



State by State  
Training Standards Overview

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- Alaska
  - Telecommunicators who act as Emergency medical dispatchers must be certified by the State. Alaska Stat. Ann. § 18.08.084 (West).
  - The training curriculum varies by agency.
- Arkansas
  - Non-mandatory training available through the Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy. Ark. Code Ann. § 12-10-325 (West).
  - The Academy follows APCO Project 33 Training Program. <http://www.p33.apcointl.org/>
- California
  - No state mandated training.
  - Agencies may voluntarily follow the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Agencies that participate receive the benefits such as job-related assessment tools, research into improved officer selection standards, management counseling, the development of new training courses, reimbursement for training and leadership training programs.
  - Agencies that participate in POST must ensure public safety dispatcher candidates satisfy requirements in the verbal, reasoning, memory, and perceptual abilities assessment; oral communications assessment; background investigation; and medical evaluation. [http://lib.post.ca.gov/publications/pam/PAM-ch5\\_selectionRequirements.pdf](http://lib.post.ca.gov/publications/pam/PAM-ch5_selectionRequirements.pdf).
  - Public safety dispatchers in agencies that participate in POST are required to complete a POST-certified public safety dispatcher's basic course before or within 12 months of their date of hire. POST-certified courses require that a program have a minimum of 120 hours of training and meet the minimum hours. Public safety dispatchers must complete 24 hours of continuing professional training every two years. <http://post.ca.gov>.
- Connecticut
  - Telecommunicators must be certified by the Department of Public Safety by completing a state-approved telecommunicator training program. Conn. Agencies Regs. § 28-30-7.
  - The program must include the following training:
    - Interpersonal communications, including: (1) The forms of communication; (2) The factors that influence and complicate communications; (3) SMCR (Sender or Source, Message or Method, Channel, Receiver) concept of communications; (4) Loop of understanding and feedback; (5) Barriers to effective communications; (6) Communication symbols and the social environment; and (7) Stress Management.
    - Organization of the public or private safety communications function, including: (1) The organizational structure of police, fire and EMS public or private safety telecommunications centers; (2) Interrelation of the communications unit with other functional units within the parent organization, with other departments and with the public; and (3) Basic operational requirements of a public or private safety telecommunications system and the vital services provided.

- Public or private safety telecommunications systems, including: (1) The components that make up a telecommunications system including, but not limited to, the use of repeater base stations, satellite receivers, voting comparators, mobile repeaters, mobile data terminals and control consoles; (2) Commonly encountered malfunctions in radio telecommunications systems, the corrective actions that may be taken to re-establish communications and the ability to communicate the nature of malfunctions to a radio technician; and (3) Electromagnetic spectrum and spectrum management by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
- Basics of public safety radio broadcasting, including: (1) Effective transmission of information and descriptive data to field units or other public or private safety agencies; (2) Theory and use of radio signal codes; (3) Use of aural brevity codes and the phonic alphabet; (4) Use of 2400 hour time in broadcasting; and (5) Correct procedures for broadcasting including the following: street address numbers, vehicle identification numbers, registration numbers, serial numbers or model numbers and descriptive data concerning persons, property and vehicles.
- Public safety telecommunications record systems, to include: (1) The various types of records that shall be maintained within a public safety telecommunications center including, but not limited to, status records, dispatch records, daily logs, daily bulletins, and supervisor's daily log; (2) Records retention schedules; and (3) Laws associated with the taping of telephone calls and radio transmissions.
- Standard universally accepted broadcast rules and procedures, to including: (1) The need for standardization of broadcast procedures; (2) Technique for choosing appropriate words and rate of speech for broadcast messages; (3) Logical sequencing of information, echo procedures, impersonal dispatching, concept of never guessing the content of written messages, and courtesy; (4) Styles of call-up procedure; (5) Clipping; (6) Acknowledging calls from mobile units or other stations; (7) Terminating calls; (8) Use of alert tones; and (9) The parts of a dispatch message.
- Telephone techniques, including: (1) Basic principles for handling calls from the general public and calls from other emergency service agencies; (2) General telephone techniques, including clarity of speech, avoidance of the use of jargon or slang, explanation of waits and telephone courtesy; (3) Specific telephone techniques, including taking charge of the conversation when dealing with the public, personality projection, repetitive persistence, obtaining pertinent information, classifying the nature of a complaint or report, and following through on information obtained; (4) Procedures for handling multiple calls; (5) Dealing with third party callers; (6) Dealing with calls from children, the elderly, and non-English speaking persons; (7) Dealing with calls involving violent crimes; (8) Dealing with calls involving anonymous callers; (9) Correct procedures for

taking and recording telephone messages, including general message taking, dealing with confidential informants, procedures for relaying routine and urgent messages, and radio paging of undercover operatives; (10) Procedures for overcoming the hysteria threshold of distraught callers; and (11) The key questions that shall be asked of a caller reporting an incident (who, where, what, when and why).

