



TOWN OF LOS GATOS

COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER LEAD

Class Code: 4530, 4532, 4535
Department: Police Department
Supervisor: Communications Dispatcher Lead
and Support Services Bureau Captain

Bargaining Unit: TEA
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of typical duties performed by employees in the class. Specifications are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job, and all duties described are not necessarily performed by all employees in the class.

FLEXIBLY STAFFED SERIES

This is a flexibly staffed series, meaning that incumbents may be promoted by successfully demonstrating the ability to perform competently at the required level and by meeting the qualifications for the next higher class. Promotion to a higher level is not automatic or guaranteed. For more information, refer to the Town's Administrative Policy on Flexibly Staffed Classifications.

CLASS SUMMARY

Under general or lead supervision, the principal function of the Communications Dispatcher, Senior Communications Dispatcher, and Communications Dispatcher Lead is to receive and dispatch calls from the public for emergency and non-emergency services. The positions operate telephone, radio, and computer equipment in the emergency response center. Employees prioritize calls, dispatch police units, and/or refer calls appropriate to the situation (i.e., medical, fire, public works, animal control services, out of jurisdiction). The position is responsible to relay information to law enforcement and emergency response personnel and to provide communications-related support to responding units. Work is often performed under pressure.

DISTINGUISHING CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Communications Dispatcher – This is the entry-level classification for this professional job series and requires full mastery of the technical aspects of the job. After a period of training and upon demonstration of competency, the Communications Dispatcher will work independently without immediate oversight. This includes the ability to work a solo shift without assistance. Work is performed in accordance with policies established by the Police Department and within guidelines established by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Within the established guidelines, the Communications Dispatcher exercises independent judgement under emergency

conditions on matters involving the potential loss of life or property.

Senior Communications Dispatcher – This is the advanced journey-level classification for the job series and is distinguished from other classes within the series by the shift supervision responsibilities assumed, including but not limited to; training new Communications Dispatcher staff, annual evaluations of Communications Dispatchers, and taking the lead on completion of special projects assigned by the Communications Dispatcher Lead. This position may also assume supervisory roles and responsibilities related to the day-to-day operations of the Communications Center and Dispatcher staff in the absence of the Communications Lead Dispatcher.

Communications Dispatcher Lead – This is the supervisory level of this job series and provides day-to-day supervision of the Communications Dispatch operations. In addition to the Communications and Senior Communications Dispatcher duties, this level is responsible for the training and scheduling of staff, annual evaluations of Senior Communications Dispatchers and review/supervision of performance evaluations for Communications Dispatchers, project management of tasks related to the Communications Center, and act as the Communications Center liaison to local and state resources.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXPECTED

The Communications Dispatcher Lead will provide direct supervision over lower levels within the series and will receive direct supervision from the Support Services Bureau Captain or designee. Incumbents will work under close supervision while being trained and will work more independently as knowledge and skills are acquired and as they progress through the classification series.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

Essential and other important responsibilities and duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Receives calls to the Police Department's emergency and non-emergency lines. This includes 911, text to 911, and non-emergency call triaging. Relay's instructions and questions from field units.
- Operates a computer-aided dispatch (CAD)/records management system (RMS) with speed and accuracy as well as telephone, radio, and telecommunications equipment.
- Skillfully utilizes and multi-tasks between the telephone, radio, and CAD system.
- Obtains essential information from reporting parties about the nature of the emergency and determines response requirements and priorities of situations.

