

DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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| | <i>Effective Date</i> October 1, 1998 | <i>Number</i> GO89-4.3 |
| <i>Subject</i> Communications Standard Operating Procedures | | |
| <i>Reference</i> CALEA Standards – 41.2.1, 81.2.3, 81.2.4, 81.2.6, 81.2.7, 81.2.11 | | <i>Revised</i> November 27, 2018 17, 2020 |
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I. Policy

~~Dispatch services are provided by Whitfield County E-911 pursuant to a written service agreement between Whitfield County and the City of Dalton. While Whitfield County E-911 establishes general operating procedures, each public safety agency may provide specific policy and guidelines critical to providing their respective service to the citizens they serve.~~ It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department to establish the framework by which information can be received from the public and relayed to ~~field~~ **field** Officers ~~in the field~~ with necessary speed and accuracy to provide ~~an~~ **an** efficient and effective communication that satisfies the immediate informational needs of the Department in its normal daily activities and during emergencies.

II. Background

Dispatch services are provided by Whitfield County E-911 pursuant to a written service agreement between Whitfield County and the City of Dalton. While Whitfield County E-911 establishes general operating procedures, each public safety agency may provide specific policy and guidelines critical to providing their respective service to the citizens they serve.

III. Responsibilities of Dispatchers

A. Communications Officers are responsible for the data entry of all dispatched ~~calls for service~~ **calls for service** and Officer-initiated ~~calls activities~~ **calls activities** into the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) System. Dispatchers shall obtain all information necessary to assist ~~Patrol~~ **Patrol** Officers in preparing themselves to answer calls. Information that shall be obtained and recorded, when applicable, includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. ~~Ensuring~~ **Ensuring** A control number ~~is~~ **is** assigned ~~in~~ **in** by the CAD system
2. Type of incident reported

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3. Location of incident reported
4. If **the incident is** in progress
5. Name of caller
6. Address of caller (if not **the same as the** incident location)
7. Phone number of caller
8. Date and time of request
9. Identification of Officer(s) assigned as primary and backup
10. Time of dispatch
11. Time of Officer's arrival
12. Time of Officer's return to service
13. Disposition **of the call or activity**

B. Suspect Information

Dispatchers shall obtain as much information as possible about suspects. This information shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Name of suspect(s)
2. Location of suspect(s)
3. Description of suspect(s) to include:
 - a. ~~Sex~~ Gender
 - b. Race
 - c. Height
 - d. Build
 - e. Color and length of hair
 - f. Color of eyes
 - g. Complexion
 - h. Presence of facial hair
 - i. Scars / marks / tattoos

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- j. Clothing description
- k. Vehicle description

C. Recording **the** Status of Officers

Status records ~~will~~ **shall** be maintained constantly by the CAD system. Dispatchers shall enter every status change for the purpose of keeping accurate records and for sending backup units as necessary. Dispatchers shall also record when an Officer is out of service.

D. Calls Requiring the Call Taker / Dispatcher to Remain on the Line with the Caller

The receiver of a 911 emergency telephone call ~~will~~ **shall** not be required to stay on the line with the caller on every occasion. A number of situations, however, ~~will~~ **shall** require the call taker / dispatcher to remain in contact with the caller in order for **the safety of the** caller and Officer(s) **safety** and to obtain critical information listed in **Section II, B** of this policy. In that respect, the call taker / dispatcher ~~will~~ **shall** be required to remain on the telephone when a call involves, but is not limited to, the following:

1. A burglary or robbery has just occurred or is in progress, and the actor is still in the area.
2. A disturbance or domestic situation in which an individual has a weapon, is believed to have a weapon, or is threatening to use violence.
3. An individual is threatening to commit suicide.

