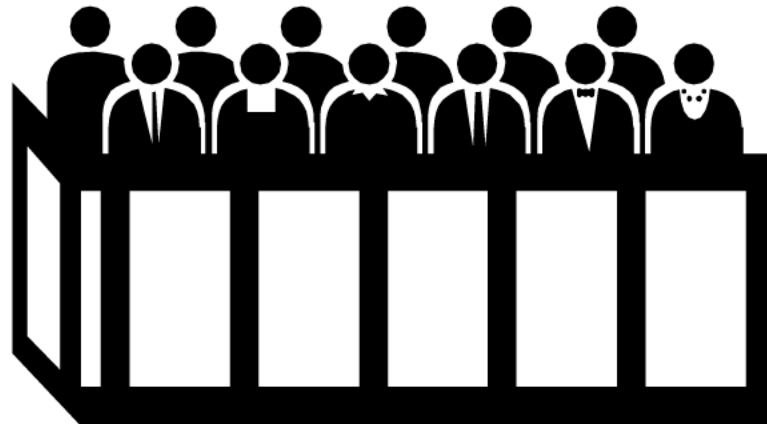


COURTROOM TESTIMONY





WHAT IS THE
CALL TAKERS AND DISPATCHERS
ROLE IN THE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
SYSTEM?

-
- ❑ Public's first point of contact in dealing with the criminal justice system.
 - ❑ Questioning and developing probable cause.
 - ❑ Documentation:
 - Proper documentation helps to refresh the memory

Calltaker Documentation

- Phone calls
- TRAC reports
- CAD events

Dispatcher Documentation

- Phone calls
- Radio recordings
- CAD events

Telephone/Radio Recordings & Written Documents



-
- All telephone and radio transmissions are recorded and retained as an official record for a period of 14 months.
 - Written documents such as CAD events and Unit histories are kept for a minimum of 2 years.
 - Audio recordings and CAD events are frequently subpoenaed for criminal/civil proceedings and reviewed by the court.



IMPACT OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY CALL TAKERS AND DISPATCHERS ACTIONS ON THE OUTCOME OF A CASE.

Errors, Omissions and Negligence

- ❑ Inappropriate and/or untimely computer messages.
- ❑ Inappropriate and/or untimely telephone calls.
- ❑ Inappropriate, incomplete and/or inaccurate radio transmissions.

Incomplete information gathering techniques

- ❑ 5 W's
- ❑ Sticking to our Policy and Procedures
- ❑ Sticking to our guidelines

