Telecommunicator Training Program Policy Handbook

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STATE 911 COMMITTEE

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Introduction

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) has established administrative rules mandating that all primary Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) throughout the State of Michigan obtain and maintain minimum training standards for each telecommunicator.

Funding to assist in covering costs for this training is available through Public Act (P.A.) 32 of 1986 to qualified Primary PSAPs that submit an annual application and follow established funding guidelines. Courses and expenses are approved through a process adopted by the State 911 Committee (SNC). A list of approved courses and instructors can be found in the Michigan State 911 Administration Portal (MiSNAP). The Allowable/Disallowable Usage of Funds for Training can be found on the SNC website.

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

This serves as a policy and implementation guide to support the administrative rules established by the MPSC. It outlines procedures, expectations, and best practices for PSAPs to meet and maintain compliance with mandated training standards. While it complements the official rules, it also includes internal policies and operational guidance specific to Michigan's 911 community.

Legislation

Public Act 78 of 1999, amending P.A. 32 of 1986, established the Telecommunicator Training Fund. Funding is provided through a 5.5% allocation from the state's "all device 911 surcharge" (MCL 484.1408(4)(c)). To qualify for funding, courses must be approved through a process administered by the Michigan State 911 Administrative Office and authorized by the SNC 911 Training Subcommittee (NTS).

Expected Costs and Funding

Training fund distribution is determined by the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) count of each eligible Primary PSAP. These funds are intended to assist PSAPs in covering costs associated with meeting mandated training standards. The effectiveness and adequacy of this funding model will be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to meet the needs of PSAPs.

Training Requirements

Minimum telecommunicator training requirements as promulgated by the SNC:

Module	Timeline	Required Hours	Topics
I	18 months from date of hire	40	Public Safety Overview Legal Aspects Radio/Phone Techniques Stress Management Call Classification
II	24 months from date of hire	40	Domestic Violence Suicide Intervention 911 Liability Stress Management Homeland Security
III	Every 24 months	24	Continuing education (includes internal training if aligned with essential job tasks)

NOTE: Module I and Module II requirements are applicable to any telecommunicator hired on or after December 13, 2012. 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 (EMD), 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.

A. Module I (MCL 484.804(2): A 40-hour basic telecommunicator course consisting of the basic requirements outlined below shall:
   1. Be completed within 18 months of the date of hire.
   2. Consist of an SNC-approved course.
   3. Include, at a minimum, the following topics:
      a. Overview of Public Safety – Police, Fire, and EMD.
      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.
   4. Module I training should be completed as one (1) 40-hour training course.

B. Module II (MCL 484.804(4): 40 hours of training which shall meet the basic requirements outlined below:
   1. Be completed within 24 months of the date of hire.
   2. Consist of an SNC-approved course(s).
   3. Include eight (8) hours of each of the following topics:
      a. Domestic Violence.
      b. Suicide Intervention.

c. 911 Liability.
d. Stress Management.
e. Homeland Security Elective.
Note: NIMS 100 and 700 may satisfy the Module II Homeland Security requirement R484.804(4)(e).

4. Module II training can be completed as one (1) consecutive 40-hour training course or in separate courses consisting of eight (8) hour increments covering each of the above-mentioned training topics.

C. Module III: 24 hours of Continuing Education
1. After successful completion of Modules I and II, all telecommunicators are required to attend 24 hours of approved training every 24 months. For non-grandfathered telecommunicators, their first training cycle is due 48 months from their date of hire and every 24 months after. All SNC-approved training can be used for continuing education towards Module III requirements.
2. Internal training includes training that is specific to a primary PSAP. A maximum of eight (8) hours of the 24 hours of continuing education may include internal training. Internal training shall qualify if the training content is directly related to improving one (1) or more of the 29 telecommunicator essential job tasks listed in Appendix A. An annual accounting of the internal training will be provided to the NTS by the PSAP upon request to indicate specific training areas included in the internal training course.

Training providers must enter course completion data into MiSNAP within 30 days of course completion. PSAP directors or designees must enter internal training within 30 days, ensuring it aligns with essential job tasks or skills listed in Appendix A or B.

Policy and Compliance Procedures

State 911 Committee's NTS approval is required for all courses for which training funds will be used. The course, instructor, and course location (online, hybrid, or physical) must be approved for the course to be approved. The NTS will review requests for Module I and Module II Endorsements for approval to be added to the training course listing.

A. Telecommunicators classified as trainee, designated, or delinquent may perform duties outlined in Appendix A. Telecommunicators classified as undesignated are not eligible to perform these duties.

