

# Washington County

## 911 Communications Specialist

### Job Description

<b>Job Code:</b>	15
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Department:</b>	Sheriff's Office
<b>Reports To:</b>	911 Communications Specialist Supervisor
<b>Location:</b>	Sheriff's Office
<b>Date Prepared:</b>	October 11, 2018
<b>Date Revised:</b>	June 14, 2021
<b>Safety Sensitive:</b>	This position is designated as safety/security sensitive and is subject to pre-employment, reasonable suspicion and random drug and alcohol screening.

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF POSITION**

The 911 Communication Specialist is a unique position due to the specialized knowledge, skills and training that are required to be able to excel in this type of profession. The 911 Communications Specialist is an emergency professional and the first point of contact for citizens where life and property are threatened and need immediate emergency assistance from police, fire or medical services. This is a high-intensity occupation where working fast paced, stressful, life and death emergency decisions will be made daily. The 911 Communication Specialist is responsible for answering both 911 emergency and non-emergency lines, creating a call for service (CFS), typing "live" accurate information from the caller, while sending the appropriate emergency responders to the correct location. Time is always critical, so multi-tasking skills are a must when dispatching all types of calls. Requires operating a multi-channel emergency radio system to dispatch emergency responders, while transmitting information and messages upon request, according to policies and procedures. This position monitors public safety units in the field, retrieves and enters pertinent data into ACIC/NCIC computer systems, operates 911 emergency equipment, TDD/TTY and other related communications equipment.

The 911 Communication Specialist is the first person "on the scene" and a vital link in an emergency, ensuring detailed, immediate and accurate information is communicated between all responders, affecting the safety of both the citizen in need and all responding personnel. Through the actions of the Communication Specialist, lives are saved and property protected while assisting the public in their time of need.

#### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Provide and maintain a positive customer service attitude at all times with public, co-workers and supervisors.
2. Responsible for operating a communications console and related communications equipment while answering incoming 911 emergency and non-emergency phone calls and collecting accurate information from callers, then disseminating that information to responding emergency units or agencies.
3. Responsible for prioritizing call answering, e.g., 911 lines/non-emergency lines, use of proper call greeting, projecting a professional demeanor while providing calming instruction to obtain information.
4. Ascertaining incident information by obtaining and verifying caller information and location, determining the nature of the incident, and all available data including but not limited to automated

data, social media information, text message or images and providing information to responders either verbally and/or digitally.

5. Managing challenging callers using appropriate handling of distressed, autistic, hearing-impaired, elderly, child, angry and foreign-language speaking callers.
6. Provides direct counseling to suicidal person, domestic violent victims, and children.
7. Determines additional risk such as weapons present, medical conditions or mobility issues of victims that complicate or threaten the health and safety of the citizens and responders on scene.
8. Providing pre-arrival instructions where needed in law enforcement events such as; suicidal persons, active shooters, deescalating persons in crisis, separating domestic violence victim from abuser, protecting children at the scene, and serving as a hostage negotiator.
9. Washington County Law Enforcement (LE) Channel Dispatch A: Dispatch and monitor all radio traffic generated by Washington County (LE), fire or medical related calls for service and self-initiated activity. This includes "directing the net" during an emergency situation and being able to determine when calls should be held when higher priority calls come in. All radio transmissions must be logged into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in real time.
10. Washington County Small Town (LE) Channel Dispatch A: Dispatch and monitor all radio traffic generated by 10 law enforcement small town agencies within Washington County related to police, fire or medical calls for service and self-initiated activity. This includes "directing the net" during emergency situations and being able to determine when calls should be held when higher priority calls come in. All radio transmissions must be logged into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in real time.
11. Washington County (LE) Channel Dispatch B: Is a secondary channel used by civil process, court security and transport deputies. Civil process deputies will be checking out at locations regarding serving civil papers, protection orders and execution of evictions (move outs). Transport deputies will transport prisoners from the detention center to court, doctor appointments and other detention or state prison facilities locally or across the United States. Officer safety checks on transport units must be completed via telephone or radio due to "High Risk Inmate Transport". This channel handles non emergency radio traffic during emergency situations when the main Washington County Dispatch A or Washington County Small Town Dispatch A channel has the "net directed" for emergency traffic. ACIC radio traffic can also be performed on this channel. All radio transmissions must be logged into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in real time.
12. 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP): Answer all 911 calls for Washington County Sheriff's Office, including, police, fire and medical calls. Must know policies and procedures for call processing and be able to mentally handle these types of calls i.e., officer involved shooting or a death of an officer, suicide, domestic violence, motor vehicle accident with severe injury or fatality, armed robbery, child sexual assault, homicide, natural disaster, unexpected death of a child. Must be able to handle callers who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, obscene, irate and mentally impaired. Emergency lines should be answered within 6 seconds. Must be able to interpret Automatic Number Identification (ANI) and Automatic Location Identification (ALI) data verifying map data when a 911 wireless call is received to ensure responders are being sent to the correct location. Washington County Sheriff's Office answers approximately 9,000 emergency calls yearly.
13. Maintaining communication with the caller during life-threatening emergencies, providing safety/lifesaving instructions, and maintain control of the conversation until field units arrive on scene.