Criminal Prosecutions

- ❑ Preliminary Hearings
- ❑ Motions
- ❑ Jury Trials
- ❑ Trial by Judge

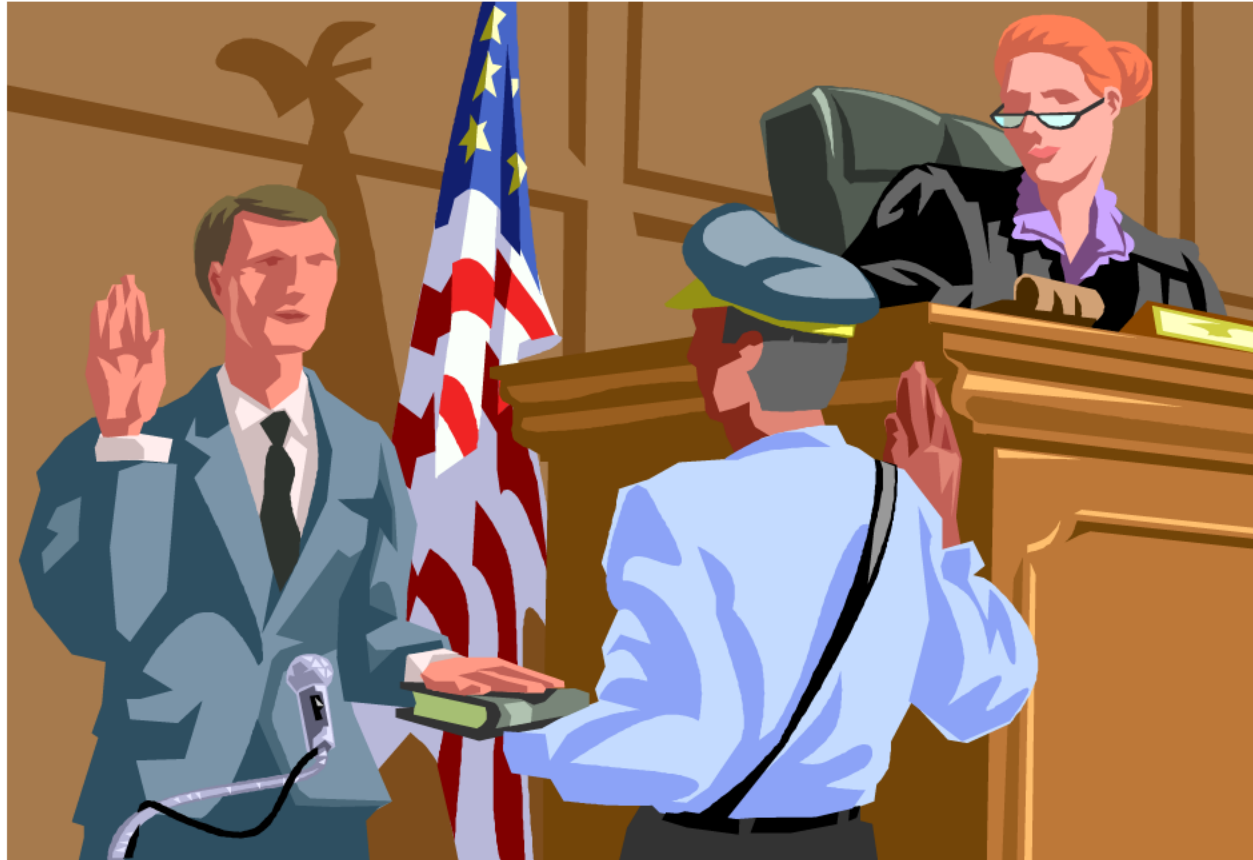
Civil Cases

- ▣ Depositions
- ▣ Jury Trials
- ▣ Trial by Judge

Subpoenas and Court Notices

- ❑ Always contact DA or City Attorney handling the case.
- ❑ Contact issuer for telephone stand by request.
- ❑ Give a copy to Supervisor.
- ❑ Entitled to 3 hour call back.

Courtroom Testimony and Preparation



Review your event ahead of time

- ❑ Get a copy of the recording from the custodian of records.
- ❑ Get a copy of the report from records.
- ❑ Get a copy of the event history.

-
- Know policy and procedure as it may pertain to the case.

Be Impartial

- ❑ Treat the prosecutor and the defense equally. Do not give impressions of bias.
- ❑ If defense asks to consult prior to the trial, you may refuse but this can be brought up in court.
- ❑ If you meet with the defense, ask if the DA or City Attorney can attend the meeting as well.
- ❑ If DA/City Attorney cannot attend, debrief them on the conversation.

Review with the DA or City Attorney

- ❑ Clarify any issues with the DA or City Attorney. They do not know the job and may ask wrong or confusing questions.
- ❑ If you recall a detail or recognize an error, advise the DA or City Attorney.
- ❑ Events and reports are not verbatim. You are only human. Admit when you do not remember or recall.

Attire

- ❑ Dress within the department's policy.
 - Uniform or business attire.
- ❑ Turn off cell phones and electronic devices.
- ❑ Remember, a jury can be swayed by something as simple as clothing.

Answer Truthfully and Professionally

- ❑ Give yes or no answers, not opinions or guesses.
- ❑ Do not volunteer information or attempt to help the DA or City Attorney out.
- ❑ Be responsive to the questions. Do not use monosyllabic answers or motions.
- ❑ When speaking, use plain English, not police jargon or codes.

Answer truthfully and professionally

- ❑ Wait for the complete question to be asked before answering.
- ❑ Pay close attention to the questions.
- ❑ Speak slowly and enunciate clearly for the court reporter.
- ❑ Wait for the outcome of objections.
- ❑ Don't be afraid to say "I don't know" or "I don't understand the question".

Be Respectful

- ❑ Address the judge as “Your Honor”.
- ❑ On cross-examination, do not take it personally or get into a confrontation with the defense.
- ❑ Remain calm, do not become defensive or attempt to be funny.
- ❑ You are a witness. Wait in the hallway until called.

Be Aware of Body Language

- ❑ Sit up straight. Do not slouch or fidget.
- ❑ Do not chew gum.
- ❑ You are on stage before taking the witness stand. Be aware of your surroundings in the hallway, parking lot, and elevators.
- ❑ Take the oath seriously. Stand tall, raise your hand and speak up.

Previous Testimony

- ❑ Can be used against you in subsequent testimonies or trials.
- ❑ Be honest and exact as possible.
- ❑ Try to keep an updated resume with training, experience and previous court cases. You do not want to “guesstimate” since answers may vary.

Any Questions

