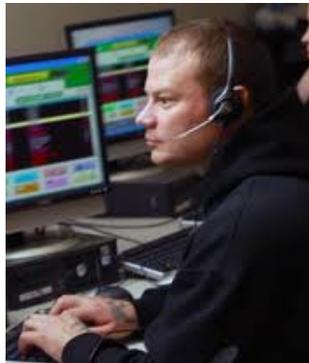


# Telecommunicator Training Program Manual

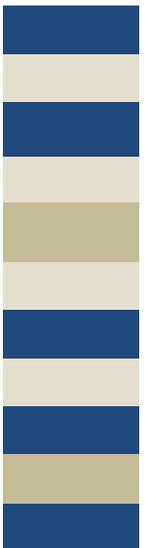
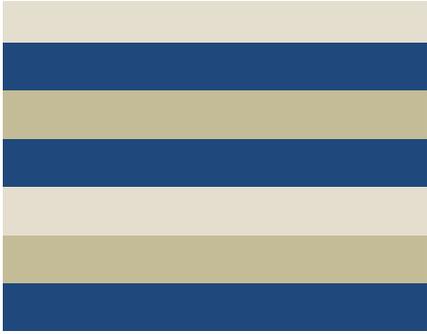


State 911  
Committee

*Dispatcher  
Training  
Subcommittee*



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## **Introduction:**

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As set forth in M.C.L. 484.1413 (1)(b), the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) has established administrative rules mandating all primary Public Service Answering Points (PSAP, the point where the 911 call is answered) across the State of Michigan maintain a minimum training standard for every Telecommunicator (those persons answering 911 calls and dispatching public safety units to the scene). Until now, there have been no minimum standards for basic Telecommunicator training in Michigan with the exception of Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) certification and more recently National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) Training.

The Michigan Public Service Commission mandate became effective as of December 13, 2012. Any Telecommunicator hired by a primary PSAP on or after December 13, 2011, is required to complete the minimum training standards described in this manual.

Funding for this training is available through Public Act (P.A.) 32 of 1986 to qualified PSAPs that submit an application and follow funding guidelines. This funding is made available to PSAPs for courses and expenses approved through the process established by the State 911 Committee (SNC). A list of approved courses and eligible expenses can be viewed at <http://www.michigan.gov/snc>.

A Telecommunicator training workgroup, including members of the PSAP community as participants, has helped to make this program implementation as smooth as possible. The Telecommunicator training workgroup has developed a white paper with training standards including program guidelines and processes.

There are many venues across the State of Michigan interested in providing training to their local PSAPs. This includes, but is not limited to, community colleges and universities. Some of these colleges are currently offering approved courses and many are prepared to work with local PSAPs to develop courses tailored to the needs of the local PSAPs and the public safety community.

In addition to assistance provided by colleges and universities, there are a number of approved training providers. For a full listing of approved courses go to <http://www.michigan.gov/snc>.

The State 911 Dispatcher Training Subcommittee (DTS) presents this with the knowledge that future changes may be necessary and intends for this to be a living document. Future consideration may be given for in-house training to meet continuing education requirements.

## **Legislation:**

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- A. P.A. 78 of 1999, which amended P.A. 32 of 1986, created a training fund. This funding is available through a 6% distribution of the state "all device 911 surcharge" (M.C.L. 484.1408 (4)(c)). This Act also requires that the courses for which training funds are to be used must go through the appropriate approval process. That program is administered through the State of Michigan 911 Office with the approval of the State 911 Committee.
- B. P.A. 165 of 2007 transferred responsibility for approving courses from the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) to the Emergency Telephone Service Committee, now recognized as the State 911 Committee.

## **Expected Costs and Funding:**

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Funding for this program is provided through the training fund established in P.A. 78 of 1999. The distribution of training funds is based on the Full-Time Employee (FTE) count for each eligible PSAP. While it is possible that this program may incur unforeseen costs and expenses, preliminary

estimates indicate that the current collection and distribution of training funds will be sufficient to meet the established mandates. The efficacy of these funds will be re-evaluated as the process moves forward.