14. Monitor Smart911/Rave Panic Button to see if the caller has created a profile that will give the 911 Communication Specialist additional information i.e., medical conditions, property details, utilities, access to the residence, floor layout, vehicle information, and emergency contacts. If the caller is not able to talk, a message can be sent to check their welfare. The Rave Panic Button is activated when there is an "Active Shooter" heard or seen on a school campus. Once the button is pushed, a call is sent to the 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), so emergency responders can be dispatched.
15. Monitor Rapid SOS emergency response web-based portal that integrates into the 911 system retrieving real time data information from the caller to the 911 communications specialist. This web-based portal is used as a tool to determine accurate caller location when calling in on 911.
16. Monitor StarChase, which is a vehicle tagging system used during pursuits. Once the GPS system is deployed and attached to the suspect vehicle the 911 Communications Specialist will be able to track the vehicle through a web-based portal and relay GPS location information to responding field units via radio.
17. Pull CFS, radio traffic, emergency and non-emergency phone calls per FIOA requests.
18. Washington County Sheriff's Office Business Lines- must be able to answer multiple phones lines virtually at the same time and determine if the caller has an emergency with the goal of answering all business lines by the 3rd ring. Responsible for asking appropriate questions to determine if police, fire or medical dispatch is necessary. Requires placing calls on hold in the order of priority and transferring calls to the appropriate agency, if needed. Washington County Sheriff's Office answers over 181,000 non-emergency calls yearly.
19. Using TDD/TTY and relay services to comply with ADA standards to communicate with caller who have hearing and/or speech disabilities.
20. Utilizing language interpretation services and coordinating with mental health resources for appropriate contacts with callers who have mental health or language barriers to receiving help.
21. Queries, enters, modifies and clears information in local, state and national computerized databases such as the Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC), National Crime Information Center (NCIC) pertaining to arrest warrants, driver record, criminal history, stolen property, missing persons, violent persons and protection orders.
22. Relay information from the ACIC/NCIC computer networks regarding wanted person, stolen property, vehicle registration, stolen vehicles, protection orders, criminal histories, parolees, and officer safety information to officers in the field.
23. Maintain current and accurate validations on active stolen property, protection orders, missing persons and runaway juvenile entries on a monthly basis and maintain the "hot file" in accordance with ACIC/NCIC rules and regulations.
24. Process and enter "live" accurate data quickly from the caller and enter large amounts of information into readable, typed remarks in a timely manner into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. Maintain contact with all units on assignments; maintain status and location of units. Must have the ability to recall numerous acronyms and codes essential to appropriate call processing. The 911 Communication Specialist is tasked with attaching photos to calls for service (CFS), entering Be On Look Out (BOLO's) and security checks so responding officers can see this valuable information from their mobile data computers.

25. • Knowledgeable of the Sheriff's Office Management System (SOMS) is the Sheriff's Office records management system used to access information (i.e. Incident Reports, Booking, Civil Process, Warrants, etc.)
26. Notifying key personnel of critical incidents, using judgment to determine the need to contact other law enforcement and public safety agencies for additional information and resources as needed, or relaying information regarding incidents and situational awareness.
27. Assist and provide information to Arkansas State Police, Arkansas Highway Police, Arkansas Game and Fish, Veterans Affairs Police (VA), Prairie Grove Battlefield Park, Devils Den State Park as well as other special law enforcement task forces.
28. Monitor local agencies radio traffic; Fayetteville Police Department, Springdale Police Department, Central EMS, and Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWIN) relaying emergency and non-emergency information to public safety personnel in the field.
29. Accurately maintain logs- tow logs to ensure that tow companies are evenly distributed among authorized tow companies, bail bondsmen, livestock, hospice list, jury list and sex offender logs. Complete the daily shift summary.
30. Monitor the Washington County Courthouse, Historical Courthouse, Juvenile Justice Complex and South Annex Tactical Training Facility alarm system. When duress alarm is tripped notify appropriate personnel and dispatch deputies to the duress location.
31. Knowledgeable on how to retrieve radio and telephone recordings from the communications recording system.
32. Answer small town agencies phones when they are forwarded to the Washington County Sheriff's Office and ensure that calls for service are entered and Small Town officers dispatched to the appropriate location.
33. Monitors and answers the red phone in the administrative lobby of the Washington County Sheriff's Office. Call for Service (CFS) will be entered when a citizen is calling from the lobby phone requesting emergency or non-emergency response. The appropriate resources (police, fire or medical) will be dispatched.
34. Monitor lobby camera and release lobby and dispatch doors when appropriate.
35. Monitor Satellite phone, answer or transmit when appropriate during emergency disaster.
36. Communications Training Officer (CTO) - 911 Communication Specialists with tenure, leadership, and extensive experience in this profession could be assigned to work one-on-one with a trainee, monitoring, evaluating and documenting their on-the-job training, which includes Daily Observation Reports (DORS), administering written worksheets, quizzes and tests. Mentor, coach and administer constructive feedback to the trainee to ensure the trainee is successful in completing the training program. Could recommend that training materials be updated.
37. Perform any other related duties as required or assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty mentioned satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required.

