



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Handling calls for service*

Number: 506-A

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Rescinds: C-104 Calls for Service
506 – Handling Calls for Service

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Approved By:

I. PURPOSE

To provide personnel working in the Communications Unit with guidelines for handling calls for service.

II. PROCEDURE

A. RESOURCES

1. Communications personnel have immediate access to at least the following departmental resources:
 - a. Officer in charge;
 - b. Duty roster of all personnel;
 - c. Residential/Cellular telephone number of each agency member;
 - d. Visual maps detailing the agency's service area;
 - e. Officer status indicators;
 - f. Written procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services to the agency; and
 - g. Tactical communication plan.

B. RESPONSES

Communications Officers will dispatch the appropriate agency to requests for service and will not attempt to convince the caller that the request for service is unnecessary. All requests for service shall be documented by a CAD incident and all requests for service will receive a response. Communications Center personnel shall:

1. Receive and record all incoming information on calls for assistance. Personnel shall record the following:
 - a. Control number;
 - b. Date and time of request;
 - c. Name and address of complainant, if possible;

- d. Type of incident reported;
 - e. Location of incident reported;
 - f. Identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and backup;
 - g. Time of dispatch;
 - h. Time of officer arrival;
 - i. Time of officer return to service; and
 - j. Disposition or status of reported incident.
2. Dispatch appropriate field personnel.
 3. Officers and communications personnel will utilize CAD to record the status of officers when out of service
 4. Perform relevant record and motor vehicle checks, if appropriate
 5. Control all radio communications during an emergency.
 6. Coordinate assistance under the direction of the Patrol Supervisor.
 7. Continue to monitor each situation until stabilization or termination.

C. ASSIGNING PROPER PRIORITY

The CAD system automatically assigns a priority to a call when a nature code is chosen. Call priorities are: P=priority 5=medium 9=low. The call taker shall upgrade or downgrade the CAD recommended priority as necessary and according to the information received. The call taker must be mindful of the circumstances of the caller as well as the incident being reported. No Communications Officer will change the priority or nature of a call that another Communications Officer has taken without receiving additional information and/or without discussing it with the person who took the call.

D. ASSIGNING FIRE CALLS

The Communications Officer will assign pending calls for service to the CAD Unit Recommended unit(s). If the assigned unit(s) does not radio or place themselves en route via MCT within one minute, the dispatcher will attempt to contact the unit on the radio to confirm they are responding to the call. If an attempt to contact the responder is unsuccessful, the dispatcher will re-tone the call assigning it to the next due station/ apparatus. Refer to the MBFD SOG's for response plans and numerical radio language, in compliance with ISO regulations.

E. ASSIGNING POLICE CALLS

The Communications Officer will assign pending calls to officer(s) in the assigned beat via radio or MCT, as appropriate. If the unit status does not show en route within one minute, the Communications Officer will attempt to contact the officer again, this time via radio only. If again there is no response, the Communications Officer will assign the call to the next appropriate unit and notify the Patrol

supervisor. Assign officers to calls in a consistent manner, using CAD Unit Recommend as a tool to determine the number of officers to respond, unless special circumstances exist or other instructions have been given by a supervisor.

Patrol supervisors will monitor the radio traffic and respond to calls as necessary. Officers may request a supervisor if conditions warrant.

F. POLICE CALLS FOR SERVICE – PRIORITIES

Calls for service are prioritized according to their seriousness.

P = Priority (Emergency/Urgent)

Priority indicates an emergency call wherein life is jeopardized or serious personal injury is present or likely to occur, where a property crime is in progress or where a Burglary/ Alarm is activated. Response time is critical. Things to consider: Citizen and officer safety.

Priority calls for service shall be dispatched immediately according to the beat assignment and response plan. If there are no available officers from any reasonable section, a supervisor will be dispatched immediately.

Examples of Priority calls include but are not limited to:

- 1) Officer in distress.
- 2) Crimes in progress when personal injury is likely.
- 3) Calls involving in-progress assaults and/or weapons.
- 4) Missing juveniles of tender age, circumstances.
- 5) Missing adults-endangered.

