

Council Meeting
February 5, 2008

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, CA

SUBJECT: Approve revised class specification for Public Safety Dispatcher

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director and the Civil Service Commission that the City Council approve the revised class specification Public Safety Dispatcher.

FUNDING

Not applicable.

BACKGROUND

The City Council approved the consolidation of the Police and Fire Communications under Public Safety Dispatch in 2005 and the classification of Public Safety Dispatcher was created in March 2007. There are currently six vacancies for Public Safety Dispatcher being covered by Police Officers or Firefighters to staff the assignments and ensure continuity of service.

Staff has been working aggressively to recruit and hire Public Safety Dispatchers; however, the position is difficult to fill due to strict background requirements and competition in the labor market. In order to attract experienced Public Safety Dispatchers from other agencies the Police Chief requested that staff develop a Public Safety Dispatch Lateral Transfer Program. The highlights of the Lateral Transfer Program include offering new hires a monetary transfer incentive as well as crediting the employee with vacation and sick leave upon successful completion of the twelve month probationary period.

An agreement with TME-AFSCME to implement the Public Safety Dispatch Lateral Transfer Program was adopted by your Honorable Body at your meeting of January 8th, 2008. As part of the agreement, current Police Communication Operators who transfer to the position of Public Safety Dispatcher will also qualify for the transfer incentive. Management has met and conferred on the changes to the class specification and TME-AFSCME concurs with this recommendation.

At their meeting of January 28, 2008, the Civil Service Commission unanimously approved the revised class specification for Public Safety Dispatcher. This recommendation is submitted to your Honorable Body for your review and approval.

ANALYSIS

The class specification for Public Safety Dispatcher has been modified to include the distinction between the Lateral-entry Public Safety Dispatcher as well as a change to the Education and Experience section. The changes are as follows:

Distinguishing Characteristics

Lateral-entry Public Safety Dispatcher is distinguished from entry-level Public Safety Dispatcher in that the Lateral-entry Public Safety Dispatcher is required to have two (2) years of continuous employment as a Dispatcher or Communications Operator (in Police or Fire) within the last three (3) years.

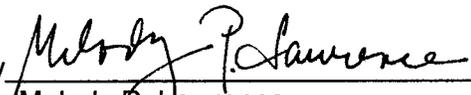
Education and Experience – Lateral Entry

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. Two (2) years of continuous employment as a Dispatcher or Communications Operator (in Police or Fire) in the state of California within the last three (3) years. Possession of a Public Safety Dispatcher POST certificate is highly desirable.

Respectfully submitted,

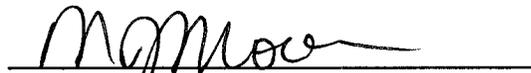
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Thomas Doty, Chair

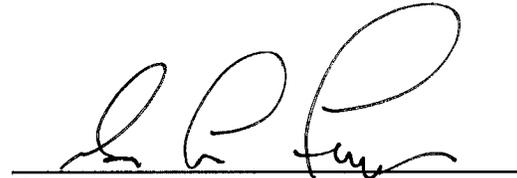
ELAINE M. WINER
Human Resources Director

By 
Melody P. Lawrence
Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:


Elaine M. Winer
Human Resources Director


Jeannie Moorman
TME-AFSCME President


Greg Ferguson
TME-AFSCME Vice President

NOTED:


LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

- Attachments: A) Public Safety Dispatcher Existing Class Specification
B) Public Safety Dispatcher Revised Class Specification
C) Civil Service Commission Meeting January 14, 2008 Item 9



Class Window : Print Page

Class Code: 7305
City of Torrance

March 2007
Civil Service

TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN THIS POSITION, CLICK HERE

Public Safety Dispatcher

Definition

Under general supervision, operates communication systems utilizing radio, telephone and computer equipment to receive 911 emergency and routine calls requesting police or fire services; provides information to the public; dispatches safety personnel and equipment in response to service requests and to organize and coordinate the activities of field units; maintains records of activities in response to service requests; and performs related work as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This is an entry/journey level class, distinguished from the Services Officer in that the incumbent is not responsible for enforcement of State laws and City ordinances. Assignments are generally limited in scope and are set within procedural frameworks established by higher level positions. As experience accrues, the incumbent performs with increasing independence. Work requires incumbent to exercise some judgment in selecting appropriate established guidelines to follow; significant deviations require prior approval. Interpretation of general administrative or operational policies is sometimes necessary.

