

	SFASU POLICE DEPARTMENT	
	Policy 9.1 Communications Procedures	
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	Approved: John Fields, Jr. Chief of Police	
	Reference: TBP 3.18, 9.01, 9.02, 9.03, 9.04, 9.05, 9.06, 9.07, 9.08, 9.09 / IACLEA 11.1.2, 11.1.3a – j, 11.1.4a – g, 11.1.5a – g, 11.1.6a & b, 11.1.7, 11.1.8, 11.1.9, 11.2.1a & b, 11.2.2, 11.2.3, 11.2.4, 11.2.5a – c, 11.2.6, 11.2.7a & b	

I. POLICY

Accurate communication is essential to the operation of any department. The communications center, which functions 24 hours a day, is designed to provide safety and security for police personnel and to respond to the needs of the public. It is essential that every step in our communication process be conducted concisely, effectively, accurately, and properly.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for responses to calls received through the 911 system.

III. DEFINITIONS.

- A. 911 - The telephone number 911 is used for emergency telephone communications to the department.
- B. E 911 - The Enhanced 911 means that when a 911 call is received the address of the caller is displayed (**TBP 9.05**).
- C. Call-Taker - Any employee who answers a 911 or an E911 telephone call.
- D. (936) 468-9111 – Emergency phone number directly connected to the SFASU telecommunication center.
- E. Unknown 911 - A call received on the E911 system, but the caller will not or cannot communicate verbally with the call-taker. The address and telephone number of the caller will generally be available.

- F. Call-Taker Training Manual - The manual produced by the Power Phone Corporation for the purpose of uniform training of Call-Takers within the district's jurisdiction, which includes this department.
- G. ANI (Automatic number identification) - ANI indicates that the call-taker's screen shows the caller's telephone number when the E911 line is answered.
- H. ALI (Automatic location identification) - ALI refers to the display on the call-taker's screen of the caller's address when the E911 line is answered.

IV. GENERAL

- A. The Communications Center operates 24 hours a day and has 24-hour telephone access for calls for service and TDD telephone access for emergency calls for service (IACLEA 11.2.3).
- B. The Communications Center operates 24 hours a day and has 24-hour two-way radio communication with all members of the department operating in the field (TBP 9.01 & 9.06 and IACLEA 11.2.4).
- C. The Communications Center is a secure facility. No unauthorized personnel are allowed inside the facility without the express approval of a communications supervisor (TBP 9.02).
- D. All tours or other visits to the facility will be coordinated and approved in advance by the communications supervisor.
- E. Police personnel will limit their access to the Communications Center to business-related tasks and shall not take breaks, do reports, or otherwise visit personnel inside the Center.
- F. The Communications Center has an emergency back-up generator for power, and keeps portable radios for communications in the event of a power failure. In the event of an extended power failure that puts in-coming 911 calls at risk, the 911 calls should be transferred to another PSAP and police and fire-call responses initiated by portable radio systems.

- G. The back-up generator is maintained by Physical Plant and receives a documented test monthly (IACLEA 11.2.1a). The communications supervisor will ensure continuing documentation of generator testing and any failure during a test will be reported to the Chief of Police immediately (TBP 9.04).
- H. Physical Plant representatives will conduct and document a full load test of the department's generator at least once every calendar year (IACLEA 11.2.1b).
- I. The dispatch consoles have a recording system that records all telephone and radio transmissions and allows for immediate playback if necessary (TBP 9.03).
1. All recordings will be maintained for a minimum of thirty (30) days (IACLEA 11.2.5a).
 2. All recordings shall be stored off-site within the Boynton building on a secured server and within a room where access is limited to authorized personnel only (IACLEA 11.2.5b).
 3. The review of recorded conversations must be approved by a member of the command staff and retrieved by the CID sergeant, dispatch supervisor or public safety technology specialist (IACLEA 11.2.5c).
- J. All call boxes will transmit directly into the dispatch center, and will be tested and inspected monthly. Testing and inspections are documented through the CAD system and a spreadsheet is created and forwarded to the Emergency Management Director for follow-up on repairs. Also, a maintenance form is completed and forward to Instructional Technology concerning needed repairs (IACLEA 11.2.6).
- K. Panic alarms are strategically placed throughout the university and the alarm signal transmits directly to the dispatch center.
1. All panic alarms will be tested at least quarterly and documented within the department's CAD system (IACLEA 11.2.7a).
 2. At least once every two (2) years, the security situation that prompted installation of the panic alarm will be evaluated to determine if the security need remains relevant and is being met. Also, all evaluations will be managed by the Emergency Management Director and he/she will document the results (IACLEA 11.2.7b).

