



GENERAL ORDER

MINOCQUA POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **COMMUNICATIONS PROCESSES**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: General Orders Manual

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INDEX AS: Backup Radio System
Communications Procedures
Dispatch Procedures
Federal Communications Requirements
Inter-Jurisdictional Communications
Radio Procedures
Radio Communications To & From Field Personnel
Telephone Security

PURPOSE: The purpose of this General Order is for the Minocqua Police Department to:

1. Establish standard procedures for radio and emergency telephone communications and set forth rules governing the use of radio and emergency telephone equipment.
2. Define the responsibility of police units, supervisory personnel, and personnel assigned to duties as call takers as related to the operation of the police radio and telephone communications systems.
3. Define the responsibility of Telecommunicators as well as setting forth policy on physical access to the Center by Department employees.

This General Order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. DISPATCH COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
- II. TELEPHONE SYSTEM
- III. COMMUNICATION SYSTEM RULES

- IV. COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH (CAD) DATA ENTRY
- V. OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES
- VI. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES
- VII. RADIO SECURITY
- VIII. BACKUP RADIO SYSTEM
- IX. PHONETIC ALPHABET
- X. BROADCASTING DESCRIPTIONS
- XI. RADIO REPAIR
- XII. ASSIGNMENT OF RADIO CALL NUMBERS
- XIII. INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

I. DISPATCH COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

- A. The Dispatch Communications Center is designed and designated as a limited access area. The presence of persons not assigned to the dispatch area creates unneeded distraction and noise and detracts from the overall quality of the dispatching. Department employees shall not spend time in the dispatching area of the Dispatch Center unless specifically assigned to that area by a supervisor. Officers directed to the Dispatch Center to pick up paperwork shall limit their stay at the Center to a length of time reasonably necessary to complete their assignment.
- B. The Dispatch Communications Center provides 24-hour telephone, and walk in access for citizens to request emergency services. Patrol officers shall have 24-hour continuous 2-way radio communications capability with the Dispatch Communications Center. Patrol officers should communicate with the telecommunicator by use of the squad radio or mobile data computer (MDC). Officers may contact the Center by telephone when the need exists.
- C. The Dispatch Communications Center shall be provided with the following information, and shall have the information immediately accessible for Center personnel:
 - 1. Visual map of the Department service area.
 - 2. Written procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services for the Department, including tactical dispatching plans.
- D. The Dispatch Communications Center and all Minocqua Police Department employees will comply with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements.
- E. The Dispatch Center is a secured area. Only authorized personnel will be allowed.

II. TELEPHONE SYSTEM

- A. Telephone demeanor
 - 1. Any employee receiving an outside telephone call shall answer in a clearly understood, calm, decisive, and courteous voice.
 - 2. Those employees assigned to answering phone calls shall answer incoming telephone calls by saying "Minocqua Police Department, this is (name)?"

3. If the caller describes a situation for which a minor incident report may be left, the call taker may take the report over the telephone.
4. If the caller needs to be transferred to an individual or another office in the Department, the call taker shall transfer the call. If the employee's location is unknown in the station, a page will be made to advise the employee of the call. If the transferred call is not answered, transfer the caller to voice mail of the employee.
5. If the caller needs to be transferred to another Department and the call taker knows which Department, the phone number of that Department will be provided to the caller.
6. If the call taker does not know which Department the caller needs, the call taker shall provide the general number for the Town Office.

B. Telephone Security

1. Under no circumstances will the personal telephone number of any Department employee be given to the public. Numbers may be given to other members of the Department if the identity of the person making the request is known.
2. No confidential information will be given to the public or press by Department employees using the telephone or by other means. Special reports designated for press release by the Chief or his designee will be the only exception to this rule. Also refer to General Order 8.01: Public Information.

- C. All misdirected emergency calls shall be answered promptly and routed or directed to the proper agency or department that can help the caller.

III. COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM RULES

- A. All messages transmitted over Dispatch Center radio frequencies will be direct and concise and will conform to Departmental regulations as well as those regulations set forth by the Federal Communications Commission. This includes those messages that are sent via the mobile data computer.

1. Unidentified transmissions, superfluous communications, obscene or profane language, wise cracking and smart remarks, clicking the mike button, or any violations of FCC rules are strictly prohibited. See General Order 1.16: Laptop/Mobile Data Computer Use for more information on unacceptable message content.

- B. Dispatch Telecommunicators are responsible for assigning units to calls for service during normal operations. Assigned personnel shall carry out the assignments received from the Dispatch Communications Center. No one shall refuse an assignment when so dispatched.