E. Calls Requesting Victim / Witness Information and / or Services

1. It is the responsibility of the Officer responding to a call **for service** to provide initial information relating to the victim / witness services provided by **the** Department and / or other agencies.
2. ~~Dispatchers~~ **The 911 Center** may receive calls from citizens requesting victim / witness information and / or services at all times of the day. When requests are received, dispatchers shall provide the caller with the contact number for the Conasauga Judicial Circuit's Victim / Witness ~~Office~~ **Assistance Program (VWAP)**. Phone numbers ~~will~~ **shall** be maintained on file to direct calls to the ~~Victim / Witness Office~~ **VWAP** during regular business hours and non-business hours.
3. If the victim / witness wishes to speak to an Officer, has additional questions, or wants to provide additional information, an Officer ~~will~~ **shall** be dispatched to meet with **or contact** the caller.

F. Dispatching of Assignments

1. When a call is received and the unit assigned to that area is unavailable, ~~the dispatcher shall send the closest unit available~~ **the 911 Center utilizes**

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a geo proximity layer to assign an available unit to the call. However, such decisions are subject to review by the Watch ~~Supervisor~~ Commander and may be overridden.

2. After a unit is dispatched, the dispatcher is to relay any pertinent information ~~which~~ that may assist in the apprehension of a suspect(s) if he / she leaves the area.

III. Radio Communication

- A. When an Officer initiates communication with the dispatcher, he / she ~~must~~ shall first give his / her badge number. The Officer ~~will~~ shall then wait until the dispatcher acknowledges by repeating the Officer's badge number, then the Officer may convey ~~the~~ his / her message.
- B. When the dispatcher initiates communication to a ~~Patrol~~ Officer, the Officer ~~will~~ shall respond by giving his / her badge number and location by street name and nearest cross-reference.
- C. Before Officers get out of their patrol units, they ~~must~~ shall notify the dispatcher of their location by giving an address or the street name and a cross-reference. Giving a business name for the cross-reference is an option to the cross street.
- D. Officers are required to communicate with the dispatcher under the following conditions:
 1. Upon arrival at the scene of a dispatched call for service
 2. Before leaving their patrol units or assigned ~~beats~~ districts
 3. When making vehicle or pedestrian stops
 4. When going in and out of service
- E. Upon arriving at an incident, Officers shall advise the following:
 1. Nature of the case (if self-initiated)
 2. Their location
 3. Developments in their investigation, if appropriate
- F. ~~This Department provides every Patrol Officer with two means of radio communication. Each patrol unit police vehicle is equipped with a mobile radio,~~ and All Officers are issued a portable radio to carry on their person. Radios are used for the purpose of communicating with the dispatcher and / or other Officers for the exchange of information, requesting assistance, transmitting an order or instructions, and responding to calls for service.

IV. Telephone Communications

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A. Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD)

1. The Whitfield County 911 Center ~~will shall~~ maintain a TDD phone to provide emergency call-taking services to those citizens who are hearing or speech impaired. ~~The Dalton Police Department's Records Unit will shall maintain a TDD phone for non-emergency calls.~~
2. All ~~communications personnel~~ Whitfield County 911 dispatchers ~~will shall~~ be trained in the proper procedures for both taking an incoming call and placing an outgoing call on the TDD phone.

B. Calls for Service

1. Calls for service ~~will shall~~ be typed into the computer as they are being taken.
2. Calls ~~will shall~~ be dispatched in the order they are received unless they are emergencies.
3. Calls are to be assigned a priority code by the CAD system.

C. In-Progress Calls

Should a caller be reporting an incident that is in progress, the dispatcher shall attempt to keep the caller on the line until the first unit arrives on the scene so that additional information, such as direction of travel, type of vehicle involved, and a description of the suspects, ~~can~~ may be obtained.

VI. Data Communications / Mobile Data Terminals (MDT)

- A. The MDT supplements the existing Department ~~voice~~ radio system. MDTs are not intended to replace ~~voice~~ radio communications, but ~~to~~ allows the ~~voice~~ radio channels to be available for higher priority traffic.
- B. Use of the MDT while the vehicle is in motion is hazardous and should be limited to single key operations. If receiving a message / text and entry is required, the vehicle should be in a safe location. ~~Members~~ Officers must not allow operation of the MDT to reduce their situational awareness, especially in cases involving violators or suspects.
- C. The MDT should be used for:
 1. Driver's license, vehicle registration, ~~wanted / stolen~~, and ~~criminal history~~ Records Management System inquiries, when safe to do so
 2. Viewing call data
- D. Once Officers have logged onto the MDT at the beginning of their shift, they are considered to be available for calls.
- E. MDTs are governed by FCC regulations and are recorded.

