Florida Public Safety Telecommunicator Workbook

Sixth Edition

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01.0 Understand the roles and duties of a Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST). The student will be able to:

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01.02   Describe the evolution of telecommunications and 911.

01.03   Define the roles of a call taker and a dispatcher as it relates to public safety telecommunications.

01.04   Understand the proper conduct of a PST.

01.05   Understand the importance of reporting for duty and the impact absences have on a communications center.

01.06   Understand the importance of adhering to dress codes (if applicable) and personal hygiene.

01.07   Identify performance standards and explain why they are important.

01.08   Identify statutory and other legal requirements and expectations for a certified PST.

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01.01 Comprehend the History of the Telecommunication Profession

Before the implementation of the 911 system, emergency response was a patchwork of local numbers and frantic scrambles. Imagine a world where reaching help in a crisis meant navigating a maze of phone lines, each with its own code and protocol. A test call in Alabama sparked a revolution, ushering in an era of streamlined emergency response and saving countless lives. Let us explore the fascinating history of public safety telecommunications, from the crackle of one-way radios to the sophisticated networks of today. We also celebrate the vital role of the **Public Safety Telecommunicators (PSTs),** who stand behind every answered 911 call.

History of Telecommunications

- **The First 911 Call:** The first 911 call was made in Haleyville, Alabama. It was a test call to ensure that the new 911 system was working correctly.

- **The Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act (911 Act):** The 911 Act was enacted to establish 911 as the national emergency phone number and to put other mandates in place to preserve the integrity of emergency services. The 911 Act also created the National 911 Program, which is responsible for developing and implementing policies and programs to improve the 911 system.

- **The First One-Way Radio Communications:** The first one-way radio communications were used by the Detroit Police Department. These early radios were used to broadcast information to patrol cars, but they could not be used to communicate back to the telecommunicators.

Figure 1 First 911 call being placed in Haleyville, Alabama

- **The First Two-Way Radio Communications:** The first two-way radio communications were implemented in Bayonne, New Jersey. This allowed police officers to communicate directly with the dispatcher, significantly improving their ability to respond to emergencies.

The Evolution of Public Safety Telecommunications

Evolving telephone and radio communications led to the public safety telecommunications profession as we know it today. PSTs now use a variety of communication technologies, including telephones, radios, computers, and mobile devices, to gather information, dispatch emergency responders, and provide assistance to the public.

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week

California declared the first National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week as a nod to the voices behind the headset. This week is now celebrated annually during the second full week of April in the United States, Canada, and Australia to recognize the important role that PSTs play in public safety.

The history of public safety telecommunications is a testament to human ingenuity and its unwavering commitment to protecting lives. From the pioneering spirit of early radio experimenters to the tireless dedication of PSTs who answer calls day and night, this journey underscores the critical role technology and human connection play in emergency response. As we move forward, embracing new technologies and fostering collaboration, we can ensure that the legacy of that first 911 call continues to resonate – a beacon of hope and a lifeline in times of crisis. Let this training serve as a reminder of the immense responsibility and profound impact PSTs carry. May it inspire us all to contribute to the ongoing evolution of a system that truly puts the safety of our communities first.

01.02 Describe the Evolution of Telecommunications and 911

The emergency communications landscape has undergone remarkable transformations over the years, shaped by technological advancements and an unwavering commitment to public safety. The introduction of 911 in Haleyville, Alabama, marked a significant leap forward, establishing a standardized and easily memorable number for individuals to call during emergencies.

<u>Technological Evolutions</u>

- **Enhanced 911 (E911):** The implementation of E911 in Orange County, Florida, revolutionized emergency response by incorporating location information from the caller's phone. This technological breakthrough enabled emergency responders to pinpoint the caller's location with greater precision, particularly for mobile phone users, leading to faster and more effective interventions.

- **Text Messaging and Multimedia Messaging:** As telecommunications technology continued to evolve, so did the capabilities of 911 services. The integration of text messaging and multimedia messaging into emergency communication platforms expanded accessibility for individuals with hearing or speech impairments. This advancement empowered individuals to relay potentially lifesaving information in numerous ways, enhancing the inclusivity of emergency response systems.

- **Next Generation 911 (Next Gen 911, NG911):** Next Gen 911 represents the latest frontier in emergency communications. This secure network is for public safety use only and is an innovative approach that leverages **Internet Protocol (IP)** technology to facilitate a more seamless exchange of information between callers, emergency services, and other relevant entities. Next Gen 911 enables the incorporation of more accurate location data, real-time data such as video streaming, and sensor information, providing a more comprehensive picture for emergency responders.

