



CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Code: 60002210
Date Established: 07/1973
Last Reviewed: 06/2025
Last Revised: 06/2025
Last Title Change: 02/1982
FLSA: non-exempt
Probation: 12 months

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of duties involved in the operation of the emergency services systems and various communication devices to receive, route, relay and dispatch calls for emergency and non-emergency law enforcement and other services; and performs related work as required.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Six months of dispatching experience OR three months of call taking experience in a public safety environment.

LICENSE OR CERTIFICATE

A valid driver's license is required at the time of appointment and must be maintained for continued employment in this classification.

Certification on the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) is required within three months of appointment and must be maintained for continued employment in this classification.

FEMA Incident Command System (ICS) 100, 200, 700, 800 certification is required within three months of appointment.

Certifications in Emergency Medical Dispatch (MPDS), Emergency Fire Dispatch (FPDS), Emergency Police Dispatch (PPDS) through the International Academy of Emergency Dispatching, and CPR certification at Healthcare provider level are required within three months of appointment; these certifications require the completion of continuing education units plus recertification every two years for continued employment in this classification.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Exercises no supervision.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES *(The following is used as a partial description and is not restrictive as to duties required.)*

Receive, screen, and take appropriate action on all emergency service calls including 911 calls from the public requesting law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS); determine nature and location of emergency; determine priority; dispatch emergency units as necessary and in accordance with established procedures; transfer calls to appropriate agency as necessary.

Maintain contact via two-way radio system with all first responder units and operate the Computer-Aided-Dispatch (CAD) system terminals.

Follow International Academy of Emergency Dispatch national standards and protocols while dispatching the correct police, fire, or medical units to the caller's location while maintaining the national standard of accuracy.

Maintain knowledge in state and local laws pertaining to: Native American Reservation laws and procedures, Washoe County Code, and miscellaneous Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS).

Research, enter, and transmit information from various databases for information on victims, witnesses and suspects including vehicle license registration, drivers' license record checks, stolen vehicle checks, wanted persons, suspect identification, criminal history, and other pertinent information.

Use telecommunications systems, radio, and digitalized paging system, to coordinate emergency calls and relay information and assistance requests involving other law enforcement agencies and specialized law enforcement teams (SWAT, MAIT, RAVEN, SAR); provide assistance to other police agencies as requested.

Maintain a variety of automated and manual logs, records, files, and indexes pertaining to emergency and dispatching activities.

Assist in providing orientation and training to newly hired dispatchers.

May perform any and all of the Examples of Duties found within the Communication Call Taker class specification.

Attend and participate in meetings, trainings, and information sessions representing the Communications Center; stay abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of communications technology and emergency dispatch services.

JOB RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Full Performance *(These may be acquired on the job and are needed to perform the work assigned.)*

Knowledge of:

Department/division policies, practices, and procedures.

Terms and acronyms commonly used in area of assignment.

Pertinent federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations, including but not limited to, Native American Reservation laws and procedures, Washoe County Code, and miscellaneous Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS).

Operating characteristics of the NCIC and CJIS systems and other software to understand and perform a variety of research.

International Academy of Emergency Dispatching (IAED) standards and our maintained Agency policy and procedures.

Countywide geographical areas of responsibility such as streets, businesses, hiking, ski areas, jurisdictional boundaries, districts, etc.

Operating characteristics of a variety of communications equipment and tools used in the area of emergency dispatch including Teletypewriter/ Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD), radio scanner, intercom system, multi-channel radio system, and 911 system.

Geography, and zones that represent geographical areas of responsibility.

Resources and agencies available for referral.

Ability to:

Understand the organization and operation of the County and outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.

Interpret and apply pertinent laws, codes and regulations including administrative and departmental policies and procedures.

Respond to requests and inquiries from the public and County personnel related to the policies and procedures of assigned function.

Operate current technology within the Emergency Communications Center such as CAD system, Intrado (IP-based phone) 911 System, Carbyne, P25/800 MHz Radio System, Word, Excel, Outlook, and the Internet.

Use and operate the CAD system terminals and mapping system through CAD to understand and locate major landmarks, roads, and buildings within Washoe County.

Entry Level *(Applicants will be screened for possession of these through written, oral, performance, or other evaluation methods.)*

Knowledge of:

Practices and procedures of dispatching law enforcement, Fire and EMS calls for service.

Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment.

Techniques and methods of record keeping and reporting.

Principles and techniques used to effectively interact with the public.

Incident Command System.

Terms and acronyms commonly used in Law Enforcement, Fire Service, and Medical.

Multi-jurisdiction mutual aid agreements.

Ability to:

Apply the methods and techniques of emergency communications dispatching.

Read and interpret street and geographical maps.

Receive, prioritize, and transmit a large volume of radio, telephone, and teletype transmissions, properly, rapidly, efficiently and effectively.

Operate computer equipment and FAX machines.

Type caller information accurately using a computer keyboard, monitor, mouse, and other specialized equipment as required; Type or enter data at a speed necessary for successful job performance.

Work under pressure; react quickly, respond calmly and effectively; exercise good judgment and make sound decisions in emergency situations and with constant interruptions.

Speak clearly and distinctly in a well-modulated voice.

Maintain confidentiality of information and not divulge or discuss confidential, private, restricted or other similar information with unauthorized staff or members of the public.

Understand and follow oral and written instructions.

Analyze situations carefully, make quick and sound decisions, and adopt effective courses of action in both routine and non-routine situations.

Interact effectively and sensitively with individuals from diverse backgrounds; effectively communicate with and elicit information from upset and irate citizens.

Communicate clearly and concisely, both verbally and in writing.

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS *(Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment.)*

Work is performed in an emergency dispatch center setting; exposure to unusual fatigue factors, and emergency or stressful situations; exposure to noisy distractions from simultaneous events while working on multiple computer systems and monitors, utilizing both a headset and telephone and/or telephony system for verbal communications; exposure to varying lighting conditions. Must be willing to work shift work, irregular hours, rotating shifts, holidays, weekends, and during natural disasters and pandemics. Must complete and submit a personal history statement and pass an extensive background investigation. Must be willing to submit a set of fingerprints. Must pass a drug test. Must pass a Computerized Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA) examination. . Must pass an audio/hearing test. Requires visual acuity to recognize and read letters, numbers, and maps as well as auditory ability sufficient to hear inside the dispatch center, over the radio, and on the phone. Ability to work in a professional office environment, in a restricted area with little opportunity to move around, and to sit for long periods of time. Ability to remain calm in emergency situations.

This class specification is used for classification, recruitment and examination purposes. It is not to be considered a substitute for work performance standards.