1. An officer may request that another unit be assigned to carry out a specific assignment to the shift supervisor, if one or more of the following circumstances is present:
 - a) A family member is involved in the incident.
 - b) The officer is involved in a civil lawsuit with one of the persons involved.
2. In all cases, however, the officer's supervisor shall determine if the request shall be granted.
3. If assigned personnel have reason to object to an assignment, they shall make such objections to a supervisor.

4. An on-duty supervisor shall accompany units that are assigned to major crimes such as, but not limited to, homicide, rape, robbery, and burglary in progress.
 5. A supervisor or detective may modify the original dispatch by advising units to disregard or by asking more units to respond. Once at the scene, an assigned unit may also ask for additional assistance, or advise that assisting unit(s) can disregard.
- C. In the event of a natural or manmade disaster or any major civil disturbance or major crime, the Chief of Police and/or Duty Command Staff shall be notified according to established procedure.
 - D. Mobile radio units may use "plain English" in most radio transmissions, otherwise Department approved "10 codes" will be used.
 - E. No special codes or signals will be used by any shift, and/or group of employees or individuals unless designated by the Chief of Police.
 - F. The status of out-of-service officers shall be noted in the CAD system by Dispatch Telecommunicators. Officers are responsible for calling out their status and when returning into service.
 - G. All Dispatch Telecommunicators and other Department members shall utilize the proper local, state, and federal criminal justice systems.
 - H. All radio and telephone calls are recorded on the NICE system. Allowing for immediate playback.

IV. COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH (CAD) DATA ENTRY

- A. A record will be maintained for each request for service (criminal and non-criminal) as well as officer self-initiated activity. This record will be recorded in the Minocqua Police Department's CAD/Records system. This information will include but is not limited to: User name, date and time of request or self-initiated activity, complainant information (name, address (when possible) call back number, type of incident, location of incident, officer(s) assigned/responding, dispatch time, arrival time, Officer return-to-service time and disposition or status of case.

V. OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. When beginning a tour of duty, officers shall contact the Dispatch Center by radio; state they are 41, and notify if they are going to training/court/or any other event that is not a scheduled shift. This may also be done in person in the Dispatch Center.
- B. Officers, when calling the Dispatch Center, shall state their assigned unit number followed by "Minocqua", i.e. "331 Minocqua". The officer shall then wait for a response from a Center Telecommunicator. Once acknowledged by a Telecommunicator, the officer may continue with his/her traffic. Under normal circumstances, an officer wishing to speak on a special call with another unit shall request permission over the common channel first.
- C. Calls for service will be dispatched from the Dispatch Center in conformity with their policy and procedures. Incidents will be dispatched over the radio giving address and basic information. At the same time, the address, nature and further information may be sent to the responding officer via the mobile data computer (MDC). (See Policy & Procedure 1.16: Laptop/Mobile Data Computer Use). Additional information as it may become known to the Telecommunicator shall be sent via the radio to keep all officers informed of possible suspects, vehicles etc.

- D. Vehicle registration checks, stolen vehicle checks, driver's license checks, and wanted person checks may be sent over the MDC when they can be accomplished with reasonable safety. If the officer believes, in a given situation, that his/her attention is best not removed from the situation at hand, the check may be run over the radio through a telecommunicator at the Center. Likewise, if the officer is in a situation where he/she is a distance away from the squad car, and circumstances dictate, the check can be run through the Center. In most cases this information should be aired.
- E. When making a vehicle stop the officer shall call in the traffic stop giving location of the stop and plate number and operator, over the police radio frequency, to the Dispatch Center. This is done so other officers are aware of the stop.
- F. Officers shall advise the Dispatch Center when they are going to be out on foot. Upon returning to their squads, officers shall notify the Dispatch Center that they are back in service and receive confirmation from a Telecommunicator.
- G. Officers shall advise the Dispatch Center of their intent to leave the Town/Area and the reason for doing so. Officers shall not leave the Town without being granted permission to do so from the on-duty supervisor.
- H. Officers should not request the identity of a complainant over the radio if the complainant wishes to remain anonymous. The MDC is a more appropriate device for receiving this type of information.
- I. Upon completion of a tour of duty, officers shall "log off" their MDC in accordance with General Order 1.16: Laptop/Mobile Data Computer Use.

VI. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Supervisors shall adhere to the orders contained in the Officer Responsibility Section of this Order.
- B. Supervisors may change the directions given by a Telecommunicator when such change is deemed necessary by the supervisor.
- C. Supervisory officers shall be accountable for the use of the communications system and equipment by personnel under their respective supervision.
- D. The Chief or designee shall prepare a monthly schedule showing which officers and supervisors are working on a specific day along with their special assignments. This schedule shall be posted by the appropriate personnel in the Dispatch Center, and on the P drive.
- E. The on-duty supervisor shall be responsible for notifying Telecommunicators at the Dispatch Center of special assignments or circumstances which may affect the normal dispatching of police units during their tours of duty.