- **Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP): Emergency Communications Centers (ECCs)** are divided into primary and secondary PSAPs. Primary PSAPs directly receive 911 calls, while secondary PSAPs receive 911 calls that are transferred from a primary PSAP. Both PSAPs play a crucial role in public safety telecommunications, ensuring that emergency calls are routed efficiently and accurately.

- **Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD):** Most modern PSAPs have evolved from handwritten call cards to CAD software. This advancement has significantly improved communications and response times by providing PSTs with a centralized platform to manage and track emergency calls, allocate resources, and disseminate critical information.
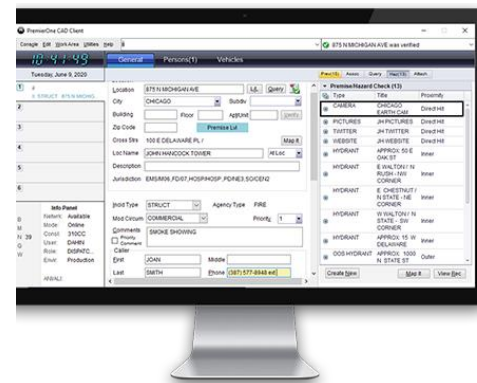
Figure 2 Motorola PremierOne CAD

Figure 3 Denise Amber Lee

The Denise Amber Lee Act: A Legacy of Improved Training

Denise Amber Lee (Figure 3), a young woman from Southwest Florida, was abducted from her home in broad daylight. Law enforcement agencies at the local, state, and federal levels immediately launched a massive search operation.

As tips and clues emerged, a **Be on the Look Out (BOLO)** alert was issued, providing a description of the suspect's vehicle. Multiple 911 calls were placed as the abductor drove through various neighborhoods and city streets.

One crucial call came from Denise herself. She managed to obtain her captor's cell phone and called 911. Pretending to be speaking to her abductor, she bravely provided the call taker with vital information about her identity and potential clues to her whereabouts.

Shortly after Denise's call ended abruptly, another 911 call was placed by an observant motorist. Stopped at a traffic light, the caller noticed screams coming from a nearby car and witnessed a hand banging on the backseat window. For nine minutes, the caller remained on the phone with the dispatcher, providing updates and staying with the suspicious vehicle in an area filled with law enforcement officers.

Hours later, the vehicle and suspect were located and apprehended. However, Denise was not found. Two days after her abduction, her body was tragically discovered just a few miles from the scene where the concerned motorist had initiated the second 911 call.

In the aftermath of this tragic event, it was revealed that critical information received by 911 operators during the early stages of the search for Denise had been mishandled. Inspired by the many shortcomings exposed during the search, Denise's family made a heartfelt plea to the Florida Legislature, advocating for improved and standardized training for all public safety ECC personnel.

Lawmakers unanimously passed the Denise Amber Lee Act, establishing a state statute mandating certification for 911 PSTs. This legislation outlines comprehensive training requirements, certification processes, and renewal procedures for PSTs across the state of Florida.

To honor Denise's memory and further support the advancement of 911 telecommunications, the Denise Amber Lee Foundation was established by her husband, Nathan Lee. The foundation provides ongoing support and advocacy for 911 PSTs nationwide.

As a tribute to Denise's courage and to ensure that such tragedies are prevented in the future, all individuals employed as a PST must be certified by the **Florida Department of Health (FDOH)**. This training workbook provides the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully pass the certification exam and lay a solid foundation for a rewarding career in public safety telecommunications.

The evolution of emergency communications, from Haleyville's first 911 call to the cutting-edge capabilities of Next Gen 911, reflects a continuous pursuit of enhancing public safety. The integration of advanced technologies, such as location tracking, text messaging, and IP-based systems, has transformed emergency response, enabling faster, more

informed, and more effective interventions. As we look towards the future, Next Gen 911 promises to further revolutionize the emergency communications landscape, empowering individuals and emergency responders to work together in safeguarding lives and communities.

Figure 4 Denise Amber Lee

01.03 Define the Roles of a Call Taker and a Dispatcher as it Relates to Public Safety Telecommunications

A PST is a call taker or dispatcher who answers, receives, transfers, and/or dispatches emergency and non-emergency calls for service. They are responsible for gathering information from callers, assessing the nature and location of emergencies, and dispatching the appropriate emergency services to the scene. There are some agencies that hire PSTs for specific roles, either only a call taker or only a dispatcher. Together PSTs play a critical role in ensuring public safety by serving as the link between the public and emergency responders.

