

9-1-1 Performance Review and Quality Assurance Standards

A. Purpose

The purpose of these standards is to promote adherence to established goals and procedures, facilitate the learning process, and provide a framework for continuous improvement. This will provide an operational standard that consistently provides the best possible service to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

B. Scope

Quality assurance reviews will be employed on a regular basis. These reviews will be used to evaluate the performance of various aspects of a telecommunicator's duties. In addition to measuring individual performance, these reviews will aid in determining whether the processes used by the telecommunicators are functionally efficient.

C. Description

1. A random sampling of 9-1-1 calls will be reviewed on a recurring basis to ensure compliance with the standards set forth in this document as well as those outlined in the standard operating procedures of each respective communications center. If needed, additional reviews will be performed in order to ensure that each telecommunicator receives a minimum of one call-taking audit per month. All calls, whether voice or TDD/TTY, will be reviewed in the same manner. An audit form will be completed for each review. It is also recommended that all incidents involving catastrophic loss be included in the review process.
2. A minimum of ten call-taking audits will be performed each week in communications centers that dispatch, on average, 72 or less emergency calls per day. Those centers that average more than 72 emergency calls per day will be required to audit 2% of the 9-1-1 calls that they process. Although it is recommended that audits be performed on a weekly basis, the quality assurance review process may assume a monthly configuration to accommodate centers with personnel and/or scheduling constraints. However, the minimum amount of audits required would remain unchanged.
3. Twice a year, a segment of each telecommunicator's radio activity will be reviewed in order to determine adherence to the dispatch standards. At a minimum, each segment that is monitored should contain three emergency dispatched calls. An audit form will be completed for each segment reviewed.
4. Call-taking and dispatching audits will be performed by a person (or persons) designated by the director of each respective communications center. It is recommended that the person(s) be on a supervisory level with a minimum of three years experience in the field of emergency telecommunications. Standards should be established to ensure that the review process is executed with consistency and objectivity.
5. In order to provide optimum feedback, it is recommended that the date selected for each review not exceed five days prior to the current date. Employees should receive the results within five days of the audit. Copies of each audit will be retained on file for three years.

6. These reviews will be utilized to support the development and assessment of goals and expectations on the telecommunicators' yearly performance appraisals. They will also be used to identify areas which may require additional or supplemental training, and aid in determining whether certain processes require modification or change.

7. All telecommunicators will be subject to this quality assurance review process, regardless of part-time or full-time status.

8. Any actions that were initiated in response to the results of a quality assurance review will be documented and included as part of the audit.

D. Types of Quality Assurance Reviews

1. Call-Taking - (Telephone Performance)

Telecommunicator performance standards that will be checked during each 9-1-1 telephone audit are:

- a) Answers telephone quickly and correctly (within 10 seconds, 90% of the time)
- b) Asks/Verifies the location of the incident
- c) Obtains the callback phone number
- d) Determines the problem/complaint and selects/assigns the appropriate nature/response
- e) Accomplishes the above tasks quickly and effectively (within 60 seconds, 90% of the time)
- f) Obtains all pertinent information and makes updates accordingly. Keeps caller on the line when indicated
- g) Controls the conversation.....explains actions.....employs calming techniques
- h) Exhibits a professional demeanor.....is courteous and tactful
- i) Demonstrates proper documentation of information on call-taker screens/cards

2. Dispatching - (Radio Performance)

Telecommunicator radio performance standards that will be checked during each review segment are:

- a) Dispatches the appropriate police, fire, or EMS units within the prescribed time frame (within 90 seconds, 90% of the time)
- b) Provides all pertinent information to responding units and relays updates accordingly
- c) Answers radio transmissions promptly

- d) Speaks clearly and concisely
- e) Listens attentively and understands each message
- f) Exhibits a timely response to requests from field units
- g) Maintains a professional demeanor
- h) Abides by applicable FCC rules and regulations

3. Emergency Medical Dispatch

Emergency medical dispatch protocols will be provided by all communications centers. Due to the existence of various EMD programs, we recommend that each dispatch center utilize the quality assurance process associated with the program that it is licensed to use. Approval of the program by the Pennsylvania Department of Health is a requisite.