- The enhanced 9-1-1 emergency telephone system, including: (1) Components and functions of the enhanced 9-1-1 telephone system network and the dynamics of 9-1-1 call flow and address information transmission; (2) Enhanced 9-1-1 features, including, but not limited to, automatic number identification (ANI), automatic location identification (ALI) and selective routing, as defined in Connecticut General Statutes section 28-25; and default routing, alternate routing, selective call transfer, fixed call transfer, manual call transfer, disaster routing, 9-1-1 data management system, and 9-1-1 printouts; (3) Components and functions of enhanced 9-1-1 terminal equipment; (4) Types of automatic location identification and trouble displays; (5) Recognizing and reacting to conditions of 9-1-1 failure or equipment malfunction; and (6) Completion of inquiry forms.
- Telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) including: (1) Effective usage of language conventions and abbreviations typically used by the deaf and hearing impaired; and (2) Appropriate procedures for establishing communications with the deaf and hearing impaired.
- Functions of a law enforcement agency and law enforcement dispatch procedures, including: (1) Roles of field personnel and objectives of a law enforcement agency; (2) Working relationship between law enforcement field personnel and telecommunicators; (3) Proper classification and processing of the basic types of law enforcement emergency calls utilizing telephone complaint and report processing procedures; and (4) Application of appropriate procedures for the processing of calls for emergency assistance related to law enforcement, including pre-arrival instructions.
- Functions of a fire department and fire dispatch procedures, including: (1) Roles of field personnel and objectives of a fire and rescue operation agency; (2) Working relationship between fire and rescue operation field personnel and telecommunicators; (3) Proper classification and processing of the basic types of fire and rescue emergency calls utilizing telephone complaint and report processing procedures; and (4) Application of appropriate procedures for the processing of calls for emergency assistance related to fire and rescue operations, including pre-arrival instructions.
- Emergency medical dispatch procedures, including: (1) Proper classification and processing of the basic types of emergency medical service calls utilizing telephone complaint and report processing procedures; and (2) Application of appropriate procedures for pre-arrival instructions pertaining to emergency

medical service operations or emergency medical dispatch cards as contained in the current U.S. Department of Transportation--National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Emergency Medical Dispatcher's Call.

- Public or private safety telecommunicator liability issues, including: (1) Liability issues associated with each phase of the dispatch function with a review of appropriate court cases; (2) Local government tort liability as it applies to the dispatch function; and (3) Liability protection offered by standard operating procedures and call guides.
  - Hazardous materials awareness training consistent with ANSI/NFPA 472, Chapter 2, Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents.
- Delaware
    - All agencies must be accredited by the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatch. Part of that requirement is for emergency medical telecommunicators complete NAEMD's EMD course. Del. Code Ann. tit. 16, § 10006 (West).
  - Florida
    - Public safety telecommunicators hired after October 2010 must complete a 232-hour training course approved by the state Department of Education and Department of Health. [http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/ems/DOH-Version3\\_10-10-11.pdf](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/ems/DOH-Version3_10-10-11.pdf). Fla. Stat. Ann. § 401.465 (West).
  - Georgia
    - Training for public safety communications officers, employees who receive, process, or transmit public safety information and dispatch law enforcement officers, is regulated by the Georgia Peace Officer Standard and Training Council (POST). Ga. Code Ann. § 35-8-23 (West).
    - The 40-hour course includes written and performance-based examinations. <http://www.gpstc.org>.
  - Idaho
    - Voluntary certifications through Idaho's POST Academy to become a communications specialist. The academy offers four levels of training certifications. There are also supervisor, master and management certifications in communications. To receive the basic certification telecommunicators must take 80-hours of POST-certified training and have one year of full-time dispatch experience.
  - Indiana
    - Emergency medical dispatchers must completed training that meets or exceeds the standards established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the Emergency Medical Dispatch Program Implementation and Administration Managers Guide. Ind. Code Ann. § 16-31-3.5-3 (West)
  - Iowa
    - Telecommunicators are required to complete a 40-hour basic training course approved by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy. Telecommunicators must complete eight hours

of annual in-service training in order to stay compliant. <http://www.state.ia.us/ilea>. Iowa Code Ann. § 80B.11C (West).

