

RESOLUTION NO. 4539

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING CITY OF MILES CITY SOUTHEASTERN MONTANA
DISPATCH PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT (PSAP) POLICY AND GUIDELINES**


WHEREAS, the City of Miles City has established certain dispatch policy for employees of the City of Miles City, which are set forth in the City of Miles City Southeastern Montana Dispatch Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Policy and Guidelines;

AND WHEREAS, the City Council finds that such policies should be adopted;

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
MILES CITY, MONTANA AS FOLLOWS:**

1. That the following new policy and guidelines: City of Miles City Southeastern Montana Dispatch Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Policy and Guidelines
2. Such policy shall become effective November 14, 2023 upon the passage of this resolution.

**SAID RESOLUTION FINALLY PASSED AND ADOPTED BY A DULY CONSTITUTED
QUORUM OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MILES CITY, MONTANA, THIS
14TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2023.**



John Hollowell, Mayor

ATTEST:



Mary Rowe, City Clerk

SOUTHEASTERN MONTANA DISPATCH
PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT (PSAP) POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Dissemination

All communications center employees shall be issued a copy of the SE Montana Dispatch manual. Each employee will be responsible for maintaining and keeping the manual current with updated rules, regulations and guidelines and to know and understand its contents.

The Dispatch Director may inspect those manuals at any time for completeness and accuracy with a minimum of one (1) inspection to occur annually.

The dispatch manual is the property of SE Montana Dispatch and must be surrendered at such time as a dispatch employee terminates their employment with the city.

Violation of this manual's dissemination security policy will be considered a breach of confidentiality and result in disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

Chain of Command

Southeastern Montana Dispatch is a department of the City of Miles City and follows policies and guidelines established by the City.

This division is directly administered by the Dispatch Director. The Dispatch Director, or his/her designee, is ultimately responsible for staffing, scheduling, budgeting, enforcing policy (including discipline) and generally ensuring that all aspects of the operation are conducted in an efficient and effective manner.

If an employee, police, fire or medical feels the action(s) of a dispatcher are unsatisfactory, inconsistent with policy, or out of the realm of a dispatcher's authority, they will then take their problem to the Dispatch Director. If the particular situation involves the Dispatch Director, the employee should consult with the Mayor who is the immediate supervisor to the Dispatch Director.

In the absence of the Dispatch Director, that issue can be brought to the attention of the Mayor or the Human Resources Officer. Officers or other emergency personnel will pursue complaints or suggestions regarding dispatch procedures or complaints about a specific incident, with their Dispatch Director and not with any individual dispatcher. Upon receipt of the complaint or suggestion, the Dispatch Director will then contact the Mayor or Human Resources Officer. Complaints from citizens regarding a dispatcher should be referred to the Dispatch Director, which will then communicate the complaint to the Mayor or the Human Resources Officer.

The Dispatch Director and the Mayor will review the incident by gathering pertinent facts to determine whether changes in guidelines are needed or if there is cause for disciplinary action.

If an employee feels the issue has not been resolved by the Dispatch Director, he/she may then take the issue in writing to the Mayor. The employee must notify the Dispatch Director of their intent to do so, the Dispatch Director will acknowledge, in writing, the date and time received. Final determinate on of an issue will be made by the Mayor. The City Mayor has final authority within the City's organization.

Any problems that arise between dispatchers should be worked out between themselves. If the problem cannot be resolved, it should then be turned over to the Dispatch Director which will discuss with the Mayor and Human Resources Officer as needed.

The Chain of Command shall be followed by all employees. An employee shall progress through the Chain of Command if action taken by a lower level of authority is considered unfair or is questioned.

Any employee knowingly by-passing or going outside the Chain of Command, either verbally or in writing, will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Questions or problems which may arise outside of normal policies or guidelines in individual Emergency Services Agencies should be referred to the Dispatch Director.

Dispatch Positions

Employees, when hired, are on a probationary status. During this probationary period each new employee is expected to learn basic procedures for handling telephone calls received and dispatch them appropriately.

