

Bowie City Police Department - General Orders



TITLE: CALL CENTER		NUMBER: 701
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X NEW _ AMENDS _ RESCINDS		DATE:

AUTHORITY Chief John K. Nesky	ACCREDITATIONS STANDARDS	TOTAL PAGES 7
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I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures to provide effective processing and recording of incoming non-emergency calls to the City of Bowie Police Department as well as after hour calls.

II. POLICY

The Non-Emergency Call Center will provide a 24-hour/daily-communication network for effective operational use for the purpose of receiving Non-Emergency Police calls for service and City of Bowie emergency calls for service after hours.

III. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Non-Emergency Call Center receives requests for service from citizens and businesses, places requests for service into the Computer Aided Dispatch System for dispatch by Prince George's County Public Safety Communications to officers. Additionally, the Non-Emergency Call Center receives after hour calls for service for the City of Bowie Department of Public Works, Department of Community Service and makes the proper notifications to city personnel for service.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

The Non-Emergency Call Center, commonly referred to as "Call Center", is a component of the Department's Operations Support Division and under the direct supervision of the Call Center Supervisor. All Call Center staff members are classified as essential personnel.

The Police Department Call Center personnel are entrusted with the following duties:

- Call center personnel are required to report to duty on time as assigned.
- Call center personnel shall be required to report for duty during natural disasters, extreme weather conditions, and states of emergency.

- Call Center Personnel shall be responsible for the proper use and operation of all equipment in the Center, and be knowledgeable in all communications functions pertaining to the daily operations of the Call Center. They shall be proficient and knowledgeable regarding all procedures required. Qualified Call Center personnel shall be assigned to train new personnel in a structured and consistent manner based upon the Call Center Training Manual.
- When equipment and/or software is found to be in need of repair or maintenance, call center personnel shall notify their immediate supervisor when practical.
- Call center personnel shall wear issued BPD polo shirts while on duty. Shorts, jeans, and miniskirts are not acceptable attire. Khaki style pants shall be worn on the waist line.
- Telephone Communications: The Call Center shall be responsible for answering all incoming telephone lines that are routed to the Bowie Police Department.
- All Non-Emergency calls for police service within the incorporated city limits of Bowie will be entered into Computer Aided Dispatch system.
- All Emergency calls for service will be transferred directly to Prince George's County Public Safety Communications 911 Center.
- All Non-Emergency calls for service that do not fall within the incorporated city limit of Bowie will be transferred to Prince George's County Non-Emergency number 301-352-1200.

V. RECORDS FUNCTION

The Call Center shall be responsible for assuming the functions of the Records Department during non-business hours. Those functions are listed below:

- Processing Speed Camera Payments
- Processing Incident or Accident Report requests
- Processing Parking Ticket Payments
- Processing requests for after hour City Services
 - a. Call Center Supervisor shall be responsible for updating the Training Manual and Reference Manuals on a regular basis or as the need arises due to changes in departmental policy. The Supervisor shall be responsible for providing direction and control over all aspects of the communications process and Call Center staff. This shall include but not be limited to the development and procedures required to operate the center in a highly effective manner.

- b. The Call Center personnel shall maintain security of computer terminals in accordance with BPD G.O. 7-1 (computer security).
- c. Call Center personnel shall answer all telephone calls on a 24-hour basis, in an efficient, professional manner prioritizing when necessary.
 - Coordinating emergency/non-emergency telephone calls.
 - Coordination and control of departmental CAD entries
 - Classification of all telephone calls.
 - Classification of calls for service.
 - May serve as reception for the Police Department; including both walk-in visitors to the Department and incoming telephone calls.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Call Center responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Maintenance of emergency contact lists for the City of Bowie Police Department, Public Works, Animal Control, and Allied Police agencies. This listing must be continually updated with new listings and changes to existing listings. Contact information is to be verified on an annual basis in order to maintain current information.
- The Call Center receives incoming telephone calls, obtains essential information from the caller, evaluates the situation and initiates appropriate action or response.
- Call Center Personnel shall maintain an enclosed and secure area to ensure that there are no distractions or inappropriate dissemination of police information.

VII. RECORDING PROCEDURES-COMPUTER

- A. The CAD computer system permits a permanent record of calls for service and incidents initiated by officers. All CAD calls include the following information:
 - Date and time
 - CAD Incident Number
 - Name and address of complainant
 - Type of incident reported
 - Location of incident
 - Phone / contact number for complainant
 - Officer / officers dispatched to the call.
 - Time of dispatch
 - Time of arrival on call
 - Time of officers' return to service

- Disposition of the call
- Narrative information pertaining to the call

All calls are to be handled in a timely manner.

B. Call management shall be handled as shown below:

- All calls where injury or in progress shall be transferred to Prince George’s County Public Safety Communications to be dispatched immediately.
- Minor report calls and minor calls for service may be placed into the CAD System to be dispatched by Prince George’s County PSC for dispatch.

