

Appendix C – Model Job Description

The following model is intended only as an illustration of the various types of work performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Emergency communication centers (ECCs) are encouraged to “cut and paste” language from this document while working closely with their hiring authority.

JOB TITLE: Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST)

SUMMARY

This critical role serves as the vital communications link between the public needing help and emergency services response. As members of the public safety ecosystem, PSTs are typically the first point of contact when a person reaches out for help. This entails a candidate to be able to work independently in a high-stress environment while receiving and evaluating incoming emergency and administrative requests for emergency services, including but not limited to law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS); triaging those requests for service; providing guidance and assistance to the public in life-safety situations; and coordinating appropriate responses to high-risk, high-stress operations, with the objective of keeping all participants safe.

ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES AND TASKS¹⁵

The primary responsibility of the PST is to protect citizens and emergency responders during the emergency incident. These include:

- Using training and policies to screen requests for emergency services; answering them professionally, recognizing if a call is received from telephone, text, video, or an automated data feed.
- Using appropriate technology to communicate with callers.
- Interpreting sensor data to triage, prioritize, properly categorize, and initiate the correct emergency response.
- Using knowledge of law enforcement, fire, and EMS protocols to prioritize and sequence calls promptly in limited time with limited or no supervision.
- Demonstrating clear and effective communications with active listening, call control, judgment, respect, and empathy with callers that range from calm to panicked.

¹⁵ The job duties and tasks are an all-inclusive list based on current capabilities of ECCs.

- Providing pre-arrival and post-dispatch instructions to those that are requiring assistance during high-stress situations, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), childbirth, hemorrhaging, active shooter, and entrapments.
- Managing challenging callers using appropriate handling of distressed, autistic, hearing-impaired, elderly, angry, and foreign-language-speaking callers.
- Providing direct counseling to suicidal persons, domestic violence victims, and children.
- 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, images or video, and providing information to emergency services either verbally and/or digitally.
- Ability to prioritize multiple events based on available resources—critical thinking.
- Using TDD and relay services to comply with standards for handling calls from hearing-impaired callers.
- 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.
- Using text-to-911 to communicate effectively with callers.
- Interpreting caller location by using geographic knowledge, tools, and location tracking capabilities when available.
- Interpreting automatic number and automatic location data provided by the emergency communications phone system and verifying data using mapping software for accuracy and reliability.
- Maintaining communications during life-threatening emergencies, providing safety/lifesaving instructions, and maintaining control of the conversation until field units arrive on scene.
- Using available vehicular, bystander, and/or law enforcement information for the purpose of protecting the public at the scene as well as on-scene responders by identifying the need for advanced life support resources or specialized fire extraction equipment.
- Utilizing training and reference resources when determining the nature and priority of emergency incidents that have live-streaming videos, graphic images, and text.
- Using training and operational protocols to take appropriate action such as: relaying critical information, dispatching/initiating emergency response services, or referring callers to other agencies.
- Documenting incident details quickly and accurately to establish incident urgency, categorizing the incident type, and obtaining the proper help for the caller.
- Demonstrating clear and effective communications and active listening with public safety responders using appropriate terminology, codes, and signals.
- Relaying initial information for dispatch accurately, reviewing the call for service details, and assuming incident command until first responders arrive.
- Conducting health and safety status checks of responders and using other available technology to ensure on-scene responders' safety.
- Documenting thoroughly and accurately all incident activities while maintaining awareness of scene activities.
- Operating emergency, administrative, and backup telephone communications systems effectively.
- Facilitating the transferring of calls to the appropriate resources and performing conference calls with entities, such as but not limited to poison control centers or helicopter dispatch.

- Interpreting and understanding local and regional geography to quickly and accurately identify the location of the emergency to improve response times of field responders.
- Operating a sophisticated workstation comprised of multiple computer systems, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) software and geographical information systems (GIS), state and federal clearinghouses, call handling including teletypewriter (TTY) and text-to-911 sessions, as well as communications systems such as radio dispatch consoles and recording systems.
- Operating multiple systems and conversations simultaneously without mistake.
- 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.
- Using mass notification software, including social media platforms, to keep the public informed of emergency incidents.
- Activating mass community warning and notification software programs to inform the public of impending critical information related to such things as severe weather impacts, potential injury or life-safety events.
- Managing chain of custody for records and documentation used in court proceedings and legal discovery.
- Maintaining a calm demeanor under chaotic and stressful circumstances, multiple conversations, and frequently noisy environments.
- Completing training, certifications, and competencies as needed by actively seeking training, completing the training and certifications required for assigned PST positions, and completing continuing education and career development as necessary.
- Following established agency policies and procedures, being aware of liability to the agency, and adhering to federal disclosure and privacy laws.
- Using debriefing tools, stress management techniques, and critical incident response models to deal with mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A high school diploma or GED
- Dependable, self-motivated and team-oriented, with a desire to provide a service to the community
- Working knowledge of Windows-based software and various other computerized electronic, telecommunications equipment
- Flexibility to adapt to changes
- Have great attention to detail and empathy towards the customers' needs and concerns
- Must be able to adapt and function, without reservation, in high-stress situations
- Must pass a background investigation that meets all local, state, and federal requirements as well as to be without felony convictions.
- Must be able to perform essential job functions (reasonable accommodation may be made on a case-by-case basis)
- Must have never committed, been involved in, or been convicted of a felony or serious misdemeanor
- Must be able to work on a rotating schedule, including nights, weekends, and holidays to ensure 24/7 coverage