V. ACCESS TO RESOURCES

A. Communications personnel will have immediate access to the following resources:

1. Access to on-duty supervisor (IACLEA 11.1.5a);
2. Duty schedule for all field personnel (IACLEA 11.1.5b);
3. Permanent record of contact information for all departmental employees (IACLEA 11.1.5c);
4. Visual depictions of the agency's current service area (IACLEA 11.1.5d);
5. Officer/employee status information (IACLEA 11.1.5e);
6. Communications personnel will have access to written procedures and contact numbers for procuring emergency and necessary campus and community services (IACLEA 11.1.5f); and
7. Access to CAD SOP's that address tactical dispatching plans (IACLEA 11.1.5g).

VI. ANSWERING CALLS FOR SERVICE

A. Call-Taker Responsibilities

1. Communications personnel shall evaluate all request for police services and determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required (IACLEA 11.1.6a).
2. Communications personnel shall advise all callers of the agency's response, which may include the agency's direct response and/or referral to another agency (IACLEA 11.1.6b).
3. Communications personnel shall access the department's CAD system to provide victims and witnesses requested information and/or services upon their initial and ensuing requests (IACLEA 11.1.7).
4. It is the responsibility of call-takers to answer all 911phone calls by saying, "SFASU Police Department or UPD 9-1-1, what is your emergency?"

5. Priority 1, 2, and 3 or any other calls requiring police action will be taken on 911 lines.
6. All other callers, such as those asking for directions, jail information, etc., will be immediately instructed to call back on a non-emergency number (IACLEA 11.2.2).
7. Call-takers will not put 911 callers on hold until the call has been evaluated and there is a determination that placing the caller on hold will not further enhance the caller's emergency.
8. It is the responsibility of the call-taker to verbally confirm the phone number and location of all callers.
9. It is the responsibility of any call-taker who receives a hang-up or other "unknown circumstance" type of call on any 911 line to do the following:
 - a. Dispatch two (2) units to a "priority 2 UNK911" call to the address given by the caller.
 - b. Call the telephone number that is displayed on the screen and try to establish communication with the caller for the purpose of informing the responding unit(s) of pertinent data. If communication is not reestablished, the units will be so notified by the dispatcher prior to their arrival at the location.
 - c. Dispatch one (1) unit to "UNK911" call boxes where there is no answer on call back or indication of any type of disturbance.
 - d. Dispatch one (1) unit to "UNK911" from cellular phone to area of X-Y coordinates of caller location if audio indicated a possible disturbance or an emergency situation.
10. It is the responsibility of any call-taker to transfer all calls that should be directed to another agency and instruct the caller to stay on the line and that a transfer is being made. The call-taker will stay on the line to verify the transfer. Should the caller hang up, the call-taker will continue to contact the needed agency with the information and inform the agency that the caller disconnected before the transfer was completed (IACLEA 11.1.9).
11. It is the responsibility of the Communication Supervisor to ensure that all call-takers have been trained and are familiar with the Call-Taker Training Manual as well as departmental policies and procedures.

12. It is the responsibility of each call-taker to have a working knowledge of the Call-Taker Training Manual and adhere to the instructions contained therein.