C. All Communications personnel have immediate access to the following resources in Communications:

- Duty roster with all personnel including names, cell phone numbers, pager number, voice mail number, radio identification number and vehicle number.
- City maps
- Agency lists of phone numbers for those jurisdictions that are in close proximity to the Bowie Police Department.
- Communications procedures for handling emergency situations.

All Non-Emergency calls for service are handled through the Non-Emergency Call Center. Upon receipt of the information from the caller, this information is entered into the CAD system. Classification and priority is handled through the training of the call-taker under Call Center guidelines.

Inter-agency contacts may be limited to telephone contact. When a telephone call for service is received, which must be referred to another agency, the caller may be given the correct number of the proper agency. If time permits, the information may be obtained and forwarded to the correct agency by Call Center Personnel.

VIII. RECORDING PROCEDURES

All telephone calls are recorded on a computerized system that allows for immediate playback and continuous recording. These calls are recorded and stored on a server. These servers are retained within a secured room. The recorded information is available for review by the Call Center Supervisor, as well as for use by that Supervisor for the training of division personnel.

Recorded information may be held separately for any of the following reasons:

- Training use
- Investigation purposes

- Administrative review
- Court purposes
- Disciplinary purposes

If a recording is needed as evidence, it should be kept in Evidence / Property Storage.

IX. NCIC / NETWORK ACCESSIBILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Agency shall have access to both the NCIC and METERS computer networks. All Call Center personnel shall be METERS/NCIC certified in order to perform criminal information checks. These systems are available via the Call Center 24 hours per day.

X. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

- Bullet resistant glass is in place in the front lobby area for personnel safety. There are also security cameras in place in the Call Center that view various areas within the station.
- The non-emergency calls are those received on 240-544-5700.
- To facilitate mutual aid assistance in emergencies, the following forms of communications are in place and are to be utilized in the manners outlined as follows:

Telephone speed-dialing: Due to the geographic location of the City of Bowie, in close proximity to Prince George's County PSC, it may be necessary to reroute calls to the proper jurisdiction. Requests for information or assistance may also be made via these lines.

By agreement with the P.G. County PSC, all "911" police emergency calls for the City of Bowie jurisdiction are telephone forwarded to Prince Georges County PSC and are answered by Prince Georges County. These calls are forwarded from the Police Department's 240-544-5700 line that is also published as the direct dial non-emergency police assistance phone number.

XI. PROCEDURES

1. Assignment:

- a. Call Center personnel shall report for duty as assigned by the Call Center Supervisor.
- b. Requested changes to the schedule shall be directed to the Call Center Supervisor.
- c. Call Center personnel shall obtain assignments from the Call Center Supervisor.

3. Recording:

- a. All telephone calls for service shall be recorded on an electronic recording device. The device shall consist of independent recordings, with the capability of the immediate playback of one recording without interrupting the reading process of the other.
- b. The recordable media (RM) shall have the capacity to store a minimum of ninety (90) days of continuous recording.
- c. The recording system shall be monitored for capacity by the Supervisor and or IT personnel.
- d. Recordings shall be immediately accessible by the Call Center Supervisor and or Command staff for a minimum of thirty (30) days.
- e. When a RM needs to be replaced, it is the responsibility of the Call Center Supervisor to ensure the secure handling of the recordings from the recorder to storage.
- f. RM shall be secured in a secured cabinet.

4. Reviewing Calls:

- a. Review of the RM shall be limited to personnel with a legitimate need such as investigative, administrative review, training, court presentation, etc.
- b. Department employees may request copies of telephone conversations by submitting a request for copy detailing the purpose of the request, via the chain-of-command. Upon approval the Call Center Supervisor shall complete the task.
 - i. The Call Center Supervisor shall keep a file of all request for recordings.
 - ii. The Call Center Supervisor shall facilitate each written request within five (5) business days.
 - iii. Emergency request for copies of telephone recordings will be accomplished immediately by the Call Center if the information is needed to obtain urgent information relative to an investigation.
 - iv. The only authorized procedure for obtaining recordings of telephone calls for service are as outlined in this policy.

5. Call Handling:

- a. Incoming Calls: The following procedure shall be followed when receiving calls for information or service.
 - i. Notify the caller the line is recorded
 - ii. Notify the caller they have contacted a Non-Emergency line
 - iii. Identify your agency and yourself
 - iv. Obtain a call number
 - v. Determine the location of the incident
 - vi. Determine the nature of the call
 - vii. Enter call into CAD
 - viii. Prince Georg's County will dispatch for service.
- b. It is essential that all personnel use proper communication skills so information can be gathered quickly
- c. Using good judgement the on-duty Call Taker will determine if the call is an emergency or non-emergency and process the call appropriately.
- d. The on duty Call Taker may make appropriate referrals to other police agencies

6. Answering Calls

- a. Phone lines will be answered by stating Bowie Police Department Non-Emergency how can I assist you?
- b. When there are multiple ringing lines calls will be held in a que until a call taker is available to process the call.
- c. Calls will be answered in the order they are received.
- d. Call Takers will remain professional and provide quality service to everyone.