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VII. Establishing Priorities for Handling Emergency Calls

A. Screening

1. Dispatchers ~~will~~ shall determine the nature of each call for information or service and ascertain whether an ~~Police~~ Officer is needed at the scene immediately. In addition to the location, the following shall be determined as soon as possible:
 - ~~a.1.~~ Is the crime or incident in progress?
 - ~~b.2.~~ Is there a weapon involved and the number of suspects?
 - ~~c.3.~~ Has the person calling or others been injured?
 - ~~d.4.~~ Are there other characteristics heard in the background that can be relayed to the Officer?
2. The dispatcher shall inform the caller of the Department's response or refer them to the appropriate agency.

B. Emergency Calls

Once it has been determined that an emergency exists, the dispatcher should:

1. Immediately advise the appropriate unit(s) and Supervisor to proceed to the location of the incident to render assistance. Responding units should also be advised that further information will follow.
2. Advise the caller that help is on the way.
3. Go back to the caller on the line and obtain essential information, such as type of weapons, suspects, vehicles, etc.
4. Provide essential critical information to ~~field~~ responding units.
5. Obtain routine information from the caller, such as name, phone number, etc., in order to complete the computer entry.

C. Interacting Agencies

1. The Whitfield County 911 Center also dispatches for the Whitfield County Sheriff's Office, Tunnel Hill Police Department, Cohutta Police Department, and Varnell Police Department. They also dispatch for Dalton and Whitfield County Fire Departments and ~~Whitfield County~~ Hamilton EMS.
2. The Whitfield County 911 Center can also contact the Georgia State Patrol, Georgia Bureau of Investigations, as well as surrounding county and city agencies.

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3. If an ~~Dalton Police~~ Officer or Supervisor needs assistance or information from any of the ~~aforementioned~~ agencies, the ~~911~~ dispatcher ~~will~~ ~~shall~~ make contact and relay the request for assistance.

D. Supervisors

1. All emergency calls ~~will~~ ~~shall~~ be brought to the attention of the ~~field Supervisor~~ ~~Watch Commander~~ as soon as possible.
2. In most cases, the Officer on the scene will determine if a Supervisor is needed. In some instances, the Supervisor may be dispatched to the scene with the first responding Officer in order to assume command. This might include cases such as an armed robbery or burglary in progress, bomb threats, hostage / barricaded subjects, and other in-progress calls or calls of a serious nature.

- E. The dispatcher ~~will~~ ~~shall~~ send at least two (2) Officers to any forcible felony in-progress, as well as other calls including, but not limited to, hostage / barricaded person, domestic / family violence, robbery and burglary alarms, and any high-risk call.

VIII. **Interpreters**

A. Hearing Impaired Interpreter

The Georgia Interpretation Services Network can provide a qualified interpreter for the hearing impaired. It may be contacted at 800-228-4992 or 404-521-9100. The use of their services requires the payment of fees.

B. Non-English Speaking Interpreter

Whitfield County 911 utilizes a "~~AT&T~~ Language Line" that provides access to over-the-phone interpretation twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. This ~~pay-per-use~~ service provides interpretation in over ninety (90) languages ~~and shall only be utilized for extreme emergencies.~~

~~VIII~~X. **Emergency Messages**

The delivery of emergency messages is a legitimate law enforcement function and ~~will~~ ~~shall~~ be handled as any other call for service. Messages may come from individuals or other law enforcement agencies.

