

3.3.1 Twenty-four hour – Two-way Communication

I. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Johnstown Police Department to follow the guidelines of this general order.

II. PURPOSE

Communications is an essential element of the police function. It is critical to the safety of the officers in the field. The purpose of this general order is to provide employees with guidelines on the administration of the police communication center. This general order specifically addresses the 24-hour, two-way capability.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Agreements, Shared Communication Facility

1. The dispatching of all police units is strictly the responsibility of the Cambria County 9-1-1 Center.
2. The Johnstown Police Department maintains 24-hour, two-way radio capability to provide continuous communication between the Communications Center and on-duty officers. Each on-duty officer has access to a mobile and portable radio. When an officer is away from his/her vehicle, he/she will have the portable radio in an operational mode to maintain communications capability with the Communications Center.
3. The Cambria County 9-1-1 Center provides the necessary repeater, control equipment and sufficient talk groups to allow routine communications.
4. The Johnstown Police Department operates on a PL Ultra High Frequency of 118.8 with 453.650 MHZ. The Cambria County 9-1-1 Center maintains the Federal Communications Commission [FCC] license granting authority to the Johnstown Police Department to operate its system.
5. The Johnstown Police Department radio operations shall be conducted in accordance with FCC procedures and requirements.

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B. Responsibilities of Police Officers

1. Officers will identify themselves with their assigned number prior to transmitting their message to the Communication Center. The identification will be in the form of “Cambria” then the unit number.
2. An officer called by radio shall answer without delay. If a unit fails to respond to the radio after being called and then called again with no response the shift supervisor will be notified of the situation and the last known location of the officer. It is then the shift supervisor’s responsibility to utilize all methods available to contact the officer before initiating a search for that officer.
3. When the officer’s assignment is completed he/she will notify the Communications Center of availability and status.
4. Officers will notify the Communications Center each time a status change is made when practicable. Status changes include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Vehicle stops/pedestrian stops
 - b. Out of vehicle
 - c. Need for assistance/back-up
 - d. Out at the police station
 - e. Prisoner or other person in the car
 - f. Situation under control
 - g. District Court
 - h. En route out of town
5. Officers are responsible for requesting CLEAN/NCIC information, Penn Dot queries and warrant checks if they so desire.
6. In the case of radio malfunction the officer shall immediately notify the Communications Center and his/her shift supervisor and adjustments will be made.

C. Responsibilities of Shift Supervisors

1. After roll call the shift supervisor will contact the Communication Center to report what officers are on duty, their call number and zone.
2. Shift Supervisors have final responsibility and authority in direction of field operations to include the number of units and identity of units dispatched to calls.
3. Supervisors shall not impair law enforcement services by permitting officers to check out of service when their services are needed to

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maintain a reasonable complement of available manpower. This includes checking out for meals, servicing department vehicles and other non-emergency functions.

4. Supervisors are responsible for approving all the complaint and incident reports generated by the officers in their unit during their shift.
5. It shall be the Shift Supervisor's discretion to request the Communications Center or Records Department personnel to call out members of the Detective Bureau.
6. Tactical dispatching plans in the event of a S.E.R.T. callout is handled by the Shift Supervisor by contacting the Chief of Police or Captain of Police.

D. Conflict between Communications Center and Patrol Units

1. Disagreements, which arise between the Cambria County 9-1-1 Center and patrol units concerning the manner of dispatching or responding to calls, shall not be discussed over the radio. Any supervisor shall have the authority to override Communications Center personnel concerning the units[s] dispatched and manner of response.
2. If a patrol unit questions the manner in which a call was dispatched they shall respond to the call and at first opportunity, discuss the matter with their supervisor. The supervisor shall resolve any problems between dispatchers and officers under their assignment.
 - a. If the problem is not solved to the officer's satisfaction he/she have the option to file a 9-1-1 Complaint Form that will be forwarded to the Captain of Police.

E. Cambria County 9-1-1 Center

Communications Center personnel are provided with immediate access to the following departmental resources within the Communications Center:

1. Dispatchers shall have immediate access to the on-duty Shift Supervisor. It is the responsibility of the on-duty Shift Supervisor to remain in contact with the Communications Center via radio or cell phone at all times.

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2. The Communications Center is notified of the officers on duty, the patrol zones assigned, the vehicle each officer is driving and their call numbers.
3. The Communications Center has posted a large map of the jurisdiction of the Johnstown Police Department as well as computerized location information available to the dispatchers.
4. Dispatchers shall have access to every officer's contact telephone numbers. Residential phone numbers shall be kept strictly confidential and shall not be released to anyone outside the department without prior authorization from the individual officer.
5. The Communications Center maintains up-to-date emergency telephone numbers.

Effective Date:

Date: March 16, 2007

By Order Of:

Craig Foust
Chief Of Police