## **Requirements:**

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Minimum Telecommunicator training requirements as promulgated by the State 911 Committee:

A. Module I: A 40 hour basic telecommunicator course consisting of the basic requirements needed to perform the responsibilities of a Telecommunicator which must:

1. Be completed within 18 months of the date of hire for Trainee Telecommunicators hired after the effective date of these rules.
2. Be completed within 18 months of the effective date of these rules for Trainee Telecommunicators hired less than 12 months prior to the effective date of these rules.
3. Consist of State 911 Committee approved courses.
4. Include, at minimum, the following topics:
  - a. Overview of Public Safety – Police, Fire and EMS
  - b. Telecommunicator Roles and Responsibilities
  - c. Legal Aspects of Dispatcher Services
  - d. Interpersonal Communications
  - e. Public Safety Technologies
  - f. Telephone Techniques
  - g. Call Classification
  - h. Radio Communications
  - i. Stress Management

B. Module II: 40 hours of training which must:

1. Be completed within 24 months of the date of hire for Trainee Telecommunicators hired after the effective date of these rules.
2. Be completed within 24 months of the effective date of these rules for Trainee Telecommunicators hired less than 12 months prior to the effective date of these rules.
3. Consist of State 911 Committee approved courses.
4. Include eight hours of each of the following topics:
  - a. Domestic Violence
  - b. Suicide Intervention
  - c. 911 Liability
  - d. Stress Management
  - e. Homeland Security Elective
5. Module II training can be completed as one 40 hour training course or in eight hour increments of the above required training topics.

C. Module III: 24 hours of Continuing Education

1. All Designated Telecommunicators are required to attend 24 hours of approved training every 24 months. All SNC approved training can be used for continuing education or Module III and will not include a Module Endorsement.
2. Internal training means training that is specific to a primary PSAP. A maximum of eight (8) hours of the 24 hours continuing education may be internal training. Internal training shall qualify as part of the allowed eight (8) hours if the training content is directly related to improving one (1) or more of the 26 telecommunicator essential job tasks listed in Appendix A. An annual accounting of the internal training will be provided to the State 911 Administrative Office upon request.

**NOTE:** Module I and Module II requirements are applicable to any telecommunicator hired on or after December 13, 2011. Telecommunicators hired prior to this date are not required to complete the aforementioned training requirements. Training of Telecommunicators in areas such as Emergency Medical Dispatch, LEIN, NIMS and other federal, state, or locally required training is in addition to Modules I and II and is the responsibility of the employing agency. However, NIMS 100 and 700 may satisfy the Module II Homeland Security requirement (IV)(C)(4)(e).

- D. State 911 Committee approval is required for all courses for which training funds will be used. The DTS will review requests for Module I and Module II Endorsements for approval to be added to the training course listing. This endorsement is a tool and is completely optional. It is the PSAP administrator's responsibility to determine whether or not a basic or advanced telecommunicator course meets the standard requirements.
- E. **New Hires:** The 24-month continuing education requirements begin after two years of employment and in conjunction with successful completion of Modules I and II.
- F. **Existing Telecommunicators:** Telecommunicators who are continuously employed by a Michigan Primary PSAP for a minimum of 12 months before December 13, 2012, (as referenced in R484.803, Rule 3) will become Designated Telecommunicators. Continuous employment shall be recognized as no break of employment of more than 30 calendar days. All Designated Telecommunicators are required to begin 24 hours of continuing education as of December 13, 2012.
- G. **Leaves of Absence:** The requirement for 24 hours of continuing education in each 24-month period may be extended if notice of a PSAP approved leave of absence is provided to the State 911 Office by the Primary PSAP Director.
- H. Failure to complete these requirements will result in the Telecommunicator becoming undesignated.

## **Registrations and Notifications:**

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The Primary PSAP Director must register their 911 Telecommunicators with the State 911 Committee using the appropriate system established by the SNC. Notification of a leave of absence for any telecommunicator must be provided to the State 911 Office for any leave which prevents completion of required training. New hires are to be entered within 30 days of starting employment. Telecommunicators who retire, resign, or are terminated will be entered as inactive within 30 days of leaving employment.

Training course completion must also be entered in the appropriate system established by the SNC. This information must be entered within 30 days of completion.

## **Policies:**

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- A. The Telecommunicator classifications of Trainee, Designated and Delinquent are eligible to perform Telecommunicator duties as described in Appendix A. Undesignated Telecommunicators are disqualified from performing Telecommunicator duties as described in Appendix A.
- B. Designated classification may be maintained as a telecommunicator changes employment from one Primary PSAP to another, as long as the lapse in employment by a Primary PSAP does not exceed three months. If a telecommunicator takes a leave of absence or leaves employment for

a period longer than three months and maintains the continuing education requirements, they will retain their designated telecommunicator status when returning to employment.