- Subject to call back and hold over to maintain minimum staffing 24/7
- This position is designated as essential and must report to work during times when the government/agency is closed
- Must be able to obtain and maintain the following licenses and certifications within a given time frame:
 - Basic Telecommunicator Course that includes:
 - Telecommunicator roles and responsibilities
 - 911 call processing
 - Radio communications
 - Emergency management
 - Emergency communications technology
 - Legal concepts
 - Interpersonal communications
 - Stress management
 - Quality assurance
 - Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Training
 - Certification in CPR

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- By the end of the probationary period, thorough knowledge of the policies, procedures, processes, laws, ordinances, and regulations affecting public safety call-taking and the ability to apply them appropriately.
- Able to use logic, critical thinking, and reasoning to reach conclusions and solve problems.
- Adhere to policy and procedure requirements that are stringent, rigorous, and unwavering, including confidentiality of information and trustworthiness while dealing with sensitive information.
- Communicate clearly, concisely, and effectively; relay details accurately; listen actively; think and act quickly.
- Compile and analyze operational data and prepare and maintain accurate records.
- Effectively interact with people of different social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds.
- Establish and maintain cooperative and professional working relationships with co-workers, supervisors, representatives from other departments, and other emergency services agencies.
- Follow instructions, spell correctly, and write clearly.
- Handle multiple tasks simultaneously, under pressure, and in emergency and stressful situations.
- Learn quickly and retain public safety and technology training material.
- Maintain regular, reliable, and punctual attendance.
- Obtain information from hostile, confusing, and emotional callers.
- Provide effective customer service and deal tactfully and courteously with a demanding public.
- Able to handle complaints and difficult situations, remaining calm under pressure.
- Remember names, numbers, and locations accurately.
- Read and interpret geographical spatial data and maps quickly and accurately.
- Resilient and resourceful while coordinating high-risk, high-stress operations, with the objective of keeping all participants safe.

- Operate computer systems with specialized software and enter data via keyboard and software with speed and accuracy.
- Organize and prioritize work to meet deadlines and accomplish tasks.
- Use judgment and decision-making skills to rapidly evaluate situations, establish priorities, resolve matters, and pass on information, as needed.
- Relentless problem solver.
- Friendly and tactful personality.
- Patient and resilient.
- Stress tolerance and adaptability.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work is performed in an emergency communications center. The work level can fluctuate from minimal to fast-paced and high volume. The employee deals with crisis situations that require them to quickly make major decisions involving people, resources, and property with frequently limited direction.

The PST may be asked to work scheduled shifts at any time of the day and on weekends and holidays. Must be able to cope in a safe manner with stressful situations, emotional callers, irate responders and unprofessional contacts. Under unusual circumstances, the PST may be required to perform duties at or near the scene of any emergency.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This work is sedentary and requires little to no exertion of force. Work regularly requires speaking or hearing and frequently sitting, using hands to finger, handle, or feel, reaching with hands and arms and repetitive motions. Work requires close vision, distance vision, ability to adjust focus, depth perception, and peripheral vision. Vocal communication is required for expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word and conveying detailed or important instructions to others accurately, loudly or quickly. Hearing is required to perceive information at normal spoken word levels and to receive detailed information through oral communications, and/or make fine distinctions in sound. Work requires preparing and analyzing written or computer data. Work requires exposure to loud noises, extreme emotions, and stressful environments. Work is generally indoors and in a moderately noisy location surrounded by others talking on the phone or radio.

COMPENSATION

The non-negotiable starting salary for this position is \$20.24 per hour.

Benefits include health insurance, dental insurance, a vision plan, annual leave, sick leave, paid holidays, a contributory retirement plan, group term life insurance, flexible spending accounts (health savings/flexible spending account [HSA/FSA]), and long-term disability insurance.