B. A designated telecommunicator may retain their classification when transferring between primary PSAPs, provided the lapse in employment does not exceed 24 months. If the lapse exceeds 24 months, the telecommunicator may retain designated status only if continuing education requirements have been met. The State 911 Office will verify training obtained independent of employment.

C. Plan of Action
1. A plan of action must be submitted when a telecommunicator becomes delinquent. When entering a plan of action, please include the SNC Course Number, SNC Course Name, Location, and Date the course will be completed, or deadline given by the agency if the course is a self-paced online course. As a reminder, the plan of action must bring the employee into compliance within 180 days of becoming delinquent according to the training rules. Once the plan of action is submitted it will be reviewed

by the plan of action workgroup.

2. In order for a plan of action to be valid it must be approved prior to 30 days after the date of delinquency. The plan must contain all information needed for the workgroup to determine that the plan will bring the telecommunicator into compliance.

D . Failure to Comply

1. If MiSNAP records show a telecommunicator has not met training requirements, the State 911 Office will classify them as delinquent on the first business day of the following month. Notification will be sent via MiSNAP to the employing PSAP director.
2. The PSAP director must submit a plan of action through MiSNAP by the first business day of the month following the delinquency notice. The plan must outline how the telecommunicator will meet training requirements within 180 days. The telecommunicator remains delinquent until training is documented in MiSNAP. If not resolved within 180 days, the classification changes to undesignated.
3. Failure to respond to the delinquency notice or submit a plan within one (1) month will result in the reclassification of the telecommunicator as undesignated. MiSNAP will notify the PSAP director and executive personnel with additional email notification from the State 911 Office.
4. Delinquent or undesignated status reports will be provided to the NTS for review. If necessary, the Certification Subcommittee may conduct a compliance review, which includes a training summary report.

E. Leave of Absence

Module III, 24 continuing education requirements for the 24-month period, may be extended if notice of a PSAP-approved leave of absence is provided to the State 911 Office by the PSAP director for NTS review. A leave of absence is reported by completing a plan of action in MiSNAP, checking the leave of absence checkbox.

Guidelines

This section outlines requirements and guidance regarding changes to a telecommunicator's status when employment is interrupted or transferred between PSAPs.

A. It is recommended to add new hires in MiSNAP within seven days of starting employment. For transfers from another PSAP, the director may search for the employee in MiSNAP and update the hire date in the PSAP history tab if necessary. The PSAP date of hire will need to be updated on the PSAP history tab if the employee is not added on the date of hire.

B. It is recommended that within seven days of a telecommunicator's retirement, resignation, or termination, the PSAP director or designee mark the employee as inactive in MiSNAP and enter the departure date.

Completion of Training Prior to employment

New hires who complete SNC-approved training prior to gaining employment (attending Module I and Module II in high school or through an academy prior to becoming employed) will start as designated employees. They will have 24 months from date of hire to complete their first continuing education cycle. If you have an employee who has completed training, please reach out to the State 911 Office to have the training entered upon providing a certificate from the approved program.

Break in Employment less than 24 months

A. Trainee Telecommunicator
A trainee who has not completed Module I and Module II will be provided with the remaining time to complete Module II from initial employment. They can get an 180-day extension by entering and having a plan of action approved. Their Module III due date will not change and align with the original hire date.

A. Designated Telecommunicator

May retain designated status if rehired within 24 months and continuing education requirements have been maintained.

B. Delinquent or Undesignated Telecommunicator

1. Will be reclassified as delinquent upon rehire.
2. A plan of action must be submitted and approved within 30 days, bringing the employee into compliance within 180 days.
    a. Grandfathered employees must complete 24 hours of SNC-approved continuing education within 180 days of rehire.
    b. Non-grandfathered employees who have completed Modules I and II must complete 24 hours of SNC-approved continuing education within 180 days of rehire**.**
    c. Non-grandfathered employees with Module II incomplete must complete Module II within 180 days of rehire.

Break in Employment exceeding 24 months

B. Trainee Telecommunicator
A trainee who has completed Module I but not Module II will be provided with the remaining time to complete Module II from initial employment. They can get an 180-day extension by entering and having a plan of action approved. Their Module III due date will then align 24 hours every 24 months according to the rehire date.

C. Designated Telecommunicator
May retain designated status if all training requirements were met prior to separation or if they were obtained independent of employment. If training is obtained independent of employment, the State 911 Office will enter training into MiSNAP. Employees will be reactivated in MiSNAP as designated and will have 24 months to complete their 24 hours of continuing education with their training cycle falling on their rehire date.