They must become familiar with all agencies served by SE Montana Dispatch and with all applicable geographic locations of each agency and the basic assets available at each.

Within the first six (6) months new dispatchers must be capable of handling routine dispatch operations.

Probation is based upon written evaluations and interviews with the Dispatch Director, and/or the Mayor.

All dispatch employees must carry current CPR certification and phone CPR certification.

For training purposes, a check list has been prepared to assist both the training dispatcher and the new employee. In addition to this checklist, there is a dispatch training log where additional or specific training can be documented along with the number of hours spent on this training. Once completed all training paperwork, as well as periodic evaluation sheets, will be kept in the department training officer files.

New employees must attend, and successfully complete, the Public Safety Communicator Basic School at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy during their first year of employment, or as soon as possible with regards to the availability of space in the school.

New employees must successfully complete the Montana Department of Justice CJIN/NCIC Certification workbook program within the six (6) month time period allowed by CJIN Services. Certification shall consist of, and be no less than, Operator Levels I and II with Criminal History Endorsement.

Confidentiality

Dispatch personnel will do their utmost to keep all transactions confidential. Events occurring while a dispatcher is on duty or off duty will not be discussed outside the dispatch center unless the information being discussed has already been published, or is being currently broadcast in the media.

At no time will the whereabouts of law enforcement personnel be given to callers unless the officer is familiar with the caller.

Telephone numbers for all police department personnel will not be given out. If circumstances warrant, it may be necessary to relay a message to off duty department personnel.

Dispatch will not, as a rule, advise officers on the air of a complainant's name. Exceptions are if an officer needs the name to locate the correct residence or if the responding officer is familiar with the address and are aware that the resident could create a problem for the officer. Under no circumstances will information be withheld from an officer when the information may have a direct bearing on an officer(s) safety.

When dealing with informants, the dispatcher will secure any information they want to give and determine to whom the information should go. The promise of confidentiality must be respected.

It is imperative that all public safety communicators understand that they are not to discuss their work with those outside the department. Any information divulged could cause embarrassment to the department. It could jeopardize the reputation of a citizen, or department employee, by fueling irresponsible gossip.

It is also to be understood that criminal cases could be delayed or become invalid if information were leaked from the dispatch center inappropriately.

Care should be taken when conversing within earshot of those not connected to 9-1-1, especially in social situations.

Incident case reports, arrest reports, citations, pawn slips and any other forms of investigative or departmental reports are confidential. These various types of documents, whether on paper or in the computer records system, are to be accessed by dispatch personnel only at the request of an officer or other authorized user. Dispatch personnel involved in the processing of these reports and documents are necessarily given permission to do what is required for information entry into the records management system and maintenance of the same. Dispatch personnel must know how the records and filing system work and be able to retrieve information should it be needed. This means that records will be accessed on an "as needed" basis. Unless you have a need to access a particular document that is job related these documents remain confidential, even to dispatch personnel.

Under no circumstances will any dispatch personnel access any document or report for purely personal curiosity. This includes documents placed in the dispatch "In Box." Only those persons with the responsibility for processing a particular type of document should handle the document. Documents in the dispatch "IN" box are not for perusal by the general department staff.

*** SE Montana Dispatch personnel understand that any breach of confidentiality can be grounds for disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may be initiated for failure to comply with standards of performance applicable to members of SE Montana Dispatch. Offenses may be punishable through discipline by:

- Verbal Warning (documented)
- Written Warning
- Suspension
- Dismissal

Should the seriousness warrant possible discharge, the following procedure will be followed:

The employee will be informed, in writing, of the charges against him/her, of the possible disciplinary actions that may be taken, and of the time, date and place at which the employee will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.

At the specified time, date and place, the employee will be allowed to respond to the charges and to present all information that the employee believes to be pertinent;

Following the opportunity for response by the employee, the employer will determine appropriate disciplinary action to be taken and will promptly inform the employee, in writing, of that determination.

If, in the opinion of the Mayor, any employee must be sent home as a result of a disciplinary action, said employee will be given full pay for the remainder of the shift.