5 = Prompt

Priority 5 indicates a call that should be answered promptly, but not as promptly as Priority. Response time is less critical than Priority calls. Things to consider: Evidential value, potential for escalation, and citizen satisfaction.

Priority 5 calls for service shall be dispatched promptly according to the beat assignment and response plan. If the officer in the primary or secondary beat assignment is not available, the call will be dispatched to an officer in the beat closest to the location of the call for service. If no officer is available, the Communications Officer will notify a supervisor. If the call is held for any reason, detailed notes must be added to the call for service to include the name of supervisor notified and the supervisor's instructions.

Examples of Priority 5 calls include but are not limited to:

- 1) Suspicious person/vehicle
- 2) Accident with no injury
- 3) Breach of peace
- 4) Deceased person
- 5) Traffic offenses

9 = Routine

Priority 9 indicates a call of a routine nature. Response time is not critical. However, evidential value is a consideration.

Priority 9 calls for service are dispatched according to the beat assignment and response plan. If the officer in the primary or secondary beat assignment is not available, the call will be dispatched to an officer in the beat closest to the location of the call for service. If no officer is available, the Communications Officer will notify a supervisor after attempting to dispatch for 10 minutes. If the call is held for any reason, to include a supervisor's instruction, detailed notes must be added to the call for service.

Priority and level 5 calls have priority over level 9 calls. If an officer is en route to a level 9 call and a higher priority call is received, the officer will be re-assigned to the higher priority call, and the level 9 call will be placed back in pending.

Examples of Priority 9 calls include but are not limited to:

- 1) Disabled vehicles
- 2) Loud music
- 3) Welfare checks
- 4) Found property
- 5) Illegal parking
- 6) Littering

G. HOLDING CALLS FOR SERVICE

The Dispatcher must be aware at all times of the nature and the notes of calls waiting and should assign them upon availability of units or according to the instructions of a supervisor.

1. FIRE - Fire calls for service are never held; they are dispatched immediately according to Unit Recommend. During periods of high call volume or major incidents where calls are backed up pending and no station/apparatus is recommended, the Battalion Chief will be immediately notified. Any instruction he gives as to the holding or assignment of calls will be noted in the call for service.

2. POLICE - Priority calls are never held; they are to be dispatched immediately. If no unit is available, the supervisor is to be dispatched immediately.
3. POLICE - Priority 5 calls are to be dispatched after all Priority calls for service have been dispatched first. If no unit is available, the supervisor is to be notified immediately. Any instruction given by a supervisor as to the holding or assignment of calls will be noted in the call for service.
4. POLICE – Priority 9 calls are to be dispatched after all Priority and Priority 5 calls for service have been dispatched first, the dispatcher will notify a supervisor after attempting to dispatch for 10 minutes. Exception: Pending animal calls- notification can be made to the Animal Control Officer instead of the Patrol Supervisor, and documented in the notes of the call. (Unless the circumstances of the call require immediate response by a cadet or patrol officer) Any instruction given by a supervisor as to the holding or assignment of calls will be noted in the call for service.

H. WEATHER WARNINGS

Communications Center personnel are responsible for notifying emergency responders when there is a weather warning or watch in our area. A warning means severe weather has been indicated in the area and shelter should be sought immediately. A watch means conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather within the next few hours and preparations should be made for the possibility of severe weather.

When information is received by phone, teletype, weather radio, or television from the National Weather Service, the Communications Center will send an MCT message to ALL indicating the weather warning, to include the time frame, circumstances (hail, high winds, etc), and area. The radio dispatchers will also announce the same information over the police radio. The fire dispatcher will use the General Announcement tone and transmit the same information over the radio to all stations.