D. Grandfathered Telecommunicator
Must complete 24 hours of continuing education within 24 months of rehire date. Their continuing education cycle will follow their rehire date.

E. Delinquent Telecommunicator
Must complete 24 hours of continuing education within 24 months of rehire date. Their continuing education cycle will follow their rehire date.

F. Undesignated Telecommunicator
Must complete 24 hours of continuing education within 24 months of rehire date. Their

continuing education cycle will now follow their rehire date.

Definitions

A. Date of Hire – Start date of work as a telecommunicator as documented in the telecommunicator's personnel record.

B. Delinquent Telecommunicator – A delinquent telecommunicator is either of the following:

1. A telecommunicator whose training records are on file with the State 911 Office indicates 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 all required continuing education 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 who has completed all the required training within the required timeframe.

D. Grandfathered Telecommunicator – A telecommunicator employed by a primary PSAP for a minimum of 12 months before December 13, 2012, who is exempt from completing Modules I and II but is required to complete 24 hours of continuing education every two years as outlined in R484.805.

E. 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.

F. 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.

G. Trainee Telecommunicator – A person hired as a telecommunicator less than 12 months before December 13, 2012, or a person hired after December 13, 2012, who has not yet completed Modules I and II but is still within the required time period for completion of Modules I and II.

H. Undesignated Telecommunicator –The SNC will classify a delinquent telecommunicator as undesignated when the telecommunicator's PSAP director has failed to comply with the provisions of these Rules to correct the telecommunicator's training deficiency.

Appendix A – Telecommunicator Essential Job Tasks

1. Demonstrate clear and effective communications.
2. Process calls for assistance received on all designated communications systems.
3. Accurately record information provided by callers.
4. Question callers to determine location and nature of problem and accurately classify as an emergency or non-emergency call.
5. Simultaneously perform various tasks while in reception of multiple audio and visual sources (channels, talk groups, monitors, etc.). This includes quickly and effectively answering multiple communications requesting assistance and appropriately prioritizing those requests.
6. 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.
7. Identify the most appropriate responding agency and the priority of the call. Locate and dispatch the most appropriate resource in accordance with established response procedures.
8. Document appropriate narrative data for dispatch. Document information received on an "open line" call and determine whether the open line is a call or a TDD/TTY device. Continue to document traffic from field units and update unit status as appropriate.
9. Identify and communicate scene and responder safety concerns.
10. Provide updates on calls when applicable.
11. Maintain professional voice tone and manage calls/incidents accordingly during emergency and non-emergency situations.
12. Identify and mitigate caller safety concerns.
13. Communicate with callers from various backgrounds and who vary in ethnicity, age, race, gender, and mental abilities, and may be under the influence of alcohol/drugs. Utilize foreign language interpreter service as applicable
14. Process information from callers who cannot or will not provide appropriate and necessary information to initiate an incident.
15. Receive and process calls transferred or relayed from other agencies.
16. Prioritize pending calls for service. Be cognizant and aware of potential duplicate or related calls.
17. Re-contact callers who are disconnected to determine nature and location of call or event in accordance with local protocol.
18. Operate text, TDD and TTY equipment in order to process calls from hearing or speech impaired individuals in need of service.
19. Possess and maintain knowledge of inter-agency and respective public safety agency policies and procedures.
20. Provide callers with pre-arrival/post-dispatch instructions in accordance with established protocols, policies, and procedures.
21. Refer or process internal complaints and/or requests for repair or service of agency equipment and systems.
22. Process and prioritize various information requests using local, state, federal, and international databases.

23. Receive, document, and disseminate additional requests for information and resources.
24. Disseminate to other agencies pertinent information using various methods of communication.
25. Monitor equipment alarms. Monitor other alarms from outside sources if applicable.
26. Coordinate, document, and track the response of mutual aid resources.
27. Immediately respond to requests for back up units and dispatch according to local protocol.
28. Brief on-coming relief personnel of shift activity and status of units.
29. Obtain and maintain appropriate and required certifications.

Appendix B – Telecommunicator Skills List

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 communications devices.
- Ability to speak with sufficient clarity in person or with a communications device.

***Job Performance*:**

- Ability to maintain composure and handle stressful situations.
- Ability to quickly act in a decisive manner using good judgment.
- Ability to prioritize situations and information quickly and effectively 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.
    - Ability to follow directions.
    - Working knowledge of geography and mapping systems.
    - Ability to learn and efficiently use multiple computer and radio systems.

***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 Usage of Funds for Training

For an updated listing of Allowable/Disallowable Usage of Funds for Training, please access the SNC's website.