#### C. Failure to Comply

1. When the Telecommunicator Training Records of the State 911 Office indicate that an individual employed by a Primary PSAP as a Telecommunicator has not met the training requirements of these Rules, the State 911 Office will classify the individual as a Delinquent Telecommunicator as of the first business day of the following month. At this time, the State 911 Office will notify the Director of the employing Primary PSAP(s) and provide the following information:
  - The Telecommunicator's name
  - A description of the training deficiency
2. The notification will state that the Director has until the first business day of the following month to submit the required training documentation to the State 911 Office to bring the Telecommunicator into compliance with these Rules. At that time, the Telecommunicator's status will be restored to their former classification of Designated or upgrade the classification from Trainee to Designated as applicable.
3. If the Telecommunicator has not completed sufficient training to be brought into compliance with these rules, the employing Director(s) must submit a written plan by the first business day of the month following the delinquency notice to the State 911 Office, as set forth in (VI)(C)(2), which will bring the telecommunicator into compliance within six months of the date of the Delinquency notification. The plan must be approved by the SNC Dispatcher Training Subcommittee who may take factors, such as the inherited state of a PSAP by a new Director, when deciding whether to approve a six month plan. The Telecommunicator's status will remain Delinquent until such time as the required training documentation is on file with the State 911 Office. At that time, the Telecommunicator's status will be restored to their former classification of Designated or upgrade the classification from Trainee to Designated as applicable. If the required training cannot be documented within the six month time period, the Telecommunicator's classification will be Undesignated.
4. Failure to respond to the initial delinquency notification by the Primary PSAP Director(s) will cause the State 911 Office to reclassify the Telecommunicator as Undesignated, and notification of the classification change will be sent to the Director(s) and the appropriate executive personnel.
5. Failure to submit a six month plan to bring a Delinquent Telecommunicator into compliance with these Rules within one month following the delinquency notice will cause the State 911 office to reclassify the Telecommunicator as Undesignated, and notification of the classification change will be sent to the Director(s) and the appropriate executive personnel.
6. A report of any Delinquency or Undesignated classifications will be made to the State 911 Committee Certification Subcommittee for potential review for funding/operational issues for those Primary PSAPs.

#### D. Exigent Circumstances

1. Nothing in these rules precludes a Primary PSAP Director's authority to use whatever reasonable resources are available to perform telecommunicator duties in an emergency or crisis situation of short duration. If a written complaint is received by the Dispatcher Training Subcommittee that a Primary PSAP has used Undesignated Telecommunicators beyond the spirit and intent of this exception, the Dispatcher Training Subcommittee will

review the information and determine whether the use of Undesignated Telecommunicators was beyond the spirit and intent of this exception. If so, a report of the same will be provided to the Certification Subcommittee.

2. The PSAP Director will notify the State 911 Office of any use of Undesignated Telecommunicators due to exigent circumstances in excess of two hours.

## **Definitions:**

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- A. Date of Hire – Start date of work as documented in the Telecommunicator’s personnel records.
- B. Delinquent Telecommunicator – A Delinquent Telecommunicator is either of the following:
  1. A telecommunicator whose training records on file with the State 911 Office indicate that the individual has not completed Modules I and II within the time period required for Trainee Telecommunicators, AND notification of the Telecommunicator’s delinquency status has been sent to the director of the Primary PSAP(s) employing the individual, as required by these rules.
  2. A telecommunicator who has not completed any required Continuing Education as required by the rules AND notification of the Telecommunicator’s delinquency status has been sent to the director of the Primary PSAP(s) employing the individual, as required by these rules.
- C. Designated Telecommunicator – A Designated Telecommunicator is any person that has completed the required training within the required timeframe.
- D. Leave of Absence – A leave of absence is defined by the employing agency. The Director of the PSAP should use his or her discretion in determining what is or is not an acceptable reason for a leave of absence. However, this should not be abused in order to allow more time for a telecommunicator to complete required training.
- E. Part-time Employee – The definition of a part time employee is determined by the employing agency. Part time employees are subject to the same training requirements of the promulgated rules as full-time employees.
- F. Trainee Telecommunicator – A person hired as a Telecommunicator less than 12 months before the effective date of these rules or a person hired after the effective date of these rules who has not yet completed Training Modules I and II, but is still within the required time period for completion of Modules I and II.
- G. Undesignated Telecommunicator – The SNC will classify a Delinquent Telecommunicator as Undesignated when the Telecommunicators PSAP manager has failed to comply with the provisions of these Rules to correct the Telecommunicator’s training deficiency.