- Kentucky
  - Law enforcement dispatchers are required to complete a minimum of 160 hours of training approved by the Criminal Justice Information System within six months of being hired. Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 15.530 (West).
  - The Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice and Training offers a Telecommunications Academy that meets these requirements. The basic course is 175 hours and designed for new hires. <http://docjt.ky.gov>.
- Maine
  - Emergency Medical Dispatch Centers are required to use Maine EMS licensed Emergency Medical Dispatchers. ME ADC 16-163 Ch. 3-A, § 6.
  - The Emergency Services Communication Bureau offers courses to fulfill this requirement. <http://www.maine911.com/psap/training.htm>.
  - Dispatchers are required to also complete a 16-hour PSAP equipment certification class. Recertification requires 24 hours of continuing education every two years.
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
  - New telecommunicators are required to attend a two-day 9-1-1 equipment and basic telecommunicator training offered by the State 9-1-1 Department; 40 hours of State 9-1-1 Department-approved basic telecommunicator training, and 16 hours of State 9-1-1 Department-approved continuing education annually. Existing telecommunicators are required to attend 16 hours of State 9-1-1 Department-approved continuing education annually beginning July 1, 2012. 560 MA ADC 5.04.
  - By July 1, 2012, PSAPs must provide emergency medical dispatch either through certified EMD dispatchers at the PSAP or through a certified EMD resource. The PSAP or certified EMD resource must use a single EMD Protocol Reference System on every request for medical assistance; have policies and procedures for use of EMD Protocol Reference System, and establish a continuous quality assurance program.
  - In order to act as a certified EMD dispatcher for a PSAP, the telecommunicator must be certified E911 telecommunicator; obtain and maintain CPR certification; and obtain and maintain EMD certification. 560 MA ADC 5.07.
- Mississippi
  - Minimum standard of training for local public safety and telecommunicators is determined by the Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training. Miss. Code. Ann. § 19-5-353 (West).
  - To be certified, a telecommunicator begins with successfully completing an approved 40-hour basic communications courses. Next, the telecommunicator must complete an eight-hour field observation. In urban environments, these eight hours may include a traditional ride-a-long. The telecommunicator must complete an essay about their experience, what they learned and what is available at the station for emergency

personnel and service. EMS telecommunicators must complete an approved 24-hour EMD course and be CPR certified.

- After the training application is submitted and a background investigation is completed, the certification issued is valid for three years. During that time, certified telecommunicators must complete 48 hours of continuing education on a minimum of six different topics. Not all 48 hours can be online courses.
- For the first recertification cycle, telecommunicators must also take the 16-hour state recertification course. This course includes topics such as officer down calls, AMBER alerts and suicide calls that telecommunicators may not have handled during their time on the job.
- <http://www.dps.state.ms.us/divisions/public-safety-planning/board-on-emergency-telecommunications-standards-and-training-betst/>
- Missouri
  - The 9-1-1 Training and Standards Act requires 9-1-1 telecommunicators complete 40 total hours of approved training completed within 12 months of employment. After the initial training, all telecommunicators must complete 24 hours of approved training every three years. Mo. Ann. Stat. § 650.340 (West).
- Montana
  - Public safety communications officers, anyone who receives requests for emergency services, must complete the Public Safety Communicator Basic Course offered by the Montana Law Enforcement Academy. This is a 40-hour course over one week course and covers law enforcement, fire and EMS. The topics included are effective communications, incident documentation and radio and phone procedures. Telecommunicators must also be certified by the Criminal Justice Information Network Service Section to operate CJIN computers. Mont. Code Ann. § 7-31-201.
- New Hampshire
  - State Enhanced 9-1-1 Commission and the Bureau of Emergency Communications oversees training for 9-1-1 telecommunicators. NH ST T. VII, Ch. 106-H.
  - All new employees are required to complete eight weeks, 320 hours, of classroom training followed by eight weeks, 320 hours, of hands-on training at a console. Topics discussed include active listening, EMD, mapping, NIMS, customer service, behavioral emergencies, suicide, and police, fire and EMS call taking.
  - Continuing education is offered every month. Most continuing education is not mandatory. Training is conducted while telecommunicators are on duty.
- New Jersey
  - The State Office of Emergency Telecommunications Services oversees training for telecommunicators. N.J. Stat. Ann. § 52:17C-1 (West)
  - Telecommunicators are required to complete a 40-hour basic communications course for certification through the state's Office of Emergency Telecommunications Services. Telecommunicators responsible for EMD must also complete an eight-hour CPR certification and a 32-hour EMD course. <http://www.nj.gov/911/resource>

- New Mexico
  - Telecommunicators must be certified by the New Mexico Department of Public Safety Training and Recruiting Division within 12 months of hire. N.M. Admin. Code § 10.29.10.
  - Telecommunicators are required to complete basic training, 118 hours on 10 topics, from the New Mexico Law Enforcement Training Academy's Public Safety Telecommunicator Program or an accredited academy.
  - After completing basic training, telecommunicators must take the public safety telecommunicator certification exam within one year of completing the training. Telecommunicators must successfully complete 10 hours of approved in-service training annually to maintain this certification. <http://www.dps.nm.org/training>.
- New York
  - The state Office of Fire Prevention and Control oversees training standards. N.Y. Comp. Codes R. & Regs. tit. 21, § 5201.1.
  - Telecommunicators must complete the Emergency Services Dispatch Training Evaluation Program and pass the final exam within 12 months of hire. Topics include roles and responsibilities, legal aspects, interpersonal communications, telephone techniques, call classifications, radio communications, stress management and technology. To stay in compliance, telecommunicators are required to complete 21 hours of annual in-service training. <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/fire/firewww.html>.
- North Dakota
  - 9-1-1 calls must be answered by a 9-1-1 dispatcher who has completed training. The law does not require a number of hours or topics that should be covered. The law allows individual agencies to select their training programs and set standards for certification for their telecommunicators. N.D. Cent. Code Ann. § 57-40.6-10 (West).
- Ohio
  - The law does not mandate training, but does have recommendations. Telecommunicators are encouraged to complete a minimum of 40 hours of instruction approved by the state board of education on such topics as effective communications skills; telephone techniques; law, fire and EMS terminology; radio discipline; disaster planning and responder safety. Telecommunicators must complete eight hours of continuing education every two years to be recertified. Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 4742.03 (West).
- Oregon
  - Telecommunicators are required to complete 80 hours of basic training through the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training to become certified as a public safety telecommunicator. Or. Admin. R. 104-060-0000.
  - The basic telecommunicator course includes ethics, law enforcement overview, stress management, responder safety, interpersonal communications, TDD, courtroom testimony and a fire and EMS service overview. Telecommunicators are required to complete 12 hours of continuing education, in-service training and a review of policies and procedures every year. [www.oregon.gov/DPSST](http://www.oregon.gov/DPSST).



- Pennsylvania
  - The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency oversees training standards. Otherwise. 4 Pa. Code § 120c.102.
  - The basic training requirements for telecommunicators are 104 hours of classroom and hands-on training, which includes a mandated EMD certification. Supervisors are required to complete 224 hours of training including the 104 hours of basic training. Recertification test must be successfully completed every three years. Supervisors must complete testing every four years. <http://www.pema.state.pa.us>.
- South Carolina
  - The South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy oversees the administration of training for the state's 9-1-1 telecommunicators. S.C. Code Ann. § 23-47-20.
  - The Basic Telecommunications and 9-1-1 Training Course is a two-week, 80-hour course. <http://www.sccja.sc.gov>.
- South Dakota
  - The South Dakota 9-1-1 Coordination Board oversees standards for telecommunicator training. S.D. Codified Laws § 34-45-24.
  - All telecommunicators must complete the 80-hour, two-week course from South Dakota Law Enforcement Training Center. Topics include ethics, responder safety, and liability. [http://dps.sd.gov/emergency\\_services/emergency\\_management/sd\\_911.aspx](http://dps.sd.gov/emergency_services/emergency_management/sd_911.aspx).
- Tennessee
  - The Tennessee Emergency Communications Board oversees training for telecommunicators. Tenn. Code Ann. § 7-86-205 (West).
  - Telecommunicators that receive an initial or transferred 9-1-1 are required to complete 40 hours of coursework and 40 hours of supervised on-the-job training. The minimum number of hours for specific topics includes five hours of interpersonal communications, four hours of technology, eleven hours of communications techniques, twelve hours of radio communications and dispatch techniques. Telecommunicators are required to complete a minimum of eight hours of continuing education every two years for recertification. <http://tn.gov/commerce/911/index.shtml>.
- Texas
- Vermont
  - The Vermont E9-1-1 board oversees training for telecommunicators. Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 30, § 7052 (West).
  - Telecommunicators take the Vermont Call taker Certification course. This course involves classroom instruction and on-the-job training. For recertification, telecommunicators are required complete 16 hours of continuing education ever year, eight of which include the mandatory Vermont Recertification Course, which is designed to address issues from the previous year.
- West Virginia
  - Telecommunicators are required to complete a 40-hour basic training course from a nationally accredited within one year of being hired. W. Va. Code Ann. § 24-6-5 (West).

- Wyoming
  - Telecommunicators are required to attend a basic 67-hour communications course within two years of hire. Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 9-1-708 (West). The course is offered by the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy and the training standards are set by the Wyoming Peace Officer and Training Commission. Topics include telephone and radio procedures with mock calls and dispatches, strategies for responding to emotional situations and administrative tasks. Recertification is required every two years and includes 20 hours of Wyoming Peace Officer Standards and Training approved training. <http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/post.htm>.