Supervision Exercised/Received

Receives general supervision from the Police Officer in Charge and/or the Public Safety Communications Supervisor, Police Sergeant or Police Lieutenant.

Examples of Essential Duties

The following duties represent the principal job duties however; they are not all-inclusive.

- Dispatches personnel to scene of reported incidents, or to back up personnel requesting assistance.
- Exercises considerable judgment in dispatching deployed units, emergency resources and equipment.
- Prioritizes emergency calls under direction to ensure that calls of a more urgent nature receive priority over other calls.
- Relays information, via multiple communications systems including radio, telephone and computers between citizens, City personnel and personnel of other agencies.
- Assists personnel in the field with information relating to: subjects (e.g., criminal and driving records, warrants, etc.); vehicles (e.g., wants and warrants); and property (e.g., guns and bicycles) in order for field personnel to determine the appropriate action to be taken.
- Constantly monitors resources in the field in order to determine location and

status of personnel for service.

- Continually monitors and updates information and mapping systems showing present location of emergency vehicles and equipment and the status of vehicles and equipment as events occur.
- Monitors one or more frequencies as assigned.
- Receives incoming telephone calls for City Departments in order to screen emergency calls from routine business calls and forwards calls and messages to proper destination.
- Under the supervision of the Fire Department Area Coordinator assists with communication and coordination of resources in response to requests for mutual aid.
- Provides the public with emergency medical dispatch instructions and/or basic instruction to safeguard persons in hazardous conditions and medical emergencies prior to the arrival of emergency personnel.

Examples of Other Duties

The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties:

- Provides on-the-job training to newly hired Public Safety Dispatchers in dispatch procedures.
- Performs routine data entry as required.
- Performs related duties as required.

Minimum Qualifications

Knowledge of:

- Communication equipment in use by the City.
- Operations of computer-aided public safety dispatch systems.
- Emergency medical dispatch protocols.
- Standard radio and telephone communications receiving and transmitting equipment.
- Standard broadcasting procedures and rules.
- Public safety classification codes and computer codes.
- City policies and procedures affecting departmental operations.
- General City operations.

Ability to:

- Learn, perform and retain computer-aided dispatch and related software applications.
- Operate City communication equipment and telephone switchboard.
- Develop a working knowledge of City layout, streets, major businesses and emergency facilities.
- Retain, recognize and use coded dialogue used in radio transmission.
- Remain calm, control voice, and think quickly, logically and clearly in emergency situations.
- Adjust to changing situations and operations as they are occurring.
- Quickly assess a situation and take appropriate action under stressful and emergency conditions.
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with co-workers, other City employees, employees of other agencies and the public under

normal working conditions and in emergency situations.

- Handle multiple tasks and priorities simultaneously.
- Comprehend and accurately give directions from a map and/or Thomas Guide.
- Understand and carry out complex oral and written directions.
- Speak clearly, concisely and distinctly.
- Keep accurate records.
- Work effectively and efficiently with a minimum of supervision.
- Act independently, exercise sound judgment within established guidelines and maintain confidentiality.
- Accurately use a computer keyboard by touch.

License or Certificate

Must obtain and maintain a **valid** Public Safety Dispatcher POST and Emergency Medical Dispatch certification within one (1) year of hire.

Education and Experience

Any combination of education and experience that provides the knowledge and skills required is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and skills would be:

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. One year of experience in voice communications equipment or public contact work involving the use of communication equipment.

Special Requirements

Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions:

Incumbents are frequently required to remain in the immediate work area throughout the work shift and may be ordered to work overtime with short notice.

Will be required to work various assigned shifts, including weekends and holidays.

Requires the ability to sit for extended periods of time, read color coded displays; use a computer terminal for extended periods; hear sufficiently to accurately and completely obtain information from callers; communicate clearly to effectively dispatch information over the radio/communication system. Tasks are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

Career Ladder Information

Experience gained in this classification may serve to meet the minimum requirements for promotion to Public Safety Communications Supervisor.

