POSITION DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Public Safety Communication Officer
Reports to: Public Communications Shift Supervisor

Department: Police
Pay Grade: 10

Division: Communications
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

Job Family: Police Protection-Administrative Support

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

Receives, evaluates, and processes all 9-1-1 calls for police, fire, and medical assistance; or, operates base radio equipment to dispatch Public Safety personnel (police, fire, EMS) on related incidents. Depending on assignment, incumbents may operate a multibutton telephone system, base radios, computer terminals, and teletype equipment to enter, receive, evaluate, and transmit information that frequently involves emergency situations affecting human welfare and safety. Work involves evaluating incoming calls, dispatching Police/Fire units, and transmitting information and messages upon request and/or according to established procedures. Employees are expected to demonstrate extensive communications skills and to exercise judgment under pressure. Work is performed under the general direction of a Police Communications Shift Supervisor.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES include, but are not limited, to the following:

9-1-1/Public Safety

- Answers and evaluates incoming calls for service to determine the urgency of the call and whether a police officer, fire or medical personnel should be dispatched to the scene;
- Notifies Public Safety personnel of medical emergencies such as attempted suicides, fire, drowning, serious injury accidents, etc.
- Appeases and extracts information from citizens under stress;
- Logs information in the CAD system received and/or transmitted;
- Uses appropriate computer terminals or teletype machine to input, update, and query information;
- Verifies wants and warrants and interprets data returned to the terminal;
- Observes all safety regulations and reports potential safety hazards;
- Demonstrates continuous effort to improve operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work processes and work cooperatively and jointly to provide quality seamless customer service.

Radio Dispatch

- Receives information requesting Police investigation from the 9-1-1 Section and dispatches to responsible field unit;
- Operates base radio and maintains constant radio contact with mobile units on assigned frequency;
- Maintains constant awareness of the status of mobile units and updates this information as it changes;
- Use computer terminals or teletype machine to input, update, and query information;
- Receives radio calls from field units and transmits messages via radio or telephone;
- Monitors and dispatches alarms received at the alarm board;
- Observes all safety regulations and reports potential safety hazards;
- Demonstrates continuous effort to improve operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work processes and work cooperatively and jointly to provide quality seamless customer service.
SUPERVISION RECEIVED & EXERCISED

- General direction is received from a Police Communications Shift Supervisor.
- This position has no supervisory responsibilities.

QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

Knowledge of:
- Federal Communication Commission regulations as they relate to the operation of two-way radio equipment.
- Geographical layout of the City of Harlingen
- Typewriter keyboard and CAD system command codes.

Skill in:
- Operating communications equipment (multibutton telephone, base radio, computer terminals, teletype equipment) quickly and accurately.

Ability to:
- Speak with a clear, well-modulated voice in English by phone and radio dispatching equipment while tactfully communicating with highly emotional callers.
- Operate computer-aided dispatch equipment.
- Comprehend and make inferences from material written in English language and learns job-related material primarily through oral instruction, observation, and structured lecture.
- Enter data or information into a terminal, PC, or other keyboard device.
- Work cooperatively with citizens, co-workers, sworn personnel, and other City and agency employees.
- Learn geographic areas including operating districts and their associated Police problems.
- Remain calm and exercise judgment in making decisions in emergency situations under heavy workloads.
- Determine priorities of emergencies.
- Utilize second language skill in the routine performance of duties.
- Work on weekends, holidays and shift work.
- Work safely without presenting a direct threat to self or others.

Additional requirements:
- Some positions with require the performance of other essential and marginal functions depending upon work assignment or shift.
- Must be able to successfully complete the Police Communications Operator Training Course.

Education & Experience:
- A minimum one-year experience in police or fire communications using a Computer Aided Dispatching System (CAD) or other computer applications preferred.
- High School Diploma or General Equivalency Degree (GED); or six months related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience.

Licenses, Certificates & Registrations:
- Must be able to obtain TCOLE license within the first year of employment.
- Must be a US Citizen

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS
The employee is regularly required to sit, use hands and fingers, talk and hear. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 20 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision and ability to adjust focus.

WORKING CONDITIONS
The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.