VII. RADIO SECURITY

- A. Because citizens monitor police radio channels, certain information must not be transmitted over the radio. Such information may be relayed by the mobile data computer or on the secure frequency.
- B. Minocqua Police Department employees' personal telephone numbers will not be given out over the radio.
- C. Death message calls will be communicated by MDC, telephone, or in person.
- D. The names of operators or passengers of vehicles involved in serious accidents will not be transmitted over the radio.

- E. The names of victims in death investigations will not be transmitted over the radio.
- F. Entire criminal history and other criminal records must not be communicated over the radio, although in some instances a summary may be given. The MDC is the better device to receive such information.
- G. Names of police officers/fire fighters who are killed or injured in the line of duty will not be communicated over the radio.

VIII. BACKUP RADIO SYSTEM

- A. Located at Oneida County Sheriff's Department is a remote-control console which will allow the police radio system to be controlled by a Minocqua Police Department telecommunicator. The console allows communications on the Minocqua Police, Oneida County and State frequencies. It allows monitoring and transmission on the fire channel, Oneida County Sheriffs and Police main channels, Minocqua Department of Public Works and Oneida Emergency Government.
- B. The consoles all have backup power supplies, which are inspected and tested on a monthly basis with corresponding documentation. The three County repeaters are stand alone and operate independently of each other with backup UPS and generators. All radio consoles, squads, and portable units have mutual aid repeater channels and mutual direct channels.
- C. This system can also be used by Department supervisors to communicate with officers when no radio problems exist. A telecommunicator using the system shall follow normal radio system protocol found elsewhere in this Order, using his/her radio call number to call Telecommunicators at the Station, and clear the frequency for transmission to a certain unit.
- D. Telecommunicators shall also be able to contact DPW personnel directly during snowstorms or other times when communications are desirable. This is accomplished by stating "police department--public works department" over the assigned frequency, or if known, the truck number the telecommunicator is interested in talking with.

IX. PHONETIC ALPHABET

- A. Since it is often difficult to understand unusual words, proper names, street addresses, license numbers, etc., there are many times when these should be spelled out by using the Department approved phonetic alphabet.

X. BROADCASTING DESCRIPTIONS

- A. When broadcasting descriptions, officers shall adhere to the Department approved format as closely as possible.

XI. RADIO REPAIR

- A. All radio repairs will be done by the company currently holding the contract for such services.
- B. In the event of radio problems at the Dispatch Center that render the Department's radio system out of service, the backup portable radio or counsels at Oneida County may be used following criteria found earlier in this General Order.
- C. In the event of mobile radio problems, the officer involved shall check with a shift supervisor to determine if:

1. The officer should return to the station to replace equipment.
 2. The squad should be taken out of service and radio repair called.
- D. Portable radios in need of repair will be turned in to the Lieutenant.
- E. Appropriate memos will be left by the employee using the equipment at the time of the radio malfunction for the Lieutenant.

XII. ASSIGNMENT OF RADIO CALL NUMBERS

- A. Radio call numbers for police personnel will be assigned by the Chief of Police or designee from a block of numbers assigned by Oneida County Emergency Management. A list of radio call numbers will be published annually, or as revisions are necessary by the Lead Tele-communicator.
- B. Patrol units will be assigned a three-digit area number as their radio call number, 331, 332, 333, 334, etc.

XIII. INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

- A. When the Minocqua Police Department becomes involved in an emergency situation and it is evident that assistance must be obtained from other law enforcement jurisdiction(s) within Oneida County, this agency shall immediately contact the other agencies and advise them of the circumstances and reason for the request. It shall be requested that the responding assisting officers change to a common designated radio channel. This initial contact with other law enforcement jurisdiction(s) will be made by the duty telecommunicator and shall be done by land line communications or the Oneida County LAW 1.
- B. Whenever an emergency situation arises, such as a high speed pursuit, or other incident where the squads are likely to be moving constantly throughout various jurisdictions, the designated radio channel will be EMR3, which is number one, or the first position on the Minocqua Police Department talk group on the portable radios; and Step number (1), or the first position using the home selection button on the squad mobile radios.
- C. All radio traffic during an emergency situation and contained locally shall go through the telecommunicator of the Minocqua Police Department. During those situations when jurisdictions are changing, the Oneida County Sheriff's Department shall become the main dispatch point.
- D. When Minocqua Police Department Officers are requested to assist another law enforcement agency and their municipal channel is utilized, all transmissions shall go through the dispatch point of that requesting agency, until the emergency has ceased or Minocqua Police Department Officers are released from duty in that jurisdiction. If the Oneida County Sheriff's Department channel is used, then all transmissions shall go through that department's dispatch.

David J. Jaeger

David J. Jaeger
Chief of Police

This General Order cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

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