



BRAINTREE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy and Procedure

COMMUNICATIONS

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Chief Paul Shastany

Certification Standards: **81.2.2; 81.2.8 a-c; 81.3.2**

Accreditation Standards: **81.1.2; 81.2.1; 81.2.3 a-j; 81.2.4 a-d, g; 81.2.5 a-f; 81.2.6 a b; 81.2.10; 81.2.11; 81.2.12; 81.3.1 a-d; 82.2.2 a-e; 82.2.3; 82.2.5**

Optional Accreditation Standards: **81.3.3**

General Consideration The communications procedures of the Braintree Police Department are an important part of the support mechanisms necessary for the effective and safe conduct of department business. Department communications involve the use of telephone, computer terminals, and radios. The department has established a number of communications procedures so that communications will be orderly, documented, and effective.

Policy It is the policy of the Braintree Police Department to maintain an efficient flow of information. It is essential to the functions of the department and the community it serves. The communications component must ensure that the communications system facilitates the operations of all other components of the department.

Organization and Administration Dispatch Area The dispatch area (Communications Center) is staffed by one sworn officer and one or two civilian dispatchers, who are under the immediate control of the Shift Commander.

81.3.1a b d
81.2.5 Dispatch personnel receive all oral communications from the public and public safety personnel coming into the Braintree Police Station. By following established policies and procedures, he or she dispatches appropriate police personnel and resources when requested for service.

Only assigned personnel and those authorized by the Chief of Police or his/her designee shall have access to the Communications Room.

The Shift Commander may allow personnel to enter the area to assist communications personnel, obtain teletype printouts, etc., provided however, that such instances shall be at times when they do not disrupt the communications operations and those personnel leave the area after accomplishing their purpose for entering. The dispatch door should be closed and locked at all times. **[81.3.1a]**

Access panels to all equipment shall be secured at all times and access to such equipment shall be made available only to qualified and authorized personnel. The telephone equipment room, computer room, and the radio room accessed to those persons qualified and authorized to work on the equipment. **[81.3.1b]**

The transmission lines are owned and operated by Verizon. The PD has an annunciator panel that indicates any faults with Verizon leased lines. **[81.3.1d]**

The main transmitter/antenna is on top of a secured/locked facility at 50 Rockdale Road and all 7 receiver sites are on top of secured/locked facilities. The backup transmitter and station receiver is under camera surveillance. **[81.3.1d]**

The PD power source is in a secured/locked room. **[81.3.1d]**

Communications Personnel have immediate access to the officer-in-charge **[81.2.5 a]** and the duty roster of all personnel in On Duty. **[81.2.5 b]** Officer status indicators such as assignments, vehicles, court, training, out of service and any other work status will be noted in CAD as well as On Duty. **[81.2.5 e]** The dispatcher has an available roster of employees' contact phone numbers **[81.2.5 c]** and there is also an electronic list of emergency contact numbers for outside resources and agencies. **[81.2.5 f]** The Communications Center contains an area sector map of the town of Braintree. **[81.2.5 d]**

**Audio, Radio
Recording
Calls for
Service
81.2.1
81.2.3 a-j
81.2.8 a-c
81.3.3**

The Shift Commander shall comply with M.G.L. c. 41 § 98F, regarding the daily logs, which reads as follows;

“Each police department and each college or university to which officers have been appointed pursuant to the provisions of section sixty-three of chapter twenty-two C shall make, keep and maintain a daily log, written in a form that can be easily understood, recording, in chronological order, all responses to valid complaints received, crimes

reported, the names, addresses of persons arrested and the charges against such persons arrested. All entries in said daily logs shall, unless otherwise provided in law, be public records available without charge to the public during regular business hours and at all other reasonable times; provided, however, that any entry in a log which pertains to a handicapped individual who is physically or mentally incapacitated to the degree that said person is confined to a wheelchair or is bedridden or requires the use of a device designed to provide said person with mobility, shall be kept in a separate log and shall not be a public record nor shall such entry be disclosed to the public.”

Domestic Violence incidents, arrests, 209A services, etc. shall not be included in the log. Any domestic incident should be logged under the proper domestic code in order to restrict the information from the public log. Should an officer/dispatcher have a question regarding as to what qualifies as a domestic incident, clarification should be sought with the Shift Commander.