I. DELIVERING EMERGENCY MESSAGES

The Myrtle Beach Police Department will deliver emergency messages which include but are not limited to serious illness, injury or death notifications where regular telephonic communications would be inappropriate or cannot be established between the calling party and the person they seek to contact. When a request for making a death notification is received, an on duty patrol supervisor will be notified

and the incident will be handled by the supervisor per patrol procedures. Other notifications will be assigned to the unit in the assigned beat.

J. PROCURING WRECKER SERVICE

Communications Officers are responsible for notifying wrecker services upon request from police officers or city employees. A list of all wreckers approved for tow inside the city limits of Myrtle Beach shall be kept in the Communications Center, updated by the Regulatory Unit.

1. Police tows - When a request for the wrecker on the rotation list is made, the Communications Officer will:
 - a. If a call for service is not already entered in CAD, one will be created to include the make, model, year, color, license plate and VIN (or all information that is available).
 - b. Call the next wrecker in rotation. Advise them the location, reason for request, vehicle information, officer badge number/name, and report/cad event number.
 - c. If the wrecker service is available for the call, the information will be recorded in the CAD call for service and the wrecker placed on the bottom of rotation.
 - d. If the wrecker service cannot respond (if they are not available, no answer or the line is busy for several minutes), the information will be recorded in the CAD call for service and the wrecker service will be placed on the bottom of the rotation. The next wrecker service on the rotation will be called.
 - e. The notes of the CAD call should contain the time the wrecker was called and the time the wrecker arrived. If multiple wrecker services are called for one CAD call for service, the notes of the call should be clear as to which wrecker service towed which vehicle.
2. City vehicle tows – When a request is made by a city employee / supervisor to tow a city vehicle, the Communications Officer will:
 - a. Enter a CAD call for service using the nature code CITY VEH TOW. The call will be assigned to the entering Communications Officer.
 - b. The city employee may provide the Communications Officer the vehicle information (make, model, year, color, vehicle registration and city vehicle number) as well as the location of the vehicle, driver of the vehicle and the city department the driver works for. The Communications Officer shall also be provided specific information as to the size of the vehicle/ equipment to be towed, especially if oversized. When the entering officer clicks the TOW button to assign the next wrecker on rotation, any of the above listed information can be entered. The only mandatory descriptor is the city vehicle

number, which shall be listed in the VIN field. Example: VIN/ CITY VEH 1083

- c. Call the next wrecker in rotation. Advise them the location, reason for request, vehicle information, officer badge number/name, and report/cad event number.
- d. If the wrecker service is available for the call, the information will be recorded in the CAD call for service and the wrecker placed on the bottom of rotation.
- e. If the wrecker service cannot respond (if they are not available, no answer or the line is busy for several minutes), the information will be recorded in the CAD call for service and the wrecker service will be placed on the bottom of the rotation. The next wrecker service on the rotation will be called.
- f. If a wrecker service called determines, either telephonically or by responding to the location, that they are unable to tow the vehicle/equipment, the appropriate cancel code should be used and the wrecker service will be placed on the bottom of the rotation. The next wrecker on the rotation list shall be called.
- g. The notes of the CAD call should contain the time the wrecker was called and the time the wrecker arrived.

K. ANIMAL INCIDENTS

1. Animal Control Officers are full time, Class III police officers for the Myrtle Beach Police Department. Animal incidents and crimes in the city should be dispatched to Animal Control officers if they are on duty.
2. The Myrtle Beach Police Department Animal Control will respond to vicious, stray, or nuisance animals, animal bites, animal cruelty, possibly rabid animals, barking dogs or any animal incident that presents a danger to public safety. Animal Control Officers respond to wildlife calls only when wild animals are sick, injured, rabid, or present an imminent danger to the public. All other complaints will be referred to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). After assessing the situation Animal Control may refer nuisance wild life calls to another agency or private contractor. Animal Control will not set traps for nuisance wildlife.
3. If Animal Control is not on duty a police officer shall be dispatched to any animal complaint that could endanger the safety of citizens or other animals such as vicious animals and animal bites. Police officers will also be dispatched to complaints of barking dogs. Calls regarding stray or nuisance animals should be dispatched to a cadet first, and if not available, then a patrol officer. Cadets can pick up animals from traps, but cannot set them.
4. MBPD Animal Control will only respond after working hours to vicious animals or animal incidents approved for call out by a Patrol supervisor.