B. When communication personnel dispatch officers and/or officers' self-initiate activity, they shall complete the CAD dispatch screen with all appropriate information specific to the call type. Call-takers/dispatchers are required to obtain the below listed information:

1. incident, traffic, activity, or call for service number (IACLEA 11.1.3a);
2. date and time of the entry is automatic (IACLEA 11.1.3b);
3. name and address of complainant [if applicable] (IACLEA 11.1.3c);
4. type of incident reported (IACLEA 11.1.3d);
5. description of individuals, weapons and/or vehicles involved;
6. location, date and time of incident report (IACLEA 11.1.3e);
7. identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and backup units / time of dispatch is time stamped when dispatched (IACLEA 11.1.3f);
8. time of dispatch (IACLEA 11.1.3g);
9. time of officer arrival (IACLEA 11.1.3h);
10. time of officer return to service (IACLEA 11.1.3i); and
11. disposition or status of reported incident (IACLEA 11.1.3j).

VII. COMPLIANCE WITH FCC RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. Employees will comply with FCC regulations relating to the use of radio communications systems.

B. Employees will follow established guidelines and procedures as outlined below:

1. Communications involving the protection of life and property shall be afforded priority.
2. False calls, false or fraudulent distress signals, unnecessary and unidentified communications, and the transmission of unassigned call signals are specifically prohibited.
3. Employees shall monitor the radio frequency on which they intend to transmit for a sufficient period to ensure that their transmissions will not cause interference to others.

4. The duration of radio transmissions must be restricted to the minimum practical transmission time (IACLEA 11.1.2).

VIII. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Only English will be spoken. Clear, concise, and controlled language will be used. Obscene, indecent, profane, or slang language, horseplay, and joking are not permitted.
- B. Units calling the communication center shall identify themselves by their assigned unit number. They should not continue the transmission until acknowledged by the dispatcher.
- C. Officers will give their unit number when responding to the dispatcher (IACLEA 11.1.4c).
- D. Officers will not call for another employee by name unless their radio or unit number is unknown.
- E. In most circumstances, all field personnel performing law enforcement functions shall notify Communications of their location, nature of the call, status of the officers involved and whether or not the incident is in progress (IACLEA 11.1.4a).
- F. Officers will advise the dispatcher of their arrival on the scene using proper radio etiquette or by MDT/MDC.
- G. Officers at a scene will notify the dispatcher if they determine that no other units are needed.
- H. If an incident is found to have occurred somewhere other than at the dispatched location, the officer will update their location by radio or via message to dispatcher.
- I. Upon completion of a call, officers will clear the call in the proper manner via radio or MDT/MDC and immediately go back into service.
- J. Communications personnel are required to document in the department's CAD system the status of officers when they are out of service (IACLEA 11.1.4b).

- K. Lengthy transmissions should not be made on the radio system's primary channels. Long transmissions should be done over a secondary channel when available, as a CAD message, or via a cell phone if available. Transmissions should always be held to a minimum.
- L. Employees will not become engaged in an argument on the radio. Conflict between an officer and a dispatcher should be referred to the employees' immediate supervisors for resolution.
- M. Officers shall refrain from seeking advice from a dispatcher regarding a point of law, enforcement action, or department policy. Officers should consult their immediate supervisor on these matters or obtain the information from their laptop computers.
- N. Communication with interacting agencies will be by telephone and/or radio if the outside agency has access to the department's radio frequencies. Communication with Air Ambulances Air One will be by radio or cell phone as required (IACLEA 11.1.4d).

IX. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- A. Transmissions regarding emergencies (e.g., pursuits, serious crimes in progress, etc.) will be given priority over all other transmissions. Units not involved in the emergency shall stay off the air until the situation has been resolved.
- B. When an "officer needs assistance" call is received, Communications will make a general broadcast to all units and request that available personnel respond. In addition, Communications personnel should seek assistance from area law enforcement agencies (IACLEA 11.1.4g).
- C. At the time a transmission regarding emergencies (e.g., pursuits, serious crimes in progress, felony stops, etc.) occur, Communications will make a general broadcast for "all units to hold non-emergency traffic" which will close the channel ensuring officer safety and direct communication during the emergencies.
- D. Communications shall inform law enforcement personnel of all request to deliver emergency messages. All emergency messages will be delivered in an appropriate manner, time and place based on the known information and circumstances of the

request. Emergency messages may be accepted and delivered under the following circumstances:

1. Death notifications from an outside law enforcement agency requesting assistance from UPD;
2. Medical emergency notifications from immediate family members to members of the SFASU community; and
3. Situations involving the welfare of an individual (IACLEA 11.1.8).