Figure 5 Orange County Sheriff's Office PST

The Call Taker

Imagine a frantic caller, adrenaline pumping, reaching for their phone in a moment of crisis. The call taker is the first point of contact, the calm voice amidst the storm. Their primary responsibilities involve:

- **Answering Emergency and Non-Emergency Calls:** This includes 911 calls for police, fire, and/or medical emergencies, as well as administrative calls for information or assistance.

- **Gathering Information:** Using effective communication skills, the call taker must quickly assess the situation, gather details about the nature of the emergency, location, classify the incident and identify any potential risks. Think of them as detectives on the phone, piecing together the puzzle to understand the situation at hand.

Figure 6 Coral Springs ECC Call Taker

- **Providing Pre-Arrival Instructions:** Depending on the emergency, the call taker may need to provide life-saving instructions, such as **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** or first aid, until help arrives.

- **Prioritizing Calls:** Not all emergencies are treated equally. Call takers are trained to prioritize calls based on the severity of the situation, and the time lapse, ensuring that those in immediate danger receive the fastest response.

The Dispatcher

Once the call taker gathers the information and assesses the situation, the dispatcher initiates the coordination and deployment of resources to ensure the fastest and most effective help reaches those in need. Their key responsibilities include:

- **Analyzing Call Information:** The dispatcher receives the details from the call taker and, using their knowledge and experience, determines the appropriate response. They are the decision-makers, weighing factors like resource availability and urgency to dispatch the right help.

- **Deploying Resources:** Dispatchers are responsible for sending the appropriate emergency personnel to the scene, whether it be police, fire, or medical aid. They are the link between the ECC and the field, ensuring a seamless transition of information and action.

Figure 7 Nassau County Dispatcher

- **Maintaining Communication:** Dispatchers stay in constant contact with the responding units, providing updates and relaying pertinent information. They are the communication hub, keeping everyone informed and on the same page.

- **Monitoring the Situation:** Even after dispatching resources, the dispatcher's job is not over. They continue to monitor the situation, providing additional support and guidance as needed until the emergency is resolved.

While call takers and dispatchers have distinct roles, their work is deeply intertwined. They are two sides of the same coin, working in tandem to ensure a swift and effective response in every emergency. The call taker gathers the vital information, and the dispatcher translates it into action. Together, they form the backbone of public safety telecommunications, ensuring that help is just a phone call away.

01.04 Understand the Proper Conduct of a PST

PSTs play a pivotal role as the first point of contact in emergency situations. Their conduct profoundly impacts the outcome of these situations. Understanding the proper conduct of a PST is fundamental to ensuring efficient and effective emergency response. The key aspects of the conduct of a PST includes, but are not limited to:

Professionalism and Empathy

- **Maintaining Professionalism:** PSTs must always uphold a high level of professionalism, regardless of the nature or urgency of the situation. This includes maintaining composure, using appropriate language, and adhering to protocols, policies, and procedures.

- **Displaying Empathy:** While adhering to protocols, policies and procedures, PSTs should demonstrate empathy and understanding towards callers in distress. Compassionate communication can reassure and comfort individuals in crisis.

Effective Communication

- **Active Listening:** PSTs must actively listen to callers, gathering information while showing attentiveness and patience. This helps in accurately assessing the situation and dispatching appropriate aid.

- **Clear and Concise Communication:** PSTs should communicate information accurately and briefly, ensuring that responders receive clear details without ambiguity.

Adherence to Protocols and Procedures

- **Follow Standard Operating Procedures:** PSTs are trained in specific protocols for various emergencies. It is essential to adhere strictly to these procedures to ensure a standardized and efficient response.

- **Prioritize and Triaging:** PSTs must prioritize calls based on urgency, ensuring that critical situations receive immediate attention and resources before the less critical situations.

Stress Management and Self-Care

- **Managing Stress:** Emergency PSTs often face high-stress situations. Training should include stress management techniques to help PSTs remain composed and effective during intense moments.

- **Promoting Self-Care:** Encouraging self-care practices among PSTs is vital for maintaining physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This includes providing resources and support for dealing with the emotional toll of the job.

Continuous Training and Improvement

- **Ongoing Education and Training:** PSTs should undergo regular training sessions to stay updated on evolving protocols, technologies, and best practices in emergency response.

- **Feedback and Improvement:** Encouraging feedback mechanisms helps PSTs improve their performance. Constructive feedback fosters a culture of continuous improvement within the emergency dispatch team.