Shifts

Dispatch personnel will work a rotating shift with appropriate breaks as defined by union policy. Shifts are determined by the Union contract. Dispatchers are expected to be ready to perform their work duties, such as answering 911 calls, regular line calls and handle officer radio traffic, at the start of their shift.

All dispatchers will give a thorough briefing to their relief relative to on-going calls, unusual or major calls from the preceding shift. Any pertinent information should be included as well. Shift schedules for dispatch personnel are the responsibility of the Dispatch Director. All requests for vacation, time off, or trading of shifts must be approved by the Dispatch Director of the shift schedule.

On occasion, illness or another emergency may generate a vacant shift Dispatchers should contact the Dispatch Director, verbally, eight (8) hours prior to their shift. The open shift will be filled with part-time dispatch personnel if at all possible, however if this is not feasible, an overtime shift will be posted. These overtime shifts will be posted, when available, by the Dispatch Director. Dispatchers may volunteer for the overtime shifts on a loosely rotating, informal schedule as follows:

The schedule will be filled by part time persons as to not create overtime if possible, or a dispatcher may have their schedule bumped one way or the other if time allows to do this. In the event that this is not possible, the senior dispatchers will be offered the position first, then work down the line until filled. If the overtime shift causes a dispatcher to work more than 12 hours, all other options will be exhausted before that shift will be approved. Every attempt, within reason, will be made to fairly offer overtime to each dispatcher. The decision of the Dispatch Director will be final in resolving conflicts.

Uniform Regulations

Uniforms must be kept clean and in good condition. Interpretation of appropriately maintained is at the discretion of the Dispatch Director.

Appropriate uniform clothing may consist of shirts, pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, belts, shoes, jackets, sweaters and turtlenecks. Uniform shirt colors may consist of gray or black. Uniform shirts will have the appropriate SE Montana Dispatch emblem on the left side chest of the clothing.

It's not appropriate to wear your favorite sweatshirt, t-shirt, jeans fabric of any color, ripped jeans, ratty sneakers, or flip-flops. Uniforms should still be professional, clean, pressed, and fit properly.

Uniforms are required at all times when a dispatcher is on duty, unless otherwise directed by the Dispatch Director or in an emergency situation. Per approval Dispatch Director, uniform requirements may be modified for medical reasons. Failure to comply with these standards could result in disciplinary

action. If you arrive at work out of uniform or your clothing is outside the scope of this policy, you will be offered to go home to change, once, if it happens a 2nd time, it will result in written discipline.

General Conduct

Criticism and Gossip – Dispatchers shall not criticize in public, the actions or orders of a superior officer. Derogatory remarks about another member of the department, or his/her family, either oral or written, are prohibited.

Courtesy – Dispatchers shall be courteous, civil and respectful.

Language – Dispatchers shall not use profane or insolent language.

Truthfulness – Dispatchers shall not willfully depart from the truth in the conduct of any business of the department, nor when appearing in any capacity as a member of the department.

Drinking on Duty – Dispatchers shall not drink any intoxicating liquor nor have the odor of any intoxicating liquor on their breath while on active duty.

Use of Tobacco – While on duty, dispatchers shall not smoke or chew tobacco in view of the general public.

Gambling – Dispatchers shall not play any game of chance in any office of the department, nor shall they visit any place wherein it is believed that any law or regulation pertaining to gambling is being violated.

Loitering on Duty – Dispatchers shall not loiter in any dwelling, theater, place of business or other buildings while on active duty, unless assigned to do so.

Loitering off Duty – Dispatchers off duty shall not loiter in the dispatch center. Such action disrupts the on-duty working dispatchers and the overall performance of SE Montana Dispatch is affected. Dispatchers who are off duty and need to enter the dispatch center shall notify the Dispatch Dispatcher.

Dispatch Entry- Due to confidential criminal justice information, only dispatchers and sworn law enforcement officers are allowed in SE Montana Dispatch. Any other persons attempting to gain access into the dispatch center shall have to obtain permission from the Dispatch Director.