X. MONITORING RADIO CHANNELS

- A. Field units will continuously monitor their primary channel.
- B. Investigative, support, and special unit personnel will monitor the patrol channel when they are in the field.
- C. Supervisors may monitor additional frequencies; however, they will remain available on their primary channel.

XI. RESPONSIBILITY OF SUPERVISORS

- A. Supervisors will carefully monitor and supervise the use of the radio to assist their officers as needed.
- B. Supervisors are responsible for the radio conduct of their subordinates and should immediately correct improper radio procedures.
- C. Supervisors may be assigned calls when other units are not available.
- D. Supervisors will respond to any call from subordinates and proceed to a scene when requested.
- E. Supervisor shall immediately respond to all major incidents and provide the necessary instruction and oversight (IACLEA 11.1.4f).

XII. MDT/MDC COMPUTER USAGE

- A. The Mobil Data Terminal/Computer (MDT/MDC) is a part of the radio system using frequencies licensed by the FCC. Rules concerning proper radio procedures also apply to use of the MDT. Rules for MDT messages include the following:
 - 1. They will not be personal in nature.
 - 2. They will not contain derogatory references to other persons or agencies.
 - 3. They will not contain any text that a reasonable person would find offensive.
- B. Because messages sent with the CAD/MDT system slow the system response time, only concise, work-related messages may be transmitted. Personnel are urged to use abbreviations to help keep the messages brief.
- C. There is NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY concerning sending or receiving messages via the CAD/MDT system.
- D. Except in emergency situations or in single-key response to dispatched calls or enquiries, the driver of the vehicle will not utilize the MDT/MDC keyboard while the vehicle is in motion. Drivers will stop at a safe location before utilizing the keyboard.

XIII. CALL HISTORY

- A. A report containing the following information will be created and maintained regarding each request for police services (call for service) and for officer-initiated activity:
 - 1. case or service number;
 - 2. date and time of request;
 - 3. name and address of complainant, if possible;
 - 4. type of incident reported;
 - 5. location of incident reported;
 - 6. identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and backup;
 - 7. all pertinent information in regard to the call and to officer safety;
 - 8. time of dispatch;
 - 9. time of officer arrival;
 - 10. time of officer return to service; and
 - 11. disposition or status of reported incident.

XIV. RADIO UNIT DESIGNATIONS

A. Field Units

1. Patrol and CID units shall be identified by a three-digit number.

- ##### **B. Investigative and support unit (investigations, detectives, etc.) designations are assigned to each other.**

XV. ASSIGNMENTS OF CALLS FOR SERVICE

A. Call Priority

1. The Communications center maintains a listing of the types of calls by priority. Priority 1 calls are those that require an immediate response to prevent injury or loss of life. Some Priority 1 calls are dispatched as emergency calls with a Code 3 response. Other calls are classified as Priority 2, 3, and 4 depending on the nature of the call and which ones should be handled first.
2. The Chief of Police shall establish the call-priority list.

B. Assignment of Priority Calls

1. Units Available/Units Not Available
 - a. Calls for service shall be assigned to the in-service officer responsible for the area in which the call is located. When area officers are not available, the nearest area officer will be selected. Officer safety and call priority will be the primary considerations when selecting alternate area officers.
 - b. Supervisors will monitor dispatching of Priority 1 calls and ensure that officers are immediately available or will quickly become available to respond.
2. Backup Units
 - a. Backups are assigned to ensure officer safety, to help secure crime scenes, and to check the area for suspects. Most calls categorized as Priority 1 will require a backup. The decision to send a backup on a

Priority 2 call is decided on a call-by-call basis. However, supervisors or on-scene officers may authorize the response of additional units if they feel backup is needed (IACLEA 11.1.4e).

