

Subject:	Dispatch Staffing Levels	
Effective:	7/29/2016	Procedure
Updated:		
Reference:	County of Santa Barbara On-Line Policies & Procedures Manual; Lexipol Policy 206, Emergency Management Plan	

PURPOSE

It is incumbent upon the Dispatch Center to provide prompt and efficient service to the community and to meet required performance measures mandated by the Stakeholders and user agencies served by the Dispatch Center. In order to meet the mandates and requirements, this procedure has been written to describe the minimum staffing requirements in the Dispatch Center for daily operations and any incident which causes a serious increase in radio traffic, telephone calls or other activity in the Dispatch Center.

PROCEDURE

1. This will establish a minimum level of staffing where, if deemed appropriate, the Manager, a Dispatch Supervisor, or in their absence, a Dispatcher II, are authorized to augment staffing by offering overtime shifts or adjusting schedules. Adjustment to an employee’s regular schedule will be made with a minimum of two week notice to the employee, unless exigent circumstances preclude the two week minimum notice.

The staffing levels listed below are designed to be a guide to follow when considering the need to offer overtime shifts or adjusting schedules.

- a. Between the hours of 0600 and 0200 Monday through Sunday, with the exception of 1800 to 0400 on Friday and Saturday, the optimum staffing should be 6 trained dispatchers.
- b. The four radio console positions staffed should be Sheriff’s Radio Frequency 1, Sheriff’s Radio Frequency 2, the EMS Radio console and the Fire Radio Console.
- c. There should always be a minimum of 2 Dispatcher II’s on duty, in order to ensure that the EMS and Fire radio consoles are staffed by a fully trained Dispatcher II. If a Dispatcher I, who has been released from training on the EMS console is available, they can be included in the staffing level, if a second DII is unavailable.
- d. The 5th console position staffed should be an Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) trained call-taker.
- e. The 6th console position should be staffed by the Dispatch Supervisor on duty who can act as an additional call taker, assist with training, relieving

other dispatchers for breaks and provide assistance during large or critical incidents.

2. Between the hours of 1800 and 0400 on Friday and Saturday nights, the Dispatch Supervisor on duty may request additional staffing ahead of time in order to provide an extra Law Enforcement radio channel (or two) for increased activities (specifically in the Isla Vista area).
 - a. Between the hours of 0200 and 0600 Monday through Sunday, the optimum staffing should be 5 dispatchers.
 - b. The four radio console positions that should be staffed are the Sheriff's Radio Frequency 1, Sheriff's radio Frequency 2, the EMS radio console and the Fire Radio console.
 - c. There should always be a minimum of 2 Dispatcher II's on duty, in order to ensure that the EMS and Fire radio consoles are staffed by a fully trained Dispatcher II. If a Dispatcher I, who has been released from training on the EMS console is available, they can be included in the staffing level if a second Dispatcher II is unavailable.
 - d. The 5th console position should be staffed by an Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) trained call taker.
3. When a dispatcher has completed cross training and has obtained Dispatcher II status, they are required to work a minimum of 5 hours on each of the 5 console positions during their 40 hour work week. This includes the Fire radio console, EMS radio console, Sheriff's Radio Frequency 1, Sheriff's Radio Frequency 2 and call taking.
 - a. The only exception to this is when a Dispatch Training Officer needs to devote their time to a Dispatch Trainee.
4. In the event an incident occurs in the county which causes a serious increase in radio traffic and telephone calls in the Dispatch Center, on-duty staff will be augmented through the use of overtime.
 - a. Off-duty dispatchers, especially those residing in the Santa Barbara-Goleta area, who become aware of any incident which causes a serious increase in radio traffic and telephone calls in the Dispatch Center, should contact the Center to inquire if they are needed to respond to assist.
 - b. Other off-duty dispatchers will be contacted as necessary and as time permits and will respond as requested.
 - c. The on-duty Dispatch Supervisor or the oncoming Dispatch Supervisor will determine the number of dispatchers required by the situation and will retain or dismiss reporting dispatchers as necessary. When making the decision to retain or dismiss, scheduling extended-emergency shifts will be taken into consideration.
 - d. If the staffing in the Dispatch Center becomes sufficient, additional dispatchers or tactical dispatchers may be assigned to staff an emergency communications van. (Note: any communications van or other outside

assignment of dispatchers will occur only after the staffing needs of the Dispatch Center are met and can be assured of being continually met.)

- e. If the nature of the incident precludes any response directly to the Dispatch Center, dispatchers should contact their nearest 9-1-1 PSAP and offer their assistance. If their assistance is accepted, they should contact the Dispatch Center to advise of their response.
 - i. If the impact of the incident in Dispatch gives the appearance of being 48 hours or more in duration, Dispatch will shift into extended-emergency shifts, breaking at 0600 hours and 1800 hours.
 - ii. The morning, day, and day-cover shifts will work 0600-1800 hours. The afternoon, swing, graveyard, and evening-cover shifts will work 1800-0600 hours.
5. Dispatch Supervisors will release dispatchers as the situation warrants. Personal considerations (fatigue, commitments, etc.) will be of primary concern, but an even distribution of the amount of overtime accrued will also be a determining factor. The emergency schedule will remain in effect until it's apparent that regularly scheduled personnel will be sufficient.
6. If the incident is related to a fire on State Responsibility Lands, SBSO dispatch personnel may be ordered as initial and relief dispatchers through the Region 1 Office. If necessary, other-agency dispatchers can be ordered to assist via the same process.