5. Reports of dead animals on the sidewalk, in the roadway, or on the edge of the roadway will be referred to the city sanitation division at 918-2160. If the information is received after hours, the on duty Public Works (800 or 803) unit will be notified. If the Public Works unit is not available and there is no traffic hazard, the Communications Officer will leave a message on the internal city service line 918-2002 for the removal of the carcass during normal business hours. If a traffic hazard does exist, a patrol officer will be sent to remove from the roadway.

L. INTER-JURISDICTIONAL PURSUITS

1. Notification by another jurisdiction of a pursuit in progress shall not be construed as a request to join the pursuit. The caller from the outside agency will be specifically asked if they are (1) making a request for assistance or (2) merely making a courtesy notification of a pursuit entering our jurisdiction, with no participation desired. The Communications Officer shall also determine the agency's reason for pursuit (charges).
2. In the event of a specific request for assistance in an inter-jurisdictional pursuit is made by the pursuing agency, any assistance to the pursuing agency by this Department will be specifically authorized by the on-duty Patrol supervisor after careful consideration of the pursuit facts, and the MBPD pursuit procedures will be in effect.
3. Upon receiving information that an inter-jurisdictional pursuit may be entering the limits of Myrtle Beach, the Communications Center will notify the on-duty Supervisor by police radio, providing all pertinent information regarding the pursuit to the Supervisor. Notification to the on-duty Supervisor, by police radio, will enhance officer safety for on-duty officers that may be required to react to changing circumstances of the inter-jurisdictional pursuit.

M. VEHICLE REPOSSESSION RECORDS AND PRIVATE PROPERTY TOWS

1. When a Communications Officer is notified by a car dealer, financial institution, or repossession company that a vehicle has been repossessed then a repossessed vehicle incident (REPO) should be created in CAD. If a vehicle is towed from private property at the request of the property owner, then a towed vehicle (TOW) incident should be created. The incident should contain the following information:
 - a. Location from which vehicle was removed.
 - b. Name of person repossessing or towing the vehicle.

- c. Name and telephone number of financial institution that repossessed vehicle or person requesting vehicle be towed.
 - d. Name of current owner of vehicle on repossessions.
 - e. Vehicle description, e.g., color, year, make, model, license plate, and VIN
 - f. If the wrecker company is not listed in the CAD picklist, the Communications Officer shall select "Other" and enter the name & phone number of the wrecker company in the Notes field of the tow entry.
2. After logging the tow and vehicle owner information, the CAD call will be cancelled, using the REPO or TOW reason, as appropriate. The CAD Event number will be recorded on the Tow worksheet.

N. MISCELLANEOUS CALLS FOR SERVICE INFORMATION

1. **Employee complaint calls**.....should be referred immediately to a supervisor. The caller should be transferred directly to a supervisor if available or if busy then the caller's name and number should be taken for call back. Ask the supervisor to call in for the information whenever possible instead of giving the information on the radio. Communications personnel receiving information of a complaint on another employee are prohibited from discussing the nature of complaint or the employee(s) involved except as authorized by Supervision. If a caller agrees to be transferred to the Office of Professional Standards (918-1380), make sure the caller knows they may be receiving a voicemail, especially if after hours. Citizen complaint forms can be mailed to callers, picked up at the PD, or obtained online.
2. **Civil problems**.....should be referred to the Horry County Magistrates Court (915-5293) or a private attorney unless there is a dispute in progress with both parties present.
3. **Landlord / tenant disputes**.....should be referred to the Horry County Magistrates Court (915-5293) unless a dispute is in progress with both parties present. Eviction notices are served by the Horry County Sheriff's Office.
4. **Vehicle registration issues**.....should be referred to South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (MB Office 946-7549 or Columbia Office 803-896-5000)