In addition to M.G.L. c. 41 § 98F, dispatchers shall record all requests for police service and self-initiated activity using the in-house computer and shall, as accurately as reasonably possible record the following:

- The case number **[81.2.3a]**
- Date and time of request **[81.2.3 b]**
- Name and address of complainant, if possible **[81.2.3c]**
- Type of incident reported **[81.2.3 d]**
- Location of incident reported **[81.2.3 e]**
- Identification of officer(s) assigned as primary and back-up **[81.2.3 f]**
- Time of dispatch **[81.2.3 g]**
- Time of officer arrival **[81.2.3 h]**
- Time of officer return to service **[81.2.3 i]**
- Disposition or status of reported incident **[81.2.3 j]**

In addition to recording calls on the daily log, emergency calls received

on 911 are also recorded on the Logging Recorder. This device records all incoming E-911 calls, all radio transmissions, and all calls received on the primary business number.

The department provides continuous 24 hour service by dialing 781-843-1212, 781-794-8600, or 911 toll free emergency lines. The TTY communications line is available for hearing impaired persons by dialing 781-794-1450. Should all of the 911 lines become occupied 911 calls will be rerouted to our back-up PSAP, Randolph Police Department. **[81.2.1] [81.3.3]**

Instant playback is available for calls received on the 911 System. This includes the 911 calls, calls received on the "two-way" line and on the "one-way" line. Radio transmissions are also available for instant playback. **[81.2.8 a]** Instant playback is also available for calls received on the business lines when answered at a dispatch terminal. All dispatchers must be familiar with this procedure in the event an emergency call is received on the business line and it needs to be replayed to re-check information received from the caller. **[81.2.8 a]**

The 911 digital files and radio transmissions shall be retained for at least one year (M.G.L. 6A §18G) provided no litigation is pending. E911 Call Detail Records will be retained for a period of not less than three years (M.G.L. 6A §§18A-F). **[81.2.8 a]** The digital files, including radio transmissions, shall be secured by the supervisor in charge of the 911 system (or designee). The supervisor in charge of 911 (or designee) will be responsible for the maintenance of the system and report any mechanical problems with the 911 system and/or the Instant Retrieval. Dispatchers and Communication personnel have access to the help desk if immediate assistance is needed. The 911 system computer should remain locked in the network room at all times. **[81.2.8 b]**

No one shall listen to, playback or record any tapes from the recorder without permission from the Chief, supervisor-in-charge or designee of the system. This shall **not** include immediate playback of a call for the purpose of re-checking or verifying information. Playback of recordings (911 calls, radio transmissions, and/or business line calls) from the Logging Recorder or the 911 system in the network room shall only be done by the supervisor-in charge of the system or designee who has been authorized by the Chief and has been trained on the system. The purpose of the playback must only be for training or quality assurance, criminal investigative purpose, to review a call

prior to release to the media, FOIA request, or to comply with a court order such as motion for discovery. Any other reason must be expressly approved by the Chief of Police. **[81.2.8 c]**

Requests for copies of 911 tapes shall be handled in accordance with the department policy on ***Public Records Requests and Guidelines*** or Court Orders for discovery.

**Back up
Resources
81.2.10
81.3.1 c
81.3.2**

The police department has a generator as a back-up source of electrical power. This generator performs an automatic weekly self-test. The generator is tested and/or operated under full load at least once a year. When the generator does come on during a power outage an entry using the code generator should be made in CAD/PAMET. **[81.3.2]**

In the event that the E-911 telephone system fails, the help desk shall immediately be notified, the alternate PSAP's shall also be notified. **[81.3.1c]**

In the event the department's business lines fail:

- Notify all the on duty officers;
- Notify the fire department;
- Notify the telephone company of the emergency situation;
- Make use of department issued cell phones and personal cell phones listed on the detail and overtime list. **[81.2.10]**
- Make use of the phone lines (one-way or two-way) on the E-911 system.
- Make use of the mobile data terminals provided in the communication room and patrol vehicles.

In the event that the primary radio fails, a separate, alternate radio using the same frequency is available in the dispatch area or South District on the BAPERN system may be used as an alternative source.

Portable radios should also be used by dispatchers. **[81.3.1 c]**

Department issued cell phones and personal cell phones should also be used when requests are made to call the police station for sensitive or routine matters. **[81.2.10]**

Officers and civilians in public view will use discretion while using cell phones and other electronic devices. Under no circumstances will an officer use a cell phone while directing traffic; this includes all Bluetooth type devices. While operating a department vehicle, officers and civilians are still obligated to comply with all traffic laws and/or laws of the Commonwealth. **[81.2.10]**

**Radio
Procedures
81.1.2
81.2.4 a, b, d**

The Braintree Police Department employees will adhere to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations which may be found on the FCC Homepage: **[81.1.2]**

http://wireless.fcc.gov/index.htm?job=rules_and_regulations. Under the rules of the FCC (Code of Federal Regulations, Part 47), it is unlawful to:

- Transmit superfluous signals or messages of a personal nature;
- Transmit false calls or distress signals;
- Use profane, indecent, or obscene language;
- Willfully damage or permit radio equipment to be damaged;
- Cause unlawful or malicious interference with other radio communications;
- Intercept and use or publish the contents of radio messages without expressed written permission of proper authorities;
- Make unnecessary or unidentified transmissions;
- Transmit without first making sure that the transmission will not cause harmful interference;
- Make adjustments, repairs, or alterations whatsoever to radio transmitters without correct licenses;
- Transmit call signals, letters, or numerals which have not been assigned; or
- Deny access to radio equipment if properly identified representatives of the FCC ask to inspect it at reasonable times.

Officers and other field personnel will maintain radio communications

at all times during their tours of duty and will notify dispatch when they are out of service or when leaving town. The status screen should also reflect the out of service of the officer. **[81.2.4 b]**

Officer status indicators will be utilized by dispatch personnel to note the status of field personnel. Officers (field personnel) will keep dispatch personnel advised of their status including: **[81.2.4 a,b]**

- Informing dispatch of all changes in duty status;
- Clearing assignments through dispatch as quickly as practical;
- Advising dispatch when responding to, or present at, incident scenes;
- Informing dispatch of all motor vehicle stops; and
- Notifying dispatch when they are out of service.

Radio transmissions will be as clear, precise, and calm as possible.

Only pertinent information will be transmitted to minimize use disruptions and maximize radio use for efficient delivery of police services.

In order to minimize repeat broadcasts, officers should either write down or take other steps to record or retain necessary information received from dispatch. Dispatchers shall request that officers be prepared to copy information if dispatch is about to give a broadcast containing a substantial amount of information.

Confidential information such as Criminal Offender Record Information, or other information which is unusually sensitive, should not be routinely broadcast over the radio unless immediate communication is essential for **officer safety** purposes. This information should be transmitted using the MDT's or by cell phone. **[81.2.4 a]**

Personal information about employees, including home addresses and telephone numbers, will not be transmitted over the radio.

Employees will not knowingly transmit with the intent of interfering with other units, e.g., covering other units or microphone clicking.

Background noises in dispatch and in the cruisers (e.g.: car AM/FM

radio) will be minimized, if at all possible, before transmitting.

Courtesy is most essential for the efficient and effective operation of the radio system. Discourtesy, sarcasm, banter, or arguments will not be tolerated.

The dispatch console radios, cruiser radios and officer's portable radios shall be programmed with the capability to communicate with other law enforcement agencies. This would include mutual aid (surrounding towns), south tactical, area wide three, and the Randolph Police. Included are the Braintree DPW (console), and Braintree Fire Department. **[81.2.4 d]**

**Radio
Identification
81.2.2
81.2.4 c g**

Dispatch shall be called "Control" when using the radio system. For example, "Control to 811" or when answering cruisers/portables.

Officers (Field Personnel) will use their assigned cruiser number to identify themselves when calling on the radio. Field Personnel not assigned to a cruiser (such as when on a detail) shall identify themselves by their ID number. **[81.2.4 c]** For examples, "Bravo 78 to Control" or when answering dispatch.

All officers shall be assigned a portable radio with a distinct identification number, two batteries, and a charger. This radio is to be carried by all officers while on duty or detail. Officers also have the ability to communicate with dispatch or cruiser to cruiser mobile data terminal. This will ensure two way communication capabilities between the communication center (dispatch) and the officer. **[81.2.2]**

- The Id numbers are posted in the control room on the radio console.
- Officers (field personnel) may activate the emergency alarm on the portable radio in cases such as; officer needs assistance, officer in trouble, felony in progress, life-saving situations, and other similar events. In such cases, the dispatcher will immediately check the portable id number on the radio console and attempt to contact that officer. Units will be dispatched to the last known location of that officer in response to the emergency request if necessary. **[81.2.4 g]**

**Emergency
Messages
81.2.11**

Upon receiving from a 911 caller, another police agency, hospital or other source requesting assistance and/or notification that a death, serious injury, serious illness or any other type of emergency

message, Dispatch personnel or officers shall ascertain the following information before delivering the message **[81.2.11]**:

- The full names and addresses of the person or persons to be notified.
- Name and callback number of person conveying the information to this department.
- Any other pertinent information that may help the officer making the notification.
- Upon ascertaining all of the above information, Shift Commander will be notified.
- Emergency notification requests by other agencies should be backed by a teletype message or some other form of confirmation.
- When the above information is received by telephone, communications personnel or the officer receiving the call shall verify it by a return telephone call.
- When all information has been verified, all notifications should be carried out promptly and in a considerate manner.
- Requests for message deliveries of a non-emergency nature may be delivered if approved by the Shift Commander.
- Emergency services (police, fire, EMS) should also be dispatched if appropriate.