Understanding and practicing proper conduct as a PST is fundamental to providing effective emergency services. By upholding professionalism, effective communication, adherence to protocols, prioritizing self-care, and embracing continuous improvement, PSTs can make a substantial difference in saving lives and ensuring public safety.

01.05 Understand the Importance of Reporting for Duty and the Impact Absences Have on a Communications Center

PSTs play a vital role in ensuring public safety. They are the first line of contact for people in distress, and they are responsible for dispatching emergency responders to the scene of an incident. It is crucial for PSTs to report for duty on time and be prepared to work long hours, to ensure appropriate staffing levels are maintained.

The Impact of Absences on an ECC

When a PST is absent, it can have a significant impact on the ability of an ECC to function effectively. This is because PSTs are responsible for answering a high volume of calls, and even a few absences can quickly overwhelm the remaining staff. Additionally, when PSTs are absent, it can increase the call wait time for those in need of help, which can have serious consequences.

Below are some of the specific impacts that PST absences can have on an ECC:

- **Call Wait Times:** When PSTs are absent, the remaining staff must handle a higher volume of calls, which can lead to longer wait times for callers. This can be especially problematic in emergencies when callers may need immediate assistance.

- **Response Times:** In addition to increasing call wait times, PST absences can also lead to increased response times for emergency responders. This is because PSTs are responsible for dispatching emergency responders to the scene of an incident, and if there are not enough PSTs on duty, it can take longer for emergency responders to be dispatched.

- **Stress and Burnout:** When PSTs are absent, the remaining staff must work harder and longer hours to cover the workload. This can lead to increased stress and burnout, which can further reduce the effectiveness of the ECC.

Specific Considerations for PSTs

As emergency essential personnel, PSTs work in a 24/7/365 environment, including holidays, weekends, and overnight and may require mandatory overtime. They should be ready to begin their shift at the required start time. PSTs must be available in the event of natural disasters, emergency mobilizations, or other declarations of emergency. Unplanned or excessive absenteeism can have a negative impact on the ECC and its personnel, as it lowers morale, creates stress, and places a burden on co-workers. Mandatory overtime may be required to fill absences. Emergency responder safety is also jeopardized when staffing levels are low.

Tardiness also places a burden on co-workers and the work environment. PSTs should arrive on time and be ready to work their assigned workstation. Tardiness from breaks can similarly burden those left working in the ECC.

Excessive tardiness, absenteeism, and misuse of sick leave may result in disciplinary action based on agency policy.

Reporting for duty on time is essential for PSTs, as it ensures that they are available to help those in need. By understanding the impact that absences can have on an ECC and considering the specific expectations of their profession, PSTs can take steps to reduce their absences and help to ensure that the ECC is always able to function effectively.

01.06 Understand the Importance of Adhering to Dress Codes (If Applicable) and Personal Hygiene

PSTs play an essential role in ensuring public safety by serving as the link between the public and emergency responders. Their work environment demands professionalism, composure, and the ability to project a calm and reassuring demeanor even in the most stressful situations. Maintaining a professional appearance and good personal hygiene are essential aspects of upholding these standards.

Importance of Professional Dress Code

Some PSTs may have issued uniforms that they are required to wear. Others may need to adhere to a professional dress code. Tattoos and facial piercings may be limited or prohibited according to each specific agency's policy. Certain hair styles and/or color may also be prohibited according to agency policy.

PSTs work in a professional setting and interact with colleagues, supervisors, and sometimes callers. Adhering to a dress code demonstrates professionalism, respect for the workplace, and instills confidence in the people PSTs interact with.

A professional dress code includes, but is not limited to:

- Neat and clean attire/uniform that is free of wrinkles, stains, or tears.

- Clothing that is modest and appropriate for the workplace, avoiding excessively revealing or suggestive clothing.

- Footwear that is clean, comfortable, and appropriate for the work environment.

- Minimal jewelry, ensuring it does not create distractions or pose safety hazards.

Impact of Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene is equally important for PSTs, as it directly affects their ability to perform their duties effectively and maintain a positive work environment. Good personal hygiene includes, but is not limited to:

- Regular showering or bathing to maintain cleanliness and prevent body odor.

- Proper grooming habits, including clean hair, trimmed nails, and neat facial hair.

- Fresh breath and avoiding strong perfumes or colognes that could be distracting or offensive to others.

- Maintaining a clean and organized workspace, free of clutter and unpleasant odors.

Benefits of Professional Appearance and Personal Hygiene

Upholding professional standards in appearance and personal hygiene offers several benefits for PSTs:

- **Enhances Professionalism and Credibility:** A professional appearance and good personal hygiene convey respect for the workplace and instill confidence in colleagues, supervisors, and callers.

