt, send them out!

D. Techniques for Effective Communication with Difficult Callers

1. Types of calls received from difficult callers
 - a. Non-English speaking callers or callers with accents
 - 1) Remain flexible
 - 2) Pause, taking deep breaths for both yourself and the caller
 - 3) Talking louder does not help someone understand English better
 - b. Young children/Elderly adults
 - c. Crank
 - d. Nuisance
 - e. Anonymous callers
 - f. TDD/TTY/VRS
 - g. Witnesses
 - h. Victims
 - i. Suspects
 - j. Abrasive/Hostile
 - k. Frightened
 - l. Hysterical
 - m. Hurried
 - n. Uninformed/Misinformed
 - o. Confused/Rambling
 - p. Intoxicated
 - q. Politically demanding
 - r. Foreign

2. Most people call the police department because something is wrong or they need help. It is unreasonable to expect them to be pleasant and 100% cooperative when they call. It is imperative that affirmative steps are taken to effectively defuse a potentially volatile situation.
 - a. Remain calm and in control of your emotions. They are counting on you to take care of them.
 - 1) If the RP is hysterical, lower your voice a little bit. It causes them to stop yelling so that they can concentrate on hearing.
 - 2) Sometimes it helps to slow down and take three deep breaths before resuming the conversation.
 - b. Use repetitive persistence with hysterical or irate RPs. Ask the same question again and again, calmly, until they answer it. Also try rephrasing the question.
 - c. Use the RP's name if possible. Give them your name to help establish a rapport with them quickly.
 - d. Reassure the RP that officers will respond as soon as possible. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
 - e. Don't buy into their emotions. Don't react hastily to hostile callers or personalize their statements.
 - f. Don't make judgements based on the RP's attitude or demeanor.

E. Calming Techniques

1. Actions and tone of voice
 - a. Reassure callers that our officers are competent and help is on the way
 - b. Caller has reached the right place for the help that they need
 - c. If they have reached the wrong agency, take the info if it is an emergency
2. Get the caller's attention
 - a. Use the caller's name
3. Repetition & persistence
 - a. "Calm down"
 - b. "Take a deep breath"
 - c. "Speak slower"
 - d. Repeat specific instructions
4. Ask to talk to someone else
5. Hysteria threshold
 - a. Rare that it can't be broken
6. What **NOT** to do...
 - a. React hostile to others
 - b. Make judgements based on the caller's attitude or demeanor
 - c. Allow past experiences with a caller, address or situation influence decisions adversely

F. Supervisory Notification

1. Don't be offended or take it personally when someone else overrides your decision or recommendation on a call. It happens.
2. Know agency guidelines for supervisory notification. There are some calls that require automatic notification for all 211 alarms, major in-progress calls and weapons calls.

IV. Types of Incidents

A. Specific Crimes and Incidents - specific instructions and questions (in addition to the 5 Ws)

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] ■ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



2. Robbery

- a. The public is not always clear on the difference between a robbery and a burglary. It is up to you to ask the questions to make the distinction if it is really a robbery.
- b. In progress or how long ago?
- c. Number and description of suspects?
- d. Weapons? Type and how many? Shots fired? Injuries?
- e. Vehicle description? Direction of Travel?

3. Medical/Ambulance or Paramedic Requests

- a. Where?
- b. Number of patients?
- c. Necessary information
 - 1) Conscious?
 - 2) Breathing?
 - 3) Chief complaint
 - 4) Age (best estimate)
 - 5) Sex
- d. Extrication needed? Trapped?
- e. Relay exactly what is told to you (i.e. complaint of chest pains vs. heart attack)

4. Fires & Hazmat

- a. Where?
- b. What is burning?
- c. Anyone inside, injured, in danger? - Evacuate if necessary
- d. Hazardous materials?
- e. Size of fire?
- f. Alarm only? Smell only? Flames/smoke seen?

5. Assaults/Battery

- a. With this common, but still dangerous call, your ability to obtain information in an expedient manner can make the difference between apprehending the suspect and preventing further injury.
 - 1) In progress or how long ago?
 - 2) Threatening (pending) or actually occurred?
 - 3) Number of suspects? & Is the suspect still there?
 - 4) Degree of injury?
 - 5) Weapons (how many, type of weapon, actually seen?)
 - 6) Alcohol or drugs?

- 7) Suspect(s)/Vehicle(s) description
- 8) Direction of travel

6. Sexual Assaults

- a. These can be tremendously traumatic and require sensitivity and skill from the call taker.
- b. In progress; when did it happen?
- c. Is the suspect still there? Exact location of the suspect/crime
- d. Suspect(s)/vehicle description? Can the caller identify them?
- e. Who is the victim and where are they?
- f. Medical condition of the victim... Is ambulance needed?
- g. Direction of travel?

7. Domestic Disturbance

- a. Understanding that this is one of the most dangerous calls for officers to respond to, it is imperative that all of the necessary information be obtained.
- b. In progress or how long ago?
- c. Verbal or physical?
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- d. Weapons? Type and location?
- e. Suspect(s)/Vehicle description? Direction of travel? Relationship to the victim?
- f. Alcohol/drugs?
- g. How many others are in the house and where are they?
- h. Try to keep the victim or RP landline.

8. Traffic Accidents

- a. Accidents tend to occur frequently. By accurately assessing the extent of injuries and the correct location, we are able to deploy emergency equipment more efficiently and timely.
- b. Where and when did it occur?
- c. How many people/vehicles are involved? Injuries?
- d. Are the vehicles blocking the roadway?
- e. Any power lines down?
- f. Any hazardous materials involved?
- g. Other accidents: Airplane crashes, cave-ins, industrial accidents...

9. Weapons calls

- A. What kind of weapon (gun, knife, pipe)
 - Be specific (ex. Handgun, butcher knife, wooden bat, etc)
 - How many
- 1. Used or 417?

2. Has anybody been injured? (Amb needed)
3. Suspect description / location / DOT
4. Where is the suspect now? Is anybody in immediate danger/being threatened/being attacked?
5. Does RP still have visual?
6. Did make any specific threats? (to go somewhere, to hurt somebody, etc)

B. When to keep the caller on the line:

1. Emergencies on non-emergency lines vs. non-emergencies on emergency lines.
2. In progress calls
 - a. Life endangerment
 - b. Update responding emergency equipment
 - c. Calms RP, reassures
 - d. Keeps parties separated
3. Pre-arrival instructions (PAI)
4. Discretion - When do we transfer the caller to secondary?

V. Instructional Activities (covered during academy scenarios)

- A. The student will participate in a learning activity that will reinforce the student's understanding of the components of effective interviews, including:
 1. Active listening techniques
 2. Gathering information to determine the nature of the caller's problem
 3. Methods and techniques of interviewing that maintain control, elicit cooperation, and reflect confidence, empathy and concern
- B. Given a work simulation activity, the student will receive a telephone complaint regarding at least four of the following:
 1. Crime in-progress
 2. Alarm call
 3. Domestic violence/family disturbance
 4. Fire incident
 5. Medical incident
 6. Traffic incident

7. Missing persons

The student will gather and document relevant information, maintain control of the conversation, communicate clearly with the caller, verify details with the caller and relay the information to the radio dispatcher in a timely and logical manner.

C. Given a work simulation activity, the student will be required to receive a telephone call requiring effective communication with diverse types of people to include at least four of the following special problems:

1. Hysterical
2. Intoxicated (Drunk)
3. Abusive
4. Irrate
5. Suicidal
6. Elderly
7. Child
8. Non-English speaking
9. Deaf/hearing impaired