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 duties as required.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

One year of full-time experience as a Communications Specialist Trainee with Washoe County; OR one year of full-time comparable experience in all areas of Police/Fire/EMS communications.

LICENSE OR CERTIFICATE

Possession of, or ability to obtain within six months of employment, current certification on the NCIC/CJIS criminal history information systems.

Emergency Medical Dispatch (MPDS) and CPR certification required within six months of employment.

Type at a rate of 40 net words per minute with 95% accuracy.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the full journey level in the Communications Specialist class series. Position is distinguished by the performance of the full range of duties as assigned, receiving only occasional instruction or assistance.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

N/A

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 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 radio dispatch, with all units on assignment and fire department resources; conduct welfare checks on deputies to maintain status and location of all mobile field units and to monitor deputy safety; provide information and assistance to units at on-scene locations when requested.

Transfer calls for service i.e. medical emergencies, burglary calls, fights, Search and Rescue, structure/wild land fires and other life threatening emergencies to appropriate field units with the use of the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and radio systems.
Follow Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) national standards and protocols in determining a caller’s level of distress to giving correct medical pre-arrival instructions, while dispatching the correct Advanced Life Support units to the caller’s location while maintaining the national standard of accuracy.

Interact and maintain knowledge in state and locals laws pertaining to: Native American Reservation laws and procedures; domestic animal county regulations; state laws governing wild animals; animal health issues; disease control and monitoring animal noise ordinances.

Read and interpret fire weather condition to disseminate the information to fire resources to assist in advanced fire planning, and dispatch fire resources to incidents based on set national standards.

Research 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.

Place calls for additional units from other agencies for various mutual aid agreements including specialized fire resources, wreckers, coroners, and registered owners of vehicles involved in accidents based upon incident type, location, and need.

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.

Enter, translate, retrieve, update, and disseminate information from interstate and intrastate teletype networks; locate warrants served on NCIC; clear local warrants from CJIS; update new information on computer systems including missing persons, stolen articles, guns and other pertinent information; broadcast all-points bulletins.

Assist in providing orientation and training to new dispatchers.

Attend and participate in meetings, training and information sessions; 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:**
Departmental policies and procedures.

Terms and acronyms commonly used in assigned position.

Pertinent laws, rules, and regulations that apply to the different law enforcement units.

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

Operating characteristics of a variety of communications equipment and tools used in the area of emergency dispatch including TDD, radio scanner, intercom system, multi-channel radio system, dictaphone recorder, and 911 system.

EMD and Fire Departmental standards, policies and procedures mandated by North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD).
Streets, businesses, hiking and ski areas, boundaries, districts, geography and zones that represent geographical areas of responsibility.

Resources and agencies available for referral.

**Skill to:**
Operate emergency dispatch equipment including TDD, radio scanner, intercom system, multi-channel radio system, dictaphone recorder, teletype and 911 system.

**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.

**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.

Numerical, alphabetical, and subject matter filing systems.

Principles and techniques used in dealing with the public.

Fire Incident Command System.

Terms and acronyms commonly used in animal, law enforcement and fire service.

Multi-jurisdiction mutual aid agreements.

Hazardous materials incident according to DOT guidelines.

**Skill to:**
Operate computer equipment and FAX machines.

Type at a rate of 40 net words per minute with 95% accuracy.

**Ability to:**
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.

Speak clearly and distinctly in a well-modulated voice.

Maintain confidentiality of data and information.
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 effectively, both orally and in writing.

Establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

*Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment:*

Must be willing to work shift work. Must be willing to work weekends and holidays. 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 be able to work in a restricted area with little opportunity to move around. Must pass an audio/hearing test. Ability to work in a standard office environment with the ability 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.*