3. General broadcasts can be used for DWI's, auto theft information, warrant information, missing persons, serious weather, and to alert officers of a pending call.
- C. In responding to victim/witness calls for information or service, Communications personnel will determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required and inform the victim/witness of the department's response.
- D. Communications radio and telephone conversations recordings will be maintained for 90 days. They are digitally recorded and secured. Reviewing recorded conversations will be conducted:
1. for quality assurance for EMD protocol,
 2. medical calls shall be randomly reviewed,
 3. upon requests by internal and external sources or personnel, such as the office of the District Attorney, department investigators, Internal Affairs, etc., and
 4. to randomly monitor staff for training purposes.
- E. Death messages, messages from other criminal justice agencies, and "check welfare" calls will each be entered as a call for service that requires officer response.

XVI. COMMUNICATION OFFICER TRAINING

A. TCIC and NCIC Operations

1. The Communications Center has access to TCIC and NCIC systems (TBP 9.07).
2. All call-takers will be trained in TCIC/NCIC Full Access and will comply with all rules and regulations regarding operation of the systems.

B. Communications officers are required to take the TCOLE Basic Telecommunications Officer Course, and they shall also receive initial or refresher training in the following (TBP 9.09):

1. Operations of the computer aided dispatch system;
2. University and departmental policies;
3. Communicating with persons who have mental health challenges;
4. Crisis communications;
5. The SFASU Use of Force Policy; and
6. De-escalation strategies (TBP 3.18).

XVII. WARRANT MAINTENANCE

A. The department maintains the original of all criminal warrants originating from our department.

B. The department will comply with all TCIC/NCIC requirements for warrant maintenance, entry, removal, and auditing.

C. All warrants are maintained in a warrant book (located within the communication's center) marked "Warrants" in alphabetical order of the wanted person, last name first.

D. New Warrant Entry

1. New warrants shall be directed to the communications supervisor, who shall inspect the warrant for validity on its face and enter the warrant into the appropriate computer system. A warrant entry form will be completed and attached to the front of the warrant. In addition, all entries shall be verified by a second telecommunication's officer. Only members of the Communications Division are allowed access to the warrant file inside the telecommunication center.

E. Confirmation of Warrants

1. When an officer of this agency or any other agency requests a warrant confirmation, the Communications Officer will attempt to locate the original warrant in the warrant file.

2. If the original warrant is located, the Communications Officer shall confirm the presence of the warrant and provide any identifying information, such as description, driver's license number, or other identifying numbers that will help to ensure that the proper person has been stopped.
3. If the officer states that it is the correct person and that an arrest has been made, the Communications Officer will provide the warrant number, date of warrant, charge, amount of bond, and their name.
4. If the officer is from this agency, the officer will pick up a copy of the original warrant before delivering the prisoner to the jail. If the officer is from another jurisdiction, the Communications Officer will respond through TCIC/NCIC and teletype the warrant information to the appropriate location and place the corresponding warrant paperwork on the communications supervisor's desk for pick up by detectives.
5. Communications Officers will not confirm a warrant without physically locating the original of the warrant.

F. Removal of Warrants

1. After a warrant has been confirmed and an officer has arrested the individual, the Communications Officer will make a copy of the warrant before it is picked up by the officer and will complete the warrant entry form (apprehended or clear section). The Communications Officer will remove the warrant from the TCIC/NCIC computer file and clear the record from the RMS/CAD system. Then, the Communications Officer will complete the cleared/apprehended portion of the warrant entry form and will document the time and date of the removal, put his/her initials on the front of the copy, and place the copy on the communications supervisor's desk.
2. The communications supervisor will run a computer check to ensure the warrant has been removed from the respective files.
3. Original warrants that have been served by other jurisdictions shall be sent back to the originating officer for delivery to the appropriate court.

G. File Audits

1. To ensure the integrity of the warrant file, the communications supervisor will conduct audits as required by TCIC/NCIC.
2. The communications supervisor will also conduct an audit every year of all warrants in the file to ensure they are still valid.
3. Class C warrants that have not been served within five years will be returned to the court for disposition (**TBP 9.08**).