

San Jose Police Communications
Basic Dispatch Academy

COURTROOM TESTIMONY

Post Criminal Justice Systems Learning Domain #101
2 hours

LESSON PLAN

- I. PUBLIC SAFETY CALL TAKERS AND DISPATCHERS ROLE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.
 - A. First Point of contact
 - 1. Communications (call takers and dispatchers) is generally the public's first contact in dealing with the criminal justice system
 - 2. Questioning and developing probable cause
 - 3. Documentation
 - a. Calltaker
 - b. Dispatcher
 - B. Recordings of telephone/radio and retention of written documents
 - 1. All telephone and radio transmissions are recorded and retained as an official record for a period of 14 months
 - 2. Written documents such as CAD events and unit histories are retained for a minimum of 2 years
 - 3. Audio recordings and written documents/CAD events are frequently subpoenaed for criminal and civil proceedings and reviewed by the court
 - C. Impact of the call takers' and dispatchers' actions on the outcome of a case
 - 1. Errors, omissions and negligence
 - a. Inappropriate and or untimely computer messages
 - b. Inappropriate and/or untimely telephone calls/messages
 - c. Inappropriate, incomplete, and/or inaccurate radio transmissions
 - 2. Incomplete information gathering techniques
 - D. Courtroom preparation and testimony
 - 1. Criminal prosecutions
 - 2. Civil cases (i.e. false arrest, etc.)
 - 3. Subpoenas and Court Notices
 - 4. Review your event ahead of time
 - 5. Be Impartial
 - 6. Review case with the District Attorney or City Attorney to refresh your memory
 - 7. Attire
 - a. Dress appropriately with the department's policy on court attire
 - 8. Answer truthfully and professionally

- a. Give yes or no answers not opinions
- b. Use common language, no police jargon
- 9. Be Respectful
- 10. Be Aware of Body Language
 - a. Sit up straight, do not slouch or fidget.
 - b. Avoid filler words (i.e. um, basically, etc.)
- 11. Previous testimony

Learning Activity:

Courtroom Testimony

Classroom participates in discussion from examples of videotapes