PSAPS' 911 consoles should be answered with the following; "911, this line is recorder, what/where is your emergency?"

Business Line calls should be answered, "Braintree Police, Officer/Dispatcher 'Insert Name', this line is recorded."

**Receiving
Reports
82.2.5**

Dispatch personnel may not accept crime and incident reports by telephone in lieu of dispatching a police officer. Past incidents of crimes may be accepted when reported to another Police Department due to extenuating circumstances. **[82.2.5]** The station officer or dispatchers will notify the Shift Commander if there is doubt as to whether the report should be accepted.

Dispatch personnel receiving a crime or incident report by mail should log the incident and have it appropriately assigned and investigated. The officer assigned will gather all pertinent information from the reporting party to complete an incident report. Dispatch personnel shall instruct the reporting party to complete a written statement and have the statement notarized and mailed to the department if the reporting party is unable to come to the station (another state, medical issue, etc.) If the crime is of a serious nature, dispatch personnel should consider requesting an officer from the jurisdiction where the reporting party resides to speak with the reporting party. Dispatch personnel shall request a copy of that investigator's police incident report. **[82.2.5]**

Crime and Incident Reports cannot be filed on line. The Braintree Police Department website does offer an anonymous tip line only. **[82.2.5]**

**Recording
Reported
Incidents
82.2.2 a-e**

The majority of crimes and complaints (calls for service that are non-crime related, not IA complaints) received by this department from citizens do not require the submission of a narrative report; however, all citizen reports of a crime or complaint received by an officer or a dispatcher shall result in the creation of an incident in the dispatch log describing the complaint or crime, and recording the complainant/reporting party unless it is an anonymous report. **[82.2.2 a, b]**. All incidents resulting in the dispatching or assigning of an officer or officers shall be recorded as an incident in the dispatch log. **[82.2.2 c]** All criminal and non-criminal cases initiated by law enforcement employees, shall be investigated and recorded in the dispatch log. **[82.2.2 d]** All arrests, or summonses shall be recorded in the dispatch log. Citations issued will be documented in BPD computer system. **[82.2.2 e]**

**Call
Numbering
System
82.2.3**

The department computer system will automatically generate a number. The in-house computer will have a sequential numbering system for all incidents of law enforcement service, including but not limited to traffic collision investigations, criminal investigations, offense reports, warrant service, and miscellaneous calls for service logged. **[82.2.3]**

Misdirected

In the event that a caller mistakenly reaches this department the

Calls
81.2.12

following procedures will be followed: **[81.2.12]**

Emergency Calls - If the call requires an immediate response, personnel will take all pertinent information and then relay it to the appropriate agency. This will include advising the calling person that the call is being transferred and they should remain on the line.

NOTE: Per 560 CMR 2.00 – “No caller shall be procedurally required to speak with more than two call takers – the primary PSAP call taker and the remote agency call taker.” Dispatchers are reminded to facilitate the call as best as possible.

Non-Emergency Calls - In non-emergency cases, the caller will be referred to the appropriate agency.

To facilitate this procedure internet access of telephone numbers for neighboring police departments and law enforcement agencies shall be maintained in the dispatch area.

Calls for
Information or
Services
81.2.6 a b

Victims of crime or other events and witnesses to these events may contact the department for information or additional services. Dispatchers will be responsible for judging the characteristics of the call to determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required. **[81.2.6 a]**

If an emergency exists within the jurisdictional bounds of the department, the appropriate personnel shall be dispatched. **[81.2.6 b]** For calls falling outside the town jurisdiction, advise the caller of such and the dispatcher will immediately notify the agency with jurisdiction. **[81.2.6 b]**

If no emergency exists, the dispatcher will forward the call to the appropriate person within the department. If the officer is on duty, the message will be relayed to the officer immediately. **[81.2.6 a]**

If officer is not on duty, the caller will be told when they will be on duty next, and then give the choice of leaving a message (voicemail) or talking to an on duty officer. **[81.2.6 a]** Every reasonable effort will be made to answer the caller’s requests or needs. In every case, dispatchers will tell the caller whether the Braintree Police Department (or other law enforcement agency) will respond or if their request for services or information is going to be referred to another agency. **[81.2.6 b]**

A list of available services for victims and witnesses can be located by logging into PM/AM in the ***Victim/Witness Assistance Policy*** on page 8 and 9. **[81.2.6 b]**