E. Summary

The application of these standards is designed to enhance the quality of each telecommunicator's performance and improve the processes used within the daily operations of the 9-1-1 communications centers. The result will be a standardized operation that provides a continually improving service to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

9-1-1 Quality Assurance Standards

Index - Definition of Terms

1	Quality assurance review:	an audit that is used to assess the job performance of a telecommunicator or telecommunication's process
2	Telecommunicator:	a full-time or part-time public safety call-taker and/or dispatcher
3	Catastrophic loss:	exceptional loss of human life and/or significant dollar amount of property damage
4	Radio activity:	the act of dispatching and communicating on a public safety radio frequency
5	Performance appraisal:	a yearly written evaluation of an employee's job performance measured against established expectations
6	EMD protocols:	a system or program that enables patients to be assessed and treated via telephone by utilizing current accepted emergency medical dispatch standards
7	Communications center:	a 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point or PSAP; also referred to as a dispatch center in this document
8	Standard Operating Procedures:	a set of policies and procedures developed and adopted by a 9-1-1 center to aid in directing the daily operations of the telecommunications staff
9	Call-Taking:	the act of answering 9-1-1 calls and obtaining the information necessary to affect a dispatch
10	Dispatching:	the act of alerting and directing the response of public safety units to the desired location
11	Day:	refers to an actual 24-hour day, not a "working day"
12	Emergency Dispatched Calls:	emergent incidents to which a communications center dispatches public safety agencies

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW FORM

CALL-TAKING/TELEPHONE SKILLS.

Telecommunicator: _____ # _____
Date of Review: _____ Position Monitored: _____
Times: Call Answered: _____ Call Terminated: _____

Rating Scale:
5 = Exemplary
4 = Exceeds Standards
3 = Meets Standards (Good/Competent)
2 = Requires Improvement
I = Fails to Meet Standards (Unacceptable)
N/A = Not Applicable

Results Achieved:		Rating
1. Answers telephone quickly and correctly	Yes/No	_____
2. Asks/Verifies the location of the incident	Yes/No	_____
3. Obtains the callback telephone number	Yes/No	_____
4. Determines the problem....Selects appropriate type/nature	Yes/No	_____
5. Accomplishes the above tasks quickly and effectively	Yes/No	_____
6. Obtains all pertinent information Provides updates (Keeps caller on line when indicated)	Yes/No	_____
7. Controls conversation ... Explains actions... Calming techniques	Yes/No	_____
8. Exhibits a professional demeanor ...Courteous and tactful	Yes/No	_____
9. Demonstrates proper documentation of information	Yes/No	_____

Comments: _____

Reviewed by _____ Date: _____

Telecommunicator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telecommunicator Response:

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW FORM

DISPATCHING/RADIO SKILLS.

Telecommunicator: _____ # _____
Date of Review: _____ Position Monitored: _____
Times Monitored: _____ (Start) to _____ (End)

Rating Scale:
5 = Exemplary
4 = Exceeds Standards
3 = Meets Standards (Good/Competent)
2 = Requires Improvement
I = Fails to Meet Standards (Unacceptable)
N/A = Not Applicable

Results Achieved:		Rating
1. Dispatches the appropriate units within the prescribed time frame	Yes/No	_____
2. Provides all pertinent information and relays updates	Yes/No	_____
3. Answers radio transmissions promptly	Yes/No	_____
4. Speaks clearly and concisely	Yes/No	_____
5. Listens attentively... Understands each message	Yes/No	_____
6. Exhibits a timely response to requests from field units	Yes/No	_____
7. Maintains a professional demeanor	Yes/No	_____
8. Abides by all applicable FCC rules and regulations	Yes/No	_____

Comments: _____

Reviewed by _____ Date: _____
Telecommunicator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telecommunicator Response:

