

Classification and Qualification



STANDARDS

The California State University System

Police Dispatcher

Class Codes: 8800 - 8802
Date Established: 12/01/00

OVERVIEW:

The Police Dispatcher is a specialized classification within police departments which provides essential dispatch communications and records maintenance. Dispatchers are responsible for maintaining effective and efficient communications between campus law enforcement headquarters, campus police officers in the field, outside emergency and law enforcement agencies, and the public. Incumbents in this position receive, record and dispatch general and emergency information quickly, clearly and accurately. Two position skill levels are defined:

- **Position Skill Level I** - Incumbents at this level perform standard dispatch duties which include receiving and screening incoming emergency and public safety calls and communicating with campus law enforcement staff using the police radio systems to dispatch accordingly. Work involves the use of automated/computerized dispatch and police information systems and databases to input and retrieve data. Incumbents are required to work independently, react quickly, and demonstrate good judgment and discretion in stressful situations.
- **Position Skill Level II** - Incumbents at this level typically have a higher degree of accountability for the dispatch and records functions. Their assignments typically involve providing lead work direction to other dispatchers and/or other public safety support staff and/or performing more complex and diverse functions in support of public safety programs. They often participate in the development of operational procedures and protocols related to dispatch functions.

CORE AREAS:

Positions in this classification are distinguished by the critical nature of police dispatch work and the specialized knowledge and skills required to perform this work. While the predominant focus of positions in this classification is dispatch communications, the work assignments may fall into the following core areas:

- **Dispatch Communications** - Answering and screening incoming calls to the police department which involve conversing with crime victims, witnesses, and members of the public to elicit and record pertinent information; operating police department and other emergency communications equipment to dispatch officers to calls for service, critical incidents and emergencies; entering and retrieving data for police reports, activity logs and criminal information; utilizing automated dispatch and law enforcement systems and databases to enter, research and retrieve information; operating the 911 telephone system and serving as the primary answer point; coordinating emergency responses including performing emergency dispatch duties; and referring citizens to appropriate resources such as counseling services, domestic violence support services or victim/witness assistance units.
- **Record-keeping** - Utilizing dispatch and law enforcement systems and databases (both computerized and manual) to maintain department files and reports; entering, recording, researching and retrieving information; updating department warrant and due diligence information; filing police reports; preparing arrest folders, maintaining criminal history files and preparing packets for prosecutors; compiling and sending reports to appropriate agencies; ensuring records and files are maintained in accordance with applicable laws and regulations; and providing related clerical and/or administrative support to the department.

- **Public Safety Support** – Providing support to other public safety and community service functions including parking and access services; maintaining records; monitoring security and fire alarm systems, and coordinating responses; monitoring building access; assisting campus visitors; and vehicle checkout.

ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS:

Entry to the first level within this classification typically requires one year of verifiable experience using a switchboard and two-way radio communication system in a law enforcement or comparable agency within the last ten years and a high school diploma or equivalent. Essential entry qualifications require the ability to effectively use a phonetic alphabet, speak clearly and concisely, follow oral and written instructions, transfer information accurately, handle a wide range of interpersonal interactions effectively, and learn the use of applicable automated dispatch and law enforcement systems and databases.

Incumbents must have completed or be able to attend and successfully complete the Police Officers Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Dispatcher Course. Incumbents who, upon hire, do not possess a P.O.S.T. Dispatcher Certificate also will be required to pass a written test related to essential dispatching skills. Additionally, incumbents must successfully pass supplemental P.O.S.T. requirements for dispatchers such as a background check, physical and psychological examinations, drug testing, and related requirements.

POSITION SKILL LEVELS:

Two position skill levels are defined within this classification. Progression from the first to the second skill level is referred to as an *in-classification progression*. The factors used to determine position skill level include: complexity, scope and impact of the work performed; level, type and scope of knowledge required; autonomy exercised and level of supervision received; position accountability; judgment and discretion required by the position to address and solve problems; and level and diversity of contacts and interactive capabilities required by the position.

A position is placed at a skill level where the majority of and/or most critical position responsibilities and skill requirements fall. Management assigns work responsibilities and determines position skill requirements. It is important to note that the position skill level definitions do not delineate entry requirements for each skill level, but are composites of the typical position at each level. Entry qualifications are defined for the first position skill level of the classification. Further progression within the classification depends first, on the need for a position at a higher skill level, second, on the nature of the duties and requirements of the position, and third, on an employee's demonstrated and applied skills and abilities.

Position Skill Level I

Typical nature of work assignments:

Performance of standard dispatch communications duties involving receiving and relaying calls for assistance via telephone, radio or computer terminal; police department record-keeping and reporting functions; and related department support functions outlined in the core areas.

Day-to-day assignments are performed independently under general supervision once initial training is completed.

Regular use of judgment and discretion is necessary to set priorities, assess the importance of information, and to react quickly and effectively. Established protocols and procedures are followed in most instances. Incumbents are accountable for actions taken.

Work involves regular, and often intense, contact with the campus community, general public, and campus and outside law enforcement and emergency agencies. Interaction requires tact and discretion.

Typical knowledge and skill requirements:

Working knowledge of legal codes, requirements, procedures and techniques for receiving complaints and calls for service and for dispatching and communicating with campus officers in the field.

Ability to effectively converse using police radio systems.

Working knowledge of public safety-related agencies and the respective communication protocols.

Achievement of the P.O.S.T. Dispatcher certificate.

Working knowledge of and ability to use applicable computerized and automated dispatch and law enforcement systems and databases to enter, research and retrieve data as necessary.

Ability to independently respond and act quickly, accurately evaluate information and situations, and make appropriate decisions in routine, non-routine and emergency situations.

Working knowledge of geographical layout and ability to read maps and floor plans to provide directions to officers in the field.

Ability to accurately interpret written policies, follow oral and written instructions, and transfer information.

Ability to provide clear and concise verbal directions quickly and accurately.

Ability to present and summarize information in a variety of written formats, using clear and concise language.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships, interact with all members of the campus community and general public, and maintain composure in highly stressful situations or when dealing with difficult individuals.

Ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information.

Position Skill Level II

Typical nature of work assignments:

Coordination of the dispatch and records functions including providing lead work direction of dispatch and other public safety support staff. Ensures adequate coverage at all times by assessing needs and setting work schedules, acting as shift coordinator, planning and assigning work, monitoring performance and training staff.

Performance of more advanced dispatch work including developing and auditing procedures and protocols to enhance the operation of the communications and records center; documenting policies and operational protocols and procedures; ensuring police reports and records systems are maintained according to applicable laws and regulations; compiling operational and training manuals; preparing reports on communication center and related police activities; developing and delivering dispatch and related staff and community training programs; and may serve as Emergency Medical Dispatch Manager.

Accountable for own work results and daily dispatch operations.

Performs day-to-day work independently under general supervision. Work is supervised in terms of overall accomplishments.

Work involves addressing a wide range of problems that requires judgment and some ingenuity to develop thorough and practical solutions.

In addition to Position Skill Level I knowledge and skill requirements, work assignments typically require:

Thorough knowledge of record keeping laws and regulations for police departments.

Ability to provide lead work direction and train new staff.

Ability to handle multiple priorities and manage multiple situations while under duress.

Ability to analyze and address operational and procedural problems and recommend solutions.

May be required to complete more advanced training.