## **Appendix A - Telecommunicator Essential Job Tasks**

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1. Process calls received on all designated telephone lines.
2. Accurately record information provided by callers.
3. Question callers to determine location and nature of problem, and accurately classify as an emergency or non-emergency call.
4. Simultaneously perform various tasks while in reception of multiple audio and visual sources (channels, talk groups, monitors, etc.). This includes answering multiple telephone calls for assistance and being able to quickly and effectively prioritize their call intake/call taking process. Effectively manage the process of simultaneous telephone calls and radio traffic from field personnel.
5. Determine in a timely manner, the destination for referral of calls and complete the transfer with confirmation of its reception to the appropriate location. Initiate the call intake process of information needed for immediate dispatch.
6. Identify the jurisdictional responding agency and the priority of the call. Locate and dispatch the closest appropriate resource.
7. Document appropriate narrative data for dispatch. Document information received on an "open line" call. Continue to document traffic from field units into computer system or manual card system and update unit status as appropriate.
8. Provide updates on calls when applicable.
9. Maintain professional voice tone during emergency and non-emergency situations received by telephone and radio.
10. Receive and process all calls for service according to agency policies and/or procedures.
11. Communicate with citizens from various backgrounds and who vary in age, gender, and mental abilities, and may be under the influence of alcohol/drugs. Attempt to utilize foreign language interpreter service, as applicable, when a foreign speaking individual calls for assistance in order to determine nature and location of problem.
12. Process information from citizens who cannot or will not provide appropriate and necessary information to initiate a call.
13. Receive calls transferred from other agencies and process.
14. Prioritize pending calls for service. Be cognizant and aware of potential duplicate calls or related calls.
15. Re-contact callers that are disconnected to determine nature and location of call or event in accordance with local protocol.
16. Operate TDD and TTY equipment in order to process calls from hearing or speech impaired individuals in need of service.
17. Possess and maintain knowledge of agency policies and procedures.
18. In accordance with local protocol, be able to advise citizens of actions to take during emergency and non-emergency situations.
19. Be able to refer or process internal complaints or requests for repair or service of agency equipment and systems.
20. Process and prioritize various information requests using local, state, federal, and international databases in a computer environment.
21. Receive, document, and disseminate additional requests for information and resources.
22. Disseminate to other agencies pertinent information via telephone, radio, computer, or other appropriate communication devices.
23. Monitor equipment alarms. Monitor other alarms from outside sources if applicable.
24. Coordinate, document, and track the response of mutual aid resources.
25. Immediately respond to requests for back up units and dispatch according to local protocol.
26. Brief on-coming or relief personnel of shift activity and status of units according to local protocol.

## Appendix B - Telecommunicator Skills List

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### Communications:

- Ability to write and type legibly.
- Ability to professionally and accurately communicate both orally and in writing.
- Ability to read and understand written and electronic communication.
- Ability to hear and comprehend information and sounds coming through a communication device.
- Ability to speak with sufficient clarity in person or with a communication device.

### Job Performance:

- Ability to maintain composure and handle stressful situations.
- Ability to act in a decisive manner using good judgment.
- Ability to effectively prioritize situations and information, and make appropriate decisions based on the information received.
- Ability to listen, act, and remain focused during stressful and non-stressful situations.
- Ability to multi-task under a variety of circumstances.
- Ability to maintain a professional demeanor at all times.
- Ability to adapt to new or unique situations.
- Ability to perform work- related requests and directives.
- Ability to learn and apply new information and techniques.
- Ability to testify in court in a professional manner.
- Ability to learn jurisdictional boundaries as well as surrounding geography.

### Judgment:

- Ability to respect private and confidential information.
- Ability to recognize when to self-initiate decision making while recognizing when to seek guidance and/or clearance from a supervisor.
- Ability to detach from caller's emotions yet remain empathetic.
- Ability and willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions and decisions.

### Relationships with Others:

- Ability to work cooperatively with supervisors and peers.
- Ability to act in a mature and professional manner.
- Ability to work in a team environment and support other team members.
- Ability and willingness to accept criticism without reacting defensively, rationalizing mistakes, or blaming others.
- Ability to adapt to a variety of internal and external work circumstances.

### Initiative and Reliability:

- Ability to show initiative in completing job tasks.
- Ability to handle both task and people oriented duties.
- Ability to evaluate previous incidents in order to improve performance.
- Ability to manage personal stress.

## **Appendix C – Allowable/Disallowable Use of Training Funds**

***For an updated listing of Allowable/Disallowable Usage of Funds for Training, please access the State 911 Committee's Website at:***

[www.michigan.gov/snc](http://www.michigan.gov/snc)