- Makes rapid and accurate determination of the location, nature, time element, and degree of severity for any situation. Determines closest available and most appropriate company and dispatches police, fire, medical aid, rescue, public works, and hazardous material calls. If necessary, refers callers to the appropriate agency or other resource.
- Provides communications support to units in the field.
- Enters, updates and monitors information such as time assigned, en route time, arrival, clearance, and other related information for each emergency and non-emergency event.
- Enters information into computer terminals; enters control codes and searches files to research and provide information.
- Monitors locations and verifies safe status of public safety and other specified Town personnel.
- Answers non-emergency questions, provides information to the public and refers non-emergency calls to other resources.
- Maintains appropriate records, computer data base, maps, diagrams, and written procedures relating to such activities.
- Maintains access to and the security of highly sensitive materials.
- Promptly and courteously obtains pertinent information regarding the calls for service utilizing proper radio/telephone etiquette.
- Participates in and attends continual professional training to maintain a high level of proficiency and professionalism in accordance with Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED), and other associations.
- Accesses automated law enforcement systems, inputs data and information, and makes accurate entries into automated record files in accordance with applicable laws, statutes, and Department of Justice requirements.
- Works harmoniously with other employees.
- Provides courteous and professional assistance to other employees and the public.
- May be assigned as a Disaster Service Worker, as required.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Specific to Senior Communications Dispatcher:

- As a primary trainer, instructs, counsels, and evaluates Communications Dispatcher Trainees and Communications Dispatchers.
- Implements and ensures adherence to existing policies.
- Assists in the oversight and supervision of administrative functions related to database compliance, user roles, and database access and user training.
- Prepares and analyzes administrative reports as required.
- During the absence of the Communications Dispatcher Lead, assumes the duties of the Communications Dispatcher Lead by planning, assigning, scheduling, and supervising the day-to-day operations of the Communications Center and the work of all Communications Dispatchers.

Specific to Communications Dispatcher Lead:

- Provides front-line shift supervision of Communications Dispatchers and Senior Communications Dispatchers, including scheduling to optimize coverage for 24/7 operations, assignment, and evaluation of work performance.
- Implements and ensures adherence to existing policies.
- Participates in the screening and selection of personnel.
- Assists in establishing training standards.
- Provides training and evaluates the effectiveness of the training program.
- Provides informal and formal performance feedback, including annual evaluations.
- Participates in special projects such as policy review, technology upgrades and process improvement.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Public safety communications systems and organization, procedures, and practices.
- Transmission and operation of telecommunications systems.

- Terminology used in emergency radio and telephone communications.
- Modern office standards and procedures.
- Communication and dissemination techniques and methods.
- Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective public safety operations for the protection of people, property, and data.
- Structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition and grammar.
- Principles and processes for providing customer service, including needs assessment, meeting service standards, and evaluating customer satisfaction.
- Administrative and clerical procedures and systems, such as word processing, managing files and records, transcription, use of forms and other office procedures and terminology.
- Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, and agency rules.
- Principles and methods for describing the geographical features, including their physical characteristics, locations, and interrelationships.
- Principles and methods of supervision, training, and personnel administration.
- The Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations as they pertain to emergency communications, and the ability to train subordinates and co-workers in their policies and procedures.
- Use and rules and regulations of the Town of Los Gatos Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems, and Santa Clara Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS), Police Information Network (PIN), California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS), and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) computer systems; with the ability to train subordinates and co-workers in their use.
- Town geography inclusive of, but not limited to, the location of primary roads, streets, highways, major buildings, and public facilities.
- Basic use of a personal computer.

Ability to:

- Use good judgement and clear thinking during stressful situations.

- Communicate in a clear, courteous, and concise manner with persons who may be under extreme emotional stress.
- Operate police radio console and receive radio calls from mobile units and other agencies.
- Receive telephone calls from the public; relay emergency ambulance and fire calls to County dispatch center; make telephone calls for field units.
- Operate telecommunications terminals to access County, State, and National law enforcement agencies.
- Effectively navigate the CAD system with speed and accuracy while simultaneously receiving information by phone or radio.
- Use a keyboard and other peripheral computer equipment with a high level of speed and accuracy.
- Dispatch Town personnel from other departments (e.g., Parks and Public Works, Community Development), as needed.
- Maintain written logs and files; enter calls for service into Police Department computer.
- Maintain street maps, address, and business files.
- Recall detail, including the ability to accurately recreate events, conversations, or readings and to record those recreations in written and/or oral form.
- Interpret and apply oral or written material/instructions, including the ability to listen to or read abstract or directive instructional material and to apply that data correctly to practical circumstances.
- Work under pressure in response to emergency situations.
- Take action or to decide between alternative courses of action under routine, highly stressful difficult conditions.
- Remain alert at varying hours after scheduled rest or to remain alert during extended periods of an emergency or unanticipated nature.
- Distinguish and interpret meaning of colors on video display terminals.
- Work rotating shift/hours, including nights, holidays, and weekends.

- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Communicate effectively in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Consistently demonstrate professionalism, ethical integrity, and exceptional customer service.
- Celebrate the achievements and success of the organization.

Skilled In:

- Giving full attention to what others are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate and avoiding inappropriate interruptions.
- Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
- Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
- Actively looking for ways to help people.
- Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
- Assessing performance of self and others to make improvements or take corrective actions.
- Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
- Considering the impacts of potential actions to make the most appropriate choices.
- Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

All Classifications: Completion of the twelfth grade, GED or equivalent and two years of general office experience. The successful completion of the California Commission on POST 120-hour dispatcher academy may be substituted for the two years of general office experience. Newly hired Communications Dispatchers will successfully complete the POST 120-hour dispatcher academy within the first year of hire. The availability to work irregular hours, weekends, and holidays and to report to duty on short notice is also required.

Senior Communications Dispatcher: Requires a minimum of three years of comparable experience at the level of Communications Dispatcher performing 911 dispatching functions utilizing a computer-aided dispatching system. Town of Los Gatos current employees will have successfully completed the probationary period for Communications Dispatcher, demonstrated proficiency as a Communications Dispatcher Trainer, and demonstrated the ability to supervise staff in the absence of the Communications Lead Dispatcher.

Communications Dispatcher Lead: Also requires a minimum of five years comparable experience at the level of Communications Dispatcher performing 911 dispatching functions utilizing a computer-aided dispatching system. At least two of the five years of experience at the level of Senior Communications Dispatcher or equivalent. Town of Los Gatos current employees will have successfully completed the probationary period for Senior Communications Dispatcher and demonstrated equivalent success in the supervisory roles and responsibilities in the supervision of the Communications Center.

Selection Process Includes:

Completion of CritiCall Exam (Communications Dispatcher classification)
Completion of the POST Personal History Statement
Oral Panel Interview(s)
Comprehensive Police Background Check
Criminal Records Check
Department of Justice Fingerprinting
Polygraph Test
Psychological Test
Medical Exam, Including a Drug Screen

License and Certification:

A California Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record are conditions of initial and continued employment.

Senior Communications Dispatcher – At a minimum, possession of the POST Public Safety Dispatcher Intermediate Certificate. Completion of the POST certified Supervisory Course prior to or within one year of appointment.

Communications Dispatcher Lead - At a minimum, possession of the POST Public Safety Dispatcher Intermediate Certificate. Possession of a POST Dispatcher Supervisor Certificate.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas is required. Individual(s) in this class must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting using standard office equipment; possess color visual acuity to read printed materials and multiple computer screens; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. The position in this classification occasionally bends, stoops, kneels, reaches, and sits for prolonged periods of time working at a computer or attending meetings; and pushes and pulls drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employee must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 20 pounds.

Climbing	Rarely	Balancing	Occasionally	Stooping	Occasionally
Kneeling	Occasionally	Lifting	20 lbs.	Standing	Occasionally
Crawling	Rarely	Reaching	Occasionally	Walking	Occasionally
Talking	Frequently	Grasping	Frequently	Pushing	20 lbs.
Hearing	Frequently	Feeling	Occasionally	Carry	20 lbs.
Crouching	Occasionally	Running	Rarely	Sitting	Frequently
Pulling	20 lbs.	Seeing	Frequently		

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employee primarily works in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances and is in direct contact with other Town personnel and indirect contact with the public.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Required to work a varied schedule of hours, including all shifts in a 24-hour period, holidays, and weekends.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Town will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the Human Resources Department.

The Town of Los Gatos is an Equal Opportunity Employer.