A. The following are considered notifications of an emergency nature:

1. Notification of next of kin in the event of a death or serious illness / injury
2. Notification of a person to make an emergency phone call
3. Notification of a person in the event of a traffic accident
4. Notification of a person concerning another person being stranded

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- B. Generally, non-emergency message deliveries ~~will~~ shall not be made unless other unusual circumstances exist. The dispatcher receiving such request, and not being certain as to whether the request necessitates a response, is to consult the ~~shift Supervisor~~ Watch Commander.
- C. When dispatching a message delivery, the dispatcher should ~~dispatch~~ send an Officer assigned to the geographic area in which the person receiving the message is located. The Officer shall respond to the proper address and deliver the message in a professional manner.

IX. Procedure for Burglar and Robbery Alarms

- A. Burglar Alarms
 - 1. Dispatch two (2) units to the address.
 - 2. Attempt to make telephone contact at the residence or business.
 - 3. Attempt to locate a responsible party / key holder that may be able to access the residence / business.
- B. Robbery Alarms
 - 1. Dispatch at least two (2) units and a Supervisor, if available, to the address.
 - 2. Attempt to make telephone contact with someone at the scene.
 - 3. Advise the Officer(s) of the situation, whether it is in-progress, false, or no contact is made.
 - 4. If telephone contact is made, advise the responding Officer(s) of the situation, and if it is a false alarm, request that someone go outside and contact the responding Officer(s). ~~and~~ Provide the Officer(s) with a physical description of that person.

XI. Procedure for Pursuits

When an Officer is involved in a pursuit, the dispatcher ~~will~~ shall:

- A. Clear the radio frequency of all unnecessary traffic, and advise Officers that a chase is in progress.
- B. Monitor the Officer's traffic closely to determine location, direction of travel, etc.
- C. Perform relevant record checks.
- D. Dispatch backup unit(s), and determine if a replacement is needed.
- E. Notify surrounding jurisdictions, if necessary.

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XII. Procedure for Missing Persons

When the call or complaint of a missing person is received, the call taker ~~will~~ shall:

- A. Promptly dispatch an Officer.
- B. Check agency files for helpful information.
- C. In case of an "at-risk" missing person, a Supervisor ~~will~~ shall also be dispatched. ~~as well.~~
- D. Obtain enough information to give a brief lookout, and transmit to all Officers.

XIII. Procedure for Domestic / Family Violence Calls

- A. The dispatcher who receives a domestic / family violence call can provide the responding Officers with vital information that could save the victim's and / or Officer's life. The dispatcher shall give a domestic / family violence call the same priority as any other life-threatening call and shall dispatch at least two (2) Officers to every incident.
- B. If a domestic disturbance call for service is from a residence, family member, or an employee ~~or Officer~~ of this Department, the dispatcher shall also dispatch the ~~on-duty Supervisor~~ Watch Commander.
- C. In addition to information normally gathered, an effort should be made to determine and relay the following to responding Officers:
 - 1.~~A.~~ Whether the suspect is present and the suspect's description and possible location
 - 2.~~B.~~ Whether weapons are involved
 - 3.~~C.~~ Whether the offender is under the influence of drugs or alcohol
 - 4.~~D.~~ Whether there are children present
 - 5.~~E.~~ Whether the victim has a current protective or restraining order
 - 6.~~F.~~ Complaint history at that location
- D. Dispatchers shall not cancel ~~police~~ Officers' response to a domestic violence complaint based solely on a follow-up call from the residence requesting such cancellation. However, the dispatcher shall advise the Officers of the complainant's request.

X~~III~~IV. Procedures for Emergency Requests for Assistance from Officers

- A. When an Officer requests emergency assistance, the dispatcher ~~will~~ shall:
 - 1.~~A.~~ Clear frequency of ~~all~~ unnecessary traffic.

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- 2.~~B.~~ Dispatch backup units.
- 3.~~C.~~ Perform status checks, as appropriate.
- B. The frequency ~~will~~ shall remain clear until the situation is resolved and an Officer at the scene advises that the frequency should be reopened to regular radio traffic.

This policy supersedes any previous policies issued.

BY ORDER OF

CHIEF OF POLICE

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