Neglecting or Refusing to Pay Just Debts – Dispatchers shall not contract any debt for liability which they are unable or unwilling to pay, nor shall they neglect or refuse to discharge honorably and promptly all indebtedness, claims and judgments, and satisfy all executions that may be held against them. Members shall not contract a debt under false or fraudulent pretenses.

Collections – Dispatchers shall not circulate subscription papers, sell tickets, or collect money from citizens or others for any charitable or other purposes whatsoever while on duty without the approval of the Dispatch Director.

Acceptance of Gifts, Gratuities, Fees, Loans, etc. – Dispatchers shall not accept either directly or indirectly any gift, gratuity, loan, fee or any other thing of value arising from or offered because of, any activity connected with said employment. Members shall not accept any gift, gratuity, loan, fee, or other thing of any value, the acceptance of which might tend to influence directly or indirectly the actions of said member or any other member or employee in any matter of City business; or which might tend to cast and adverse reflection on the department or any member of thereof.

Seeking Publicity – Dispatchers shall not seek publicity through the public press or other news media, either directly or indirectly for personal benefit without prior approval of the Dispatch Director.

Advertising - Dispatchers shall not permit the use of their names for advertising purposes without the approval of the Dispatch Director.

Reporting for Duty – All dispatchers are required to report on time for their shift and shall give careful attention to the bulletin board, all dispatches, orders and instructions issued, prior to employees leaving headquarters. Failure to report promptly at the time directed, shall be deemed a serious neglect of duty.

Personal Appearance in Court – Dispatchers who attend court as a witness or for any other reason, shall appear in suitable business attire.

Punctuality in Court – Dispatchers required to be in court by departmental order or subpoena shall be prompt in attendance and shall remain until excused by competent authority.

Citizen Complaints and Reports – Members of this department shall be attentive to, and take suitable action on reports and complaints by a private person except when circumstances make it necessary for them to report the matter or refer the complaint to a more suitable officer or another agency. Dispatchers shall fulfill proper requests for information or assistance, or they shall aid the person in otherwise obtaining the requested information or assistance. Dispatchers shall avoid giving the impression that they are evading the performance of their duty, or that they are not interested in the problems of the persons who are referred elsewhere for service. Dispatchers shall not belittle a seemingly trivial request, complaint, or piece of information, but shall invariably thank the complainant or informant regardless of the value of the information received.

Giving Name – Dispatchers shall give their name in a respectful manner to any person who may ask them.

Public Talks or Speaking Engagements – Dispatchers shall secure the permission of the Dispatch Director before attending conventions or filling speaking engagements as official representatives of the

department. All speech material shall be approved by the Dispatch Director, in the absence of the Dispatch Director the Mayor will approve.

Property and Evidence – Personal Use, etc. – Dispatchers shall not convert to their own use or have any claim on any found property or recovered property turned into SE Montana Dispatch.

Personal Appearance When Reporting on Duty – General appearance in the dispatch center will be neat and presentable to the public.

Tattoos- Dispatchers must not have any lewd or offensive indelible marks or figures (tattoos) visible on any part of the body while wearing on duty. Dispatchers will not have any tattoos or brands on the face, head, hands or neck above the uniform shirt collar. Tattoos or brands that are extremist, indecent, sexist or racist are prohibited, regardless of any location. (a) Extremist tattoos or brands are those affiliated with, depicting or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities: those which advocate racial, gender, or ethnic hatred or intolerance; advocate, create or engage in illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, ethnicity, religion or national origin; or advocate violence or other unlawful means of depriving individual rights under the U.S. Constitution or federal or state law. (b) Indecent tattoos or brands are those that are grossly offensive modesty, decency, or propriety; shock the moral sense because of their vulgar, filthy or disgusting nature, or tendency to incite lustful thought; or tend reasonably to corrupt morals or incite libidinous thoughts. (c) Sexist tattoos or brands are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on gender, but that may not meet the same definition of “indecent”. (d) Racial tattoos or brands are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity or national origin.

Piercings- Members of this department are allowed any tasteful and professional piercings. Interpretation of appropriate and professional is individual and will be at the discretion and final authority of the Dispatch Director.

City of Missoula Dispatch Center