- **Promotes a Positive Work Environment:** A clean and well-maintained work environment contributes to a positive, healthy, and productive atmosphere for all employees.

- **Boosts Self-Confidence:** Feeling confident in one's appearance and personal hygiene can enhance a PST's overall demeanor and performance.

- **Reduces Distractions:** Maintaining a professional appearance and good personal hygiene minimizes distractions and allows PSTs to focus on their duties effectively.

By adhering to dress codes and maintaining good personal hygiene, PSTs can project a professional image, contribute to a positive work environment, and enhance their overall effectiveness in serving the public.

01.07 Identify Performance Standards and Explain Why They Are Important

PSTs play a vital role in emergency response, serving as the link between the public and emergency responders. Their ability to gather, analyze, and disseminate information accurately and efficiently is crucial for effective emergency response. Performance standards provide a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of PSTs and ensuring they are meeting the high expectations of their profession.

<ins>What are Performance Standards?</ins>

Performance standards are a set of expectations or guidelines that define the level of performance required for a specific job or task. In the context of public safety telecommunications, performance standards outline the essential competencies and skills that PSTs must possess to effectively carry out their duties. **Quality Assurance (QA)** is a method which provides PSTs and supervisors with the opportunity to regularly monitor work performance and take corrective action in the form of training.

<ins>Why are Performance Standards Important?</ins>

Performance standards are important for several reasons:

- **Ensuring Consistent and Effective Service:** Performance standards provide a clear benchmark for evaluating the effectiveness of PSTs, ensuring that they are meeting the necessary standards for providing accurate, timely, and professional service to the public.

- **Promoting Professional Development:** Performance standards serve as a roadmap for PSTs to identify areas for improvement and enhance their skills and knowledge. They provide a framework for professional development and continuous improvement.

- **Maintaining Accountability and Transparency:** Performance standards establish a clear understanding of expectations and responsibilities, promoting accountability among PSTs and fostering transparency within the organization.

- **Supporting Fair and Consistent Evaluation:** Performance standards provide a consistent basis for evaluating PSTs, ensuring that evaluations are fair, objective, and unbiased.

<ins>Examples of Performance Standards for PSTs</ins>

Performance standards for PSTs typically encompass a range of competencies including, but not limited to:

- **Communication Skills:** PSTs must possess exceptional communication skills to effectively interact with callers, emergency responders, and colleagues.

- **Problem-Solving and Decision-Making:** PSTs must be able to analyze complex situations, make quick and sound decisions, and prioritize tasks under pressure.

- **Stress Management and Emotional Resilience:** PSTs must be able to manage stress effectively and learn how to maintain emotional composure after dealing with the many difficult situations they encounter on a daily basis.

- **Technical Proficiency:** PSTs must be proficient in using various technologies, including CAD systems, radio communications, and emergency telephone systems.

- **Adherence to Policies and Procedures:** PSTs must adhere to established policies and procedures to ensure consistent and effective handling of emergency calls.

Performance standards are essential for ensuring that PSTs meet the high standards required for their critical role in public safety. By understanding and adhering to performance standards, PSTs can contribute to the overall effectiveness of emergency response and maintain the public's trust in their ability to provide timely and professional assistance in times of need.

01.08 Identify Statutory and Other Legal Requirements and Expectations for a Certified PST

PSTs in Florida operate within a legal framework that outlines specific statutory requirements and expectations. Understanding these legal obligations is necessary for PSTs to perform their duties effectively and in compliance with the law.

<u>Statutory Requirements</u>

- **Training & Certification:** PSTs in Florida need to complete a state-approved training program, overseen by the FDOH. Certification is obtained upon completion of this program and passing the state examination. In addition to the certification and recertification requirements, PSTs who answer 911 calls for emergency medical conditions must complete **Telecommunicator Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (T-CPR)** training every 2 years.

- **Certification Oversight:** The FDOH sets training standards and manages the certification process. Certificates can be revoked if qualifications are not met.

- **Certification Renewal:** PSTs are required to have their PST certification renewed every odd year.

- **Compliance with State Laws:** PSTs are required to operate in accordance with Florida state laws governing emergency communications, confidentiality, and data privacy. These laws include statutes like the Florida Communications Fraud Act and the Florida Public Records Law.

- **Adherence to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** PSTs must comply with the HIPAA regulations when handling medical information during emergency calls. Protecting the confidentiality and privacy of sensitive health-related information is required.

<u>Expectations and Responsibilities</u>

- **Accuracy and Detail in Reporting:** PSTs are expected to accurately record, and report information received during emergency calls. Providing detailed and precise information aids emergency responders in assessing and addressing the situation effectively.

- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** Maintaining strict confidentiality regarding personal information shared during emergency calls is imperative. PSTs must ensure that sensitive details are not disclosed to unauthorized individuals or entities.

- **Ethical Conduct:** PSTs are expected to adhere to ethical standards in their interactions with callers, colleagues, and emergency responders. This includes treating all individuals with respect and impartiality, regardless of the circumstances.

<u>Continuous Compliance and Training</u>

- **Ongoing Education:** PSTs should engage in continuous education and training to stay updated on changes in laws, regulations, and best practices in emergency communications. Regular training sessions ensure that PSTs remain compliant with evolving legal requirements.

- **Quality Assurance and Auditing:** Agencies often conduct quality assurance checks and audits to ensure PSTs are adhering to legal requirements and best practices. Feedback from audits helps identify areas for improvement.

Certified PSTs in Florida must operate within a legal framework that mandates compliance with state laws, confidentiality regulations, and ethical standards. By understanding and adhering to these statutory requirements, PSTs contribute to efficient emergency response while safeguarding the rights and privacy of individuals in distress.

End of Section 01 Worksheet

1. Where was the first 911 call made?

_____

2. Describe the main purpose and importance of the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act.

_____

_____

_____

3. The acronym PSAP stands for _____.

4. The technology implemented in Orange County, Florida that enabled emergency responders to pinpoint the caller's location with greater precision, particularly for mobile phone users is called _____.

5. List the primary responsibilities of the call taker.

_____

_____

_____

6. List the primary responsibilities of the dispatcher.

_____

_____

_____

7. _____ and _____ communication includes communicating information accurately and succinctly, ensuring that responders receive clear details without ambiguity.

8. _____ communication can greatly reassure and comfort individuals in crisis.

9. List the three (3) main impacts absences have on a Communication Center.

_____

_____

_____

10. PSTs must be available in the event of _____, emergency mobilizations, or other declarations of emergency.

11. List the four (4) main benefits of maintaining a professional appearance and personal hygiene.

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. List three (3) items that might be included in a professional dress code.

_____

_____

_____

13. Explain why performance standards are important.

_____

_____

_____

14. PSTs must adhere to established _____ and _____ to ensure consistent and effective handling of emergency calls.

15. Define ethical conduct.

_____

_____

_____

16. What are the examples of state statutes that PSTs are required to operate within?

_____

_____

_____

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Section 02 Objectives

02.0 Describe and understand professionalism, ethics, and legal concepts as it relates to a PST. The student will be able to:

02.01   Understand ethics, professionalism, values, image, and personal conduct.

02.02   Explain how PST actions related to ethics, professionalism, values, image, and personal conduct affect the role of a PST.

02.03   Explain how criminal and civil law affects a PST and the agency (liability, confidentiality, negligence, breach of duty, etc.).

02.04   Understand and explain how federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations relate to the PST.

02.05   Understand the impact and importance of disseminating information.

02.06   Explain the importance of and procedure for testifying in court.

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02.01 Understand Ethics, Professionalism, Values, Image, and Personal Conduct

Ethics

Ethics refers to the principles of conduct that govern a person's actions and behavior. PSTs must adhere to a strong ethical code that ensures they act with honor, honesty, and fairness in all situations. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Maintaining Confidentiality:** PSTs handle sensitive information, including personal details and emergency situations. It is essential to protect this information and refrain from sharing it with unauthorized individuals.

- **Avoiding Conflicts of Interest:** PSTs must avoid situations where personal interests could influence their professional judgment. This includes refraining from accepting gifts or favors from individuals or businesses that may be involved in emergency situations.

- **Reporting Misconduct:** PSTs have a responsibility to report any instances of unethical or illegal behavior observed within the workplace. This includes both personal misconduct and violations of agency policies or procedures.

Professionalism

Professionalism encompasses the outward appearance, behavior, and attitudes that reflect a commitment to excellence and a dedication to serving others. PSTs must project a professional image that inspires trust and confidence in the public. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Maintaining a Neat and Clean Appearance:** PSTs should dress appropriately for their role, ensuring their attire is clean, wrinkle free, and professional.

- **Communicating Effectively:** PSTs must communicate clearly, concisely, and respectfully with callers, other PSTs, and emergency responders. This includes active listening, using professional language, and avoiding jargon.