Public Safety Dispatcher

Definition:

Under general supervision, operates communication systems utilizing radio, telephone and computer equipment to receive 911 emergency and routine calls requesting police or fire services; provides information to the public; dispatches safety personnel and equipment in response to service requests and to organize and coordinate the activities of field units; maintains records of activities in response to service requests; and performs related work as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is an entry/journey level class, distinguished from the Services Officer in that the incumbent is not responsible for enforcement of State laws and City ordinances. Assignments are generally limited in scope and are set within procedural frameworks established by higher level positions. As experience accrues, the incumbent performs with increasing independence. Work requires incumbent to exercise some judgment in selecting appropriate established guidelines to follow; significant deviations require prior approval. Interpretation of general administrative or operational policies is sometimes necessary.

Lateral-entry Public Safety Dispatcher is distinguished from entry-level Public Safety Dispatcher in that the Lateral-entry Public Safety Dispatcher is required to have two (2) years of continuous employment as a Dispatcher or Communications Operator (in Police or Fire) within the last three (3) years.

Supervision Exercised/Received:

Receives general supervision from the Police Officer in Charge and/or the Public Safety Communications Supervisor, Police Sergeant or Police Lieutenant.

Examples of Essential Duties

The following duties represent the principal job duties however; they are not all-inclusive.

- Dispatches personnel to scene of reported incidents, or to back up personnel requesting assistance.
- Exercises considerable judgment in dispatching deployed units, emergency resources and equipment.
- Prioritizes emergency calls under direction to ensure that calls of a more urgent nature receive priority over other calls.
- Relays information, via multiple communications systems including radio, telephone and computers between citizens, City personnel and personnel of other agencies.
- Assists personnel in the field with information relating to: subjects (e.g., criminal and driving records, warrants, etc.); vehicles (e.g., wants and warrants); and property (e.g., guns and bicycles) in order for field personnel to determine the appropriate action to be taken.
- Constantly monitors resources in the field in order to determine location and status of personnel for service.

- Continually monitors and updates information and mapping systems showing present location of emergency vehicles and equipment and the status of vehicles and equipment as events occur.
- Monitors one or more frequencies as assigned.
- Receives incoming telephone calls for City Departments in order to screen emergency calls from routine business calls and forwards calls and messages to proper destination.
- Under the supervision of the Fire Department Area Coordinator assists with communication and coordination of resources in response to requests for mutual aid.
- Provides the public with emergency medical dispatch instructions and/or basic instruction to safeguard persons in hazardous conditions and medical emergencies prior to the arrival of emergency personnel.

Examples of Other Duties

The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties:

- Provides on-the-job training to newly hired Public Safety Dispatchers in dispatch procedures.
- Performs routine data entry as required.
- Performs related duties as required.

Minimum Qualification Guidelines

Knowledge of:

- Communication equipment in use by the City.
- Operations of computer-aided public safety dispatch systems.
- Emergency medical dispatch protocols.
- Standard radio and telephone communications receiving and transmitting equipment.
- Standard broadcasting procedures and rules.
- Public safety classification codes and computer codes.
- City policies and procedures affecting departmental operations.
- General City operations.

Ability to:

- Learn, perform and retain computer-aided dispatch and related software applications.
- Operate City communication equipment and telephone switchboard.
- Develop a working knowledge of City layout, streets, major businesses and emergency facilities.
- Retain, recognize and use coded dialogue used in radio transmission.
- Remain calm, control voice, and think quickly, logically and clearly in emergency situations.
- Adjust to changing situations and operations as they are occurring.
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- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with co-workers, other City employees, employees of other agencies and the public under normal working conditions and in emergency situations.
- Handle multiple tasks and priorities simultaneously.

- Comprehend and accurately give directions from a map and/or Thomas Guide.
- Understand and carry out complex oral and written directions.
- Speak clearly, concisely and distinctly.
- Keep accurate records.
- Work effectively and efficiently with a minimum of supervision.
- Act independently, exercise sound judgment within established guidelines and maintain confidentiality.
- Accurately use a computer keyboard by touch.

License or Certificate:

Must obtain and maintain a **valid** Public Safety Dispatcher POST and Emergency Medical Dispatch certification within one (1) year of hire.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of education and experience that provides the knowledge and skills required is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and skills would be:

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. One year of experience in voice communications equipment or public contact work involving the use of communication equipment.

Education and Experience – Lateral Entry:

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. Two (2) years of continuous employment as a Dispatcher or Communications Operator (in Police or Fire) in the state of California within the last three (3) years. Possession of a Public Safety Dispatcher POST certificate is highly desirable.