## **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

High school or GED, plus specialized schooling and/or on the job education in a specific skill area; e.g. data processing, clerical/administrative, equipment operation, etc, plus 2 years related experience and/or training, and 1 to 6 months related management experience, or equivalent combination of education and experience.

## **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Ability to effectively communicate information and respond to questions in person-to-person and small group situations with customers, clients, general public and other employees of the organization.

## **MATHEMATICAL SKILLS**

Ability to calculate figures and amounts such as discounts, interest, commissions, proportions, percentages, area, circumference, and volume. Ability to apply concepts such as fractions, ratios, and proportions to practical situations.

## **CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**

Ability to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of known variables in situations where only limited standardization exists. Ability to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, or diagram formats.

## **REQUIRED CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS**

- Valid Driver's License.
- Ability to obtain Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) Security Training
- Ability to obtain all National Incident Management System (NIMS) training requirements.
- Ability to obtain the Basic Telecommunicator Course certification in accordance with Arkansas Law or Associations of Public Safety Communications Officials Basic Telecommunicator Course (APCO PST1) certification.
- Ability to obtain Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC) Basic and Advanced training in accordance with ACIC/NCIC rules and regulations.
- Ability to obtain Communications Training Officer (CTO) certification.
- Ability to obtain Incident Tactical Dispatcher Training (INTD)

## **SOFTWARE SKILLS REQUIRED**

Advanced: Contact Management, Other

Intermediate: Database

Basic: Alphanumeric Data Entry, Word Processing/Typing

## **INITIATIVE AND INGENUITY**

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED**

Under general supervision where standard practice enables the employee to proceed alone on routine work, referring all questionable cases to supervisor.

### **PLANNING**

Considerable responsibility with regard to general assignments in planning time, method, manner, and/or sequence of performance of own work; may also occasionally assist in the planning of work assignments performed by others within a limited area of operation.

## **DECISION MAKING**

Performs work operations which permit frequent opportunity for decision-making of minor importance and also frequent opportunity for decision-making of major importance; the latter of which would affect the work operations of other employees and/or clientele to a moderate degree.

## **MENTAL DEMAND**

Close mental demand. Operations requiring close and continuous attention for control of operations. Operations requiring intermittent direct thinking to determine or select the most applicable way of handling situations regarding the organization's administration and operations; also to determine or select material and equipment where highly variable sequences are involved.

## **ANALYTICAL ABILITY / PROBLEM SOLVING**

Moderately structured. Fairly broad activities using moderately structured procedures with only generally guided supervision. Interpolation of learned things in somewhat varied situations.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORK OF OTHERS**

Responsibility for work of others: Not indicated.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNDS, PROPERTY and EQUIPMENT**

Occasionally responsible for organization's property where carelessness, error, or misappropriation would result in moderate damage or moderate monetary loss to the organization. The total value for the above would range from \$5,000 to \$150,000.

## **ACCURACY**

Probable errors would not likely be detected until they reached another department, office or patron, and would then require considerable time and effort to correct the situation. Frequently, possibility of error that would affect the organization's prestige and relationship with the public to a limited extent, but where succeeding operations or supervision would normally preclude the possibility of a serious situation arising as a result of the error or decision.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **FREEDOM TO ACT**

Directed. Freedom to complete duties as defined by wide-ranging policies and precedents with mid to upper-level managerial oversight.

### **ANNUAL MONETARY IMPACT**

The amount of annual dollars generated based on the job's essential duties / responsibilities. Examples would include direct dollar generation, departmental budget, proper handling of organization funds, expense control, savings from new techniques or reduction in manpower.

None. Job does not create any dollar monetary impact for the organization.

### **IMPACT ON END RESULTS**

Modest impact. Job has some impact on the organizations end results, but still from an indirect level. Provides assistance and support services that facilitates decision making by others.

## **PUBLIC CONTACT**

Regular contacts with patrons where the contacts are initiated by the employee. Involves both furnishing and obtaining information and, also, attempting to influence the decisions of those persons contacted. Contacts of considerable importance and of such nature, that failure to exercise proper judgment may result in important tangible or intangible losses to the organization.

## **EMPLOYEE CONTACT**

Contacts with other departments or offices and also frequently with individuals in middle level positions; consulting on problems which necessitate judgment and tact in presentation to obtain cooperation or approval of action to be taken. Also, important contacts with associates as required in advanced supervisory jobs.

## **USE OF MACHINES, EQUIPMENT AND/OR COMPUTERS**

Regular use of highly complex machines and equipment; specialized or advanced software programs.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

Disagreeable working conditions. Exposed to several of the elements in degree 2, which are present continuously enough to make the conditions disagreeable. May involve heavy travel and/or work is in the evening during the night hours.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

The following work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES**

The following physical activities described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions and expectations.

Highly repetitive, low physical. Highly repetitive type of work which requires concentration in the performance of tasks for consistent time cycles as prescribed by the tasks.

While performing the functions of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand, sit, use hands to finger, handle, or feel, reach with hands and arms, talk or hear; occasionally required to walk. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision; color vision; and ability to adjust focus.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

- Pass an intensive background check.
- 18 years of age or older at time of hire with no felony convictions.
- Valid Driver's License.
- Pass all pre-employment dispatch, typing (minimum of 35 wpm), spelling and grammar tests.
- Pass the National Dispatcher Selection Test with a minimum score of 70%. The test measures reading comprehension, listening, problem solving, prioritizing and multi-tasking.
- Pass all oral interviews.
- Requires the knowledge of English grammar, vocabulary skills and spelling sufficient to prepare and maintain calls for service.
- Complete and pass the approximately six to eight-month training program before the employee will be allowed to work solo without the guidance of a Certified Training Officer (CTO). The training program covers the following topics:
  - a). General Policies and Procedures
  - b). Resources and Washington County and Small Town Geography
  - c). Terminology
  - d). Communications Equipment

- e). Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)
- f). Sheriff's Office Management System (SOMS)
- g). Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC), National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
- h). Call Processing, emergency and non-emergency call taking
- i). 911 Emergency lines
- j). Police dispatching

- Required to maintain the ability to work weekends, holidays, evening and night work schedules to ensure adequate staffing for a 24-hour operation. The days and hours of each shift may vary based on the needs of the center. The ability to work overtime is a required job function after training is complete.
- Required to report to work during inclement weather conditions and during natural and manmade disasters.

#### EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

High school or GED, plus specialized schooling and/or on the job education in a specific skill area; e.g. data processing, clerical/administrative, equipment operation, etc., plus 2 years related experience and/or training, or equivalent combination of education and experience.

#### COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Ability to communicate ideas effectively, including the preparation of reports and logs. Ability to listen and understand directions, information and ideas presented verbally and in writing. Ability to handle a variety of customer service issues with tact and diplomacy in a confidential manner and verbally solicit and obtain relevant information through radio and telephone communications. Ability to hear and retain detailed information.

#### CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

The ability to solve urgent problems and deal with a variety of unknown emergencies or high priority variables in situations where only limited time exists.

#### DECISION MAKING

Make accurate, sound decisions and quickly react positively under stressful conditions which typically entail the life or well-being of a citizen or officer. Use logic and reasoning to analyze, understand, and evaluate complex emergency situations.

#### MENTAL DEMAND

Must be able to quickly obtain, remember information and specific details from callers and officers without errors. The ability to concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted. Must be able to focus on the information provided by the caller in the presence of background noise and static. Work involves communicating with distraught, disoriented, argumentative, abusive, mentally disabled or disturbed and uncooperative individuals and requires explicit gathering of essential information through verbal communications while maintaining composure and providing good customer service.

#### ABILITIES

- Gain and maintain a thorough geographical knowledge of Washington County including small towns, location of major roadways, landmarks and jurisdictional boundaries.
- Read, understand and interpret complex maps.
- Remain flexible and adapt to changing circumstances, demands during variety of emergency situations and to maintain emotional composure, organization of work and accurate productivity during periods of stress and high activity.
- Memorize radio codes, signals, employee names and badge numbers.



- Hear multiple conversations simultaneously, distinguishing between voices and sources to obtain relevant information quickly and accurately.
- Speak clearly, distinctly, concisely and correctly over the radio and telephone.
- Type on computer keyboards while reading from protocol and/or talking on the radio, and operate mouse and foot controls while conversing on the radio and/or telephone.
- Make immediate decisions and react in a quick, calm, controlled and effective manner in all emergency situations.
- Interpret and apply rules, regulations, policies and procedures utilized in public safety dispatching.
- Be reliable and dependable to report to work as scheduled.
- Willingness to maintain respectful working relationships with co-workers, supervisors, public safety agencies, and the general public.