- **Demonstrating Empathy and Compassion:** PSTs must be understanding and sensitive to the needs of callers, particularly those in distress. This involves displaying empathy, offering reassurance, and showing genuine concern.

- **Continuous Learning and Adaptability:** PSTs must embrace new technology and increase their knowledge and skills to navigate evolving challenges. This can be accomplished through learning and adaptation.

- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** PSTs are required to work effectively with other professionals to achieve shared goals.

Values

Values represent the core beliefs and principles that guide a person's actions and decisions. PSTs must embody values that align with the public safety mission including, but are not limited to:

- **Integrity:** PSTs must act with trustworthiness, transparency, and moral uprightness, always striving to do the right thing, even when no one is watching.

- **Respect:** PSTs must treat others with dignity, courtesy, and consideration, regardless of their background, beliefs, or circumstances.

- **Commitment to Service:** PSTs must be dedicated to serving the public, putting the needs of others before their own and always striving to make a positive impact.

Image

Image refers to the public perception of a person or organization. PSTs are the public face of emergency services, and their actions and behavior shape the community's understanding of the profession. It is essential to maintain a positive image that reinforces trust and confidence in their role. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Conduct Both On and Off Duty:** PSTs must uphold ethical standards in all aspects of their lives, as their personal conduct reflects the profession.

- **Online Presence:** PSTs should exercise caution when using social media and other online platforms, ensuring their posts and interactions align with professional standards.

- **Promoting a Positive Image of the Profession:** PSTs can actively promote a positive image of the profession by sharing their experiences, highlighting the importance of their role, and engaging with the community.

Personal Conduct

Personal conduct encompasses the actions, behaviors, and attitudes that a person demonstrates in their daily life. PSTs must maintain high standards of personal conduct both on and off duty, as their actions reflect the profession and the agency they represent. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Being Punctual and Reliable:** PSTs must be dependable and committed to their work schedule, ensuring they arrive on time and fulfill their duties to the best of their ability.

- **Maintaining a Positive Attitude:** PSTs must project a positive and professional demeanor, even in challenging or stressful situations. This includes exhibiting patience, understanding, and a willingness to help others.

- **Avoiding Distractions and Maintaining Focus:** PSTs must remain focused on their tasks and avoid distractions that could compromise their ability to perform their duties effectively. This includes minimizing personal conversations and social media usage during work hours.

PSTs play a vital role in the public safety spectrum, and their actions and behavior have a direct impact on the lives of others. Upholding the highest standards of ethics, professionalism, values, image, and personal conduct is essential for PSTs to maintain the trust and confidence of the public and fulfill their critical role in the emergency services system.

02.02 Explain How PST Actions Related to Ethics, Professionalism, Values, Image, and Personal Conduct Affect the Role of a PST

PSTs are the calm voices and the link between the public and emergency responders. Their actions and decisions have a profound impact on the safety and well-being of their communities.

<u>How PST Actions Affect Ethics</u>

These actions include, but are not limited to:

- Prioritizing honesty and accuracy in all interactions, ensuring clear and reliable information exchange.

- Safeguarding sensitive information with utmost discretion, respecting the privacy of those they serve.

- Treating all callers with respect and fairness, regardless of their background or situation.

- Navigating ethical dilemmas with sound judgment and adherence to established protocols.

<u>How PST's Actions Affect Professionalism</u>

These include, but are not limited to:

- Projecting confidence and trust through their demeaner. Staying calm and composed even under pressure, ensuring clear decision-making.

- Maintaining a professional appearance to promote a positive impression as a representative of the agency they represent.

- Using effective communication through clear, concise, and active listening.

- Demonstrating compassion and understanding during times of crisis, offering support and guidance.

- A commitment to excellence, striving for continuous improvement and mastery of skills.

- Collaboration and teamwork with emergency services to ensure seamless response to emergencies.

<u>How PST's Actions Affect Values</u>

These include, but are not limited to:

- Adhering to established protocols and procedures for the efficiency and coordination of response at all times.

- Maintaining trustworthiness, fairness, and accountability in all interactions.

- Being respectful during interactions with callers, colleagues, and emergency responders.

- Dedication to public service by prioritizing the safety and well-being of the community more than anything else.

<u>How PST's Actions Affect Image</u>

These include, but are not limited to:

- Being the positive and calm voice in the storm, reassuring and guiding callers during emergencies.

- Becoming proficient in multitasking and prioritizing essential tasks, ensuring efficient response to critical situations both on and off duty.

