

RESPONDER & CALLER SAFETY



SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY... DO YOUR PART

08/25

RESPONDER & CALLER SAFETY

The telecommunicator plays a vital role in keeping responders and the public safe. Often referred to as first-first responders, the telecommunicator is often the first set of eyes and ears on every scene. It is important that information is properly solicited, documented and disseminated in a timely manner. The job of the telecommunicator is multifaceted and involves among other things;

- Providing accurate real time information that allows for a coordinated and tactical response by field personnel.
- Providing proper safety and sometimes life saving instructions to callers.

RESPONDER & CALLER SAFETY

The job of a call taker differs from that of a dispatcher. The call taker is primarily responsible for interacting with the public (callers), while the dispatcher is primarily responsible for interacting with field personnel (police, fire fighters, paramedics etc.). Depending on the agency, these roles are assigned independently or performed simultaneously by the same person.



This presentation will explain steps the telecommunicator can take when assigned the role of a call taker to enhance responder and caller safety.

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The address where help is needed must be verified. It is imperative that help is sent to the correct location the first time. Verification of the location not only get responders to the incident in a timely manner but may also highlight previous calls and potential hazards associated with an address.



Proper verification is having the caller repeat the information.

A call taker must never attempt verification by asking the caller “did you say....?”

Lack of verification could potentially endanger the life of those responding to an incident.

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It is imperative that callers are thoroughly interrogated and that the answers provided are accurately documented. Never assume a caller does not know the answer to a question, instead, ask all pertinent questions. Give the caller the opportunity to say what they do or don't know.

Faulty/incomplete interrogation and narrative could potentially endanger the life of those responding to an incident.

Informed intelligent decisions come from having accurate information.



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The presence, involvement or mention of a weapon is crucial to the response of every call for service. Insufficient or missing description of reported weapons in a narrative is simply irresponsible and unacceptable on the part of a call taker.

Every weapon must be accurately described and its exact location documented.
E.g. Black handgun in suspect's waist band/Pocketknife under driver's seat.

Responding blindly to a call for service may cause serious harm or death to responders and bystanders.

ASK ABOUT WEAPONS



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Accurate description and role of all parties involved is necessary for responder safety. E.g. Witness...25-year-old black male red shirt blue jeans, Suspect...elderly hispanic female short brown dress.



Always ask about and document the mental capacity, physical impairment and/or demeanor of an involved party when applicable. E.g. Caller is hearing impaired, diagnosed schizophrenic and appears agitated. This information allows responders to coordinate an appropriate response that could potentially prevent harm or death.

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It may be necessary to stay on the line with a caller. In some cases, the call taker may need to provide pre-arrival instructions while in other cases remaining on the line is the only way to ensure the caller's safety until a responder is in direct contact with them. E.g. suicidal caller, a caller who is alone and is having trouble or a small child who is home alone.



Prematurely disconnecting from a caller could potentially endanger the life of the caller and responders alike. Always keep the caller on the phone during all potentially dangerous events.

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Dual-discipline response may be necessary to enhance responder safety. It is crucial that the call taker pays close attention to background noises while interrogating a caller who is presenting a medical or fire service complaint.

Call takers must establish causation for all injuries being presented.

- What happened why she/he is bleeding from the nose?
- What caused the fall?

Call takers should consider creating a call for law enforcement for any suspicious background noise or unexplained injuries.



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The call taker must adhere to policy when interrogating all calls or service. Not following outlined policies expose the call taker to liability and jeopardize responder and caller safety. What does the policy say about;

- Notifications
- Transfers
- Verification
- Dual response
- Create or not create a call
- Classification of incidents
- Premise information/notes
- Call backs (when or if)
- Duplicate calls
- Child callers
- Repeat/frequent callers
-etc.



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THANK YOU



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