Special Requirements

Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions:

Incumbents are frequently required to remain in the immediate work area throughout the work shift and may be ordered to work overtime with short notice.

Will be required to work various assigned shifts, including weekends and holidays.

Requires the ability to sit for extended periods of time, read color coded displays; use a computer terminal for extended periods; hear sufficiently to accurately and completely obtain information from callers; communicate clearly to effectively dispatch information over the radio/communication system. Tasks are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

Career Ladder Information

Experience gained in this classification may serve to meet the minimum requirements for promotion to Public Safety Communications Supervisor.

Commission Meeting
January 14, 2008

Honorable Chair and Members
of the Civil Service Commission
City Hall
Torrance, CA

**SUBJECT: Approval of the Revised Class Specification for Public Safety
Dispatcher**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director that your Honorable Body approve the revised class specification for Public Safety Dispatcher and forward it to the City Council for adoption.

BACKGROUND

The City Council approved the consolidation of the Police and Fire Communications under Public Safety Dispatch in 2005 and the classification of Public Safety Dispatcher was created in March 2007. There are currently six vacancies for Public Safety Dispatcher that are currently being covered by Police Officers or Firefighters to cover the assignments and ensure continuity of service.

Staff has been working aggressively to recruit and hire Public Safety Dispatchers; however, the position is difficult to fill due to strict background requirements and competition in the labor market. In order to attract experienced Public Safety Dispatchers from other agencies the Police Chief requested that staff develop a Public Safety Dispatch Lateral Transfer Program. The highlights of the Lateral Transfer Program include offering new hires a monetary transfer incentive as well as crediting the employee with vacation and sick leave upon successful completion of the twelve month probationary period.

An agreement with TME-AFSCME to implement the Public Safety Dispatch Lateral Transfer Program was adopted by the City Council at their meeting of January 8, 2008. As part of the agreement, current Police Communication Operators who transfer to the position of Public Safety Dispatcher will also qualify for the transfer incentive.

The class specification has been revised and is before your Honorable Body for approval. Management has met and conferred on the changes to the class specification and TME-AFSCME concurs with this recommendation.

ANALYSIS

The class specification for Public Safety Dispatcher has been modified to include the distinction between the Lateral-entry Public Safety Dispatcher as well as a change to the Education and Experience section. The changes are as follows:

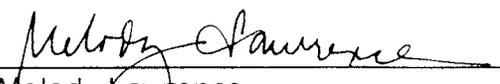
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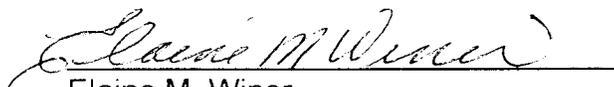
Education and Experience – Lateral Entry

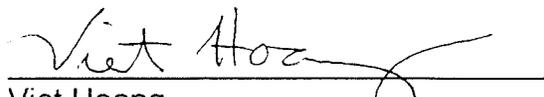
Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. Two (2) years of continuous employment as a Dispatcher or Communications Operator (in Police or Fire) in the state of California within the last three (3) years. Possession of a Public Safety Dispatcher POST certificate is highly desirable.

Respectfully submitted,

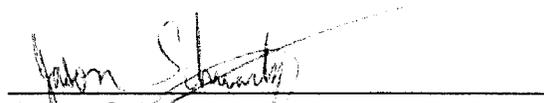
By 
Melody Lawrence
Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:


Elaine M. Winer
Human Resources Director


Viet Hoang
Acting Civil Service Manager


Jeannie Moorman
TME-AFSCME President


Jason Schwartz
TME-AFSCME Treasurer

Attachments:

- A. Revised Class Specification for Public Safety Dispatcher
- B. Tentative Agreement with TME-AFSCME

Public Safety Dispatcher

Definition:

Under general supervision, operates communication systems utilizing radio, telephone and computer equipment to receive 911 emergency and routine calls requesting police or fire services; provides information to the public; dispatches safety personnel and equipment in response to service requests and to organize and coordinate the activities of field units; maintains records of activities in response to service requests; and performs related work as required.

