

FIRE DISPATCHER TRAINEE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Classification Responsibilities: A Fire Dispatcher Trainee learns to perform the full scope of duties of a Mesa Fire Dispatcher through a structured on-the-job training program tailored to each individual's experience, or lack of, dispatching fire and emergency medical services. Incumbents are trained according to Mesa Fire and Medical Department policies and operating procedures. Duties include: receiving calls from the public; evaluating the calls for proper action; and initiating Fire and Medical response by obtaining information required for dispatching field units. An employee in this class learns to dispatch messages and calls by voice and computer to Fire units and to maintain radio contact with mobile units. This class performs related duties as required.

Distinguishing Features: This is a civilian trainee class that works in the Mesa Regional Dispatch Center. Training is provided by a Fire Dispatcher on special assignment or a Fire Communications Shift Supervisor. Typically, intense training is provided for up to eight months for Fire and Medical Dispatcher Trainees; however, additional training to reach full performance may be required. As training progresses, employees are expected to demonstrate extensive communication skills and to exercise good judgement under pressure. Employees in this class may progress by noncompetitive promotion to the classification of Fire Dispatcher after successful completion of training and satisfactory performance. A Fire Dispatcher Trainee may be assigned to a day, swing, or graveyard shift on a regular, rotational basis that includes nights, weekends, and holidays. This class is FLSA nonexempt.

QUALIFICATIONS

Employee Values: All employees of the City of Mesa are expected to uphold and exhibit the City's shared employee values of Knowledge, Respect, and Integrity.

Minimum Qualifications Required. Graduation from high school or GED. Any combination of training, education, and experience equivalent to at least one year of work experience handling 911 calls at a Primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), also known as a 911 Center, or a Secondary PSAP; OR any combination of training, education, or experience equivalent to considerable (3 - 5 years) experience in public contact or customer service experience. A minimum typing speed of 35 *net* words per minute (nwpm) is also required and will be verified prior to employment or promotion to this class.

Special Requirements. Candidates given a conditional job offer will be required to successfully complete a hearing test. Because of the confidential, sensitive nature of information handled, successful completion of a psychological examination is required. After hire, employees are required to successfully complete the Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) certification training course. Must not be on the Office of Inspector General (OIG) list of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE).

Substance Abuse Testing. Due to the safety and/or security sensitive nature of this classification, individuals shall be subject to pre-employment or pre-placement alcohol, drug and/or controlled substance testing as outlined in City policy and procedures.

Preferred/Desirable Qualification. Bilingual speaking skills (English/Spanish) are desirable. Experience with computer data entry and/or in dealing with emergency traffic is preferred.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Communication: Communicates first with an instructor, and then as training progresses, by telephone with the general public, in order to gain experience in obtaining facts quickly and accurately through the use of questions and tone of voice appropriate to the nature of the call. Learns to communicate on a base radio system with Firefighters in order to obtain or relay information. Enunciates clearly and correctly to facilitate communication. Under hypothetical learning situations, and then in actual circumstances, keys messages on a Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) terminal that is directed to Firefighters in responding to a call using clearly organized thoughts, expressed in a structured format and sequence which is taught and practiced, in order to relay information to units about an incident.

Manual/Physical: Receives training provided verbally by an instructor who simulates the types of phone calls received from the public. After classroom practice, receives phone calls from the public who are seeking public safety assistance. Enters information directly into a computer as it is being broadcast over the radio or obtained over the phone. Detects distinct tones from a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD). Detects unclear or unusual sounds on the phone or radio system that might be a call for help. Reads training material in order to learn the facts, procedures, and restrictions which are applied in call evaluations and radio protocol. Learns to visually monitor unit status on a screen in order to maintain knowledge of the current status of Firefighters and the calls assigned to them. Switches to manual operations when the CAD system is not working. Operates a multi-button telephone system, base radios, and computer terminals to receive and transmit information. Works while confined to a communications console area under conditions requiring close contact with other employees, often during stressful conditions. Reads maps in order to give verbal directions on the phone to persons who are unfamiliar with the City.

Mental: Completes study guides requiring reading and interpretation of procedures and application of those procedures in order to pass written examinations. Distinguishes between emergency and non-emergency calls when given criteria, practice, and feedback. Practices determining answers to questions by accessing various resources (computer system, files, schedules, rosters) in order to obtain accurate information. Uses logic or other problem-solving tools in data analysis or in generating solutions. Practices deciding (with decreasing assistance) which, and the number of, Fire and Medical units to dispatch by considering such factors as time of day, description, and location of calls, beat unit or equipment available, and probable degree of hazard to personnel responding. Evaluates (with practice) caller's answers to questions in order to determine the urgency of the call and whether Fire and Medical personnel should be dispatched to the scene. Practices and gains proficiency in acquiring and entering information provided by citizens via phone (including uncooperative callers) and by Firefighters via radio, directly into the CAD system by listening to content, asking clarifying questions, controlling the conversation, and determining the course of action to take within time constraints and departmental procedures. Acquires proficiency through practice in prioritizing multiple tasks such as answering the radio and phone, dispatching calls, acknowledging messages, and running inquiries. Learns the geography and operating procedures of other jurisdictions for multi-jurisdictional agreements and for automatic aide agreements.

Knowledge and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

basic telephone etiquette;
public relations techniques;
the Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations pertaining to the operation of public safety, municipal government, and public utility radio communications services; and
police or fire and medical department organization, procedures, and operating policies.

Ability to:

acquire a working knowledge of the geography and organizational structure of the City of Mesa, including streets and their hundred blocks, relative distance between streets, City boundary limits, sectors and beat areas, and fire response districts;
learn the operating procedures of the Mesa Regional Dispatch Center;
acquire a working knowledge of the geography, equipment, and procedures of other jurisdictions that Mesa has contracted with to provide fire/emergency medical services dispatching, and the mutual and automatic aide agreements with surrounding agencies;
successfully complete EMD training and Fire Dispatcher training;
perform several tasks simultaneously;
monitor police or fire alarm panels;
maintain a record of all fire activity;
enter data into a computer as it is being received;
operate CAD equipment;
operate a base radio;
dispatch fire calls, listen to incoming phone information, and assimilate spoken instructions or information from other dispatchers or a shift supervisor;
scan the personal computer (PC) screen rapidly in order to select pertinent information;
shut out extraneous information from other radio channels and coworkers, while selectively listening to information recognized as crucial;
learn, understand, and carryout specific procedural steps;
speak with a clear, well-modulated, and pleasant voice;
deal effectively with upset individuals in obtaining information;
handle negative comments and feedback from the public;
cope with emotionally tense situations;
remember details and make decisions under stressful conditions; and
establish and maintain effective working relationships with coworkers, supervisors, Police and Fire and Medical field personnel, and the general public.

The duties listed above are intended only as general illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. Specific statements of duties not included do not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Job descriptions are subject to change by the City as the needs of the City and requirements of the job change.

Fire Dispatcher Trainee

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CS4112.DOCX (Full-time)

PAY GRADE: 45

CS4125 (Part-time, Non-benefited) PAY GRADE: 45

EEO-A/S

IND-8810

JOB FCTN-PUB

SWORN-No

INCREMENTS 43-200