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Supervision Exercised/Received:

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Examples of Essential Duties

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Examples of Other Duties

The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties:

- Provides on-the-job training to newly hired Public Safety Dispatchers in dispatch procedures.
- Performs routine data entry as required.
- Performs related duties as required.

Minimum Qualification Guidelines

Knowledge of:

- Communication equipment in use by the City.
- Operations of computer-aided public safety dispatch systems.
- Emergency medical dispatch protocols.
- Standard radio and telephone communications receiving and transmitting equipment.
- Standard broadcasting procedures and rules.
- Public safety classification codes and computer codes.
- City policies and procedures affecting departmental operations.
- General City operations.

Ability to:

- Learn, perform and retain computer-aided dispatch and related software applications.
- Operate City communication equipment and telephone switchboard.
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- Keep accurate records.
- Work effectively and efficiently with a minimum of supervision.
- Act independently, exercise sound judgment within established guidelines and maintain confidentiality.
- Accurately use a computer keyboard by touch.

License or Certificate:

Must obtain and maintain a **valid** Public Safety Dispatcher POST and Emergency Medical Dispatch certification within one (1) year of hire.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of education and experience that provides the knowledge and skills required is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and skills would be:

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. One year of experience in voice communications equipment or public contact work involving the use of communication equipment.

Education and Experience – Lateral Entry:

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED Certificate. Two (2) years of continuous employment as a Dispatcher or Communications Operator (in Police or Fire) in the state of California within the last three (3) years. Possession of a Public Safety Dispatcher POST certificate is highly desirable.

Special Requirements

Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions:

Incumbents are frequently required to remain in the immediate work area throughout the work shift and may be ordered to work overtime with short notice.

Will be required to work various assigned shifts, including weekends and holidays.

Requires the ability to sit for extended periods of time, read color coded displays; use a computer terminal for extended periods; hear sufficiently to accurately and completely obtain information from callers; communicate clearly to effectively dispatch information over the radio/communication system. Tasks are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

Career Ladder Information

Experience gained in this classification may serve to meet the minimum requirements for promotion to Public Safety Communications Supervisor.

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT –
PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH LATERAL TRANSFER PROGRAM

Based on discussions between Management of the City of Torrance and representatives of TME-AFSCME, the undersigned agree to the following:

- 1) Creating a Public Safety Dispatch Lateral Transfer program.
- 2) Updating the job classification for the Public Safety Dispatcher position to allow for Lateral Transfer appointments.
- 3) Amending Section 2.1 (Salary Ranges and Class Titles) of the TME 2007-2010 MOU to add the Public Safety Dispatcher Lateral position on the salary range. The Police Chief may appoint lateral transfer employees at a higher step on the salary range depending on experience.
- 4) Employees hired as lateral transfers will receive a transfer incentive in the amount of \$1500. Upon successful completion of the probationary period (twelve months), employees will be credited with 72 hours of sick leave and 111.96 hours of vacation leave.
- 5) Employees currently in the job classification of Police Communication Operator that transfer to the position of Public Safety Dispatcher will receive a transfer incentive in the amount of \$1500. The transfer incentive will be paid once the employee signs an agreement to transfer to the Public Safety Dispatcher position. The transfer incentive amount will be issued on a separate check with all applicable taxes taken out.
- 6) City agrees that employees who transfer to the position of Public Safety Dispatcher will not lose any money prior to achieving the required Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) certificate. These employees will be made whole until they achieve the EMD certificate.
- 7) Employees currently in the job classification of Public Safety Dispatcher who transferred to the position from the Police Communications Operator position prior to signing of this agreement, will also receive the \$1500 transfer incentive.
- 8) Employees that remain in the Police Communications Operator position and decide to transfer at a later date, will qualify for the \$1500 transfer incentive.
- 9) TME-AFSCME expressly understands and acknowledges that implementation of this tentative agreement and payment for "Transfer Incentive" is contingent upon approval of the Job Classification changes from the Civil Service Commission and the City Council.

10) City will make a good faith recommendation that both the Civil Service Commission and the City Council approve the provisions of this agreement.

11) Upon approval by the Civil Service Commission and the City Council TME-AFSCME and City will amend the existing MOU as necessary to bring it into conformity with the provisions of this agreement.

Signed this 19th day of December, 2007.

Management

Aram Chapanyan
[Signature]

TME-AFSCME

IN Moon
Debra Massey
[Signature]