- Knowing that public media platforms are often used as a source of information gathering, therefore they must conduct themselves accordingly to not disclose or disseminate information inadvertently or display behavior unbecoming to PST profession.

- Portraying a positive image expected from personnel in emergency services by contributing to a public effort when necessary.

How PST's Actions Affect Personal Conduct

These include, but are not limited to:

- Demonstrating the highest personal standards in all aspects of life, on and off duty.

- Maintaining a commitment to reporting to work as scheduled and on time.

- Embracing continuous learning, having adaptability, and fostering a positive attitude to remain effective in a dynamic work environment.

- Focusing on established protocols and procedures to ensure reliability and consistency and avoiding agency liability.

PSTs are the vital link between the public and emergency responders. By upholding the highest standards of ethics, professionalism, values, image, and personal conduct, PSTs build trust, ensure effective emergency response, and contribute to the overall well-being of their communities. Their dedication and commitment make them the true first, emergency responders deserving of the utmost respect and appreciation.

Ethics, professionalism, values, image, and personal conduct are not merely words; they are the guiding principles that define a successful PST. By embracing these principles, the PST can contribute significantly to the safety and well-being of their community and make a difference in the lives of those who need them most.

02.03 Explain How Criminal and Civil Law Affects a PST and the Agency (Liability, Confidentiality, Negligence, Breach of Duty, etc.)

PSTs actions and decisions have a direct impact on the lives of others, making it essential that they understand the implications of criminal and civil law on their professional practice.

<u>Criminal Law</u>

Criminal law deals with offenses against society, where the government prosecutes individuals who violate established laws. PSTs may face criminal liability if their actions or inactions directly contribute to harm or endangerment to include, but are not limited to:

- **Negligent Failure to Dispatch Emergency Services in a Timely Manner:** PSTs have a legal duty to act promptly and responsibly when receiving emergency calls. Failure to do so could result in criminal charges if the delay causes harm or loss of life.

- **Providing False or Misleading Information to Emergency Responders:** PSTs must convey accurate and truthful information to other PSTs and responding units. Intentionally providing false or misleading information could constitute a criminal offense.

- **Violating Confidentiality Laws:** PSTs handle sensitive information, including personal details and other sensitive medical data. Intentionally disclosing this information without authorization could result in criminal charges.

<u>Civil Law</u>

Civil law deals with disputes between individuals or organizations, where one party seeks compensation for the damages or injuries caused by the other. PSTs may face civil liability if their actions or inactions cause harm or loss to others to include, but are not limited to:

- **Negligent Failure to Follow Protocols or Procedures:** PSTs must adhere to established protocols and procedures to ensure the proper handling of emergency calls and dispatching of responders. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in civil liability if the breach of duty causes harm or loss.

- **Negligent Failure to Provide Adequate Assistance:** PSTs have a duty to provide callers with the necessary information and assistance to manage emergencies. Failure to provide adequate assistance could result in civil liability if the caller suffers harm or loss as a result.

- **Negligent Failure to Maintain Confidentiality:** PSTs must protect sensitive information and refrain from disclosing it without authorization. Negligent disclosure of confidential information could result in civil liability if the affected individual suffers harm or loss as a result.

<u>Liability and Negligence</u>

Liability refers to the legal obligation to compensate another party for damages or injuries caused by one's actions or inactions. Negligence is a form of civil liability that occurs when a person fails to exercise the degree of care that a reasonable person would have exercised in the same or similar circumstances.

PSTs can be held liable for negligence if their actions cause harm or loss to others. This can include financial compensation for damages, medical expenses, and pain and suffering. In some cases, PSTs may also face punitive damages, which are intended to punish the defendant and deter future wrongdoing.

Confidentiality

PSTs must handle sensitive information including personal details and sensitive medical situations. They have a legal and ethical duty to maintain confidentiality of this information and refrain from disclosing it without authorization. Exceptions to confidentiality may include situations where disclosure is required by law, such as to prevent harm to oneself or others.

Breach of Duty

Breach of duty occurs when a person fails to meet the legal standard of care owed to another person. In the context of PSTs, breach of duty can occur when they fail to follow established protocols, procedures, or training guidelines, resulting in harm or loss to others.

PSTs play a critical role in the public safety spectrum, and their actions, inactions, and decisions have a direct impact on the lives of others. Understanding the implications of criminal and civil law is essential for PSTs to fulfill their duties responsibly and protect themselves and their agency from potential liability. By adhering to established protocols, procedures, and ethical standards, PSTs can minimize the risk of legal repercussions and maintain the trust and confidence of the public they serve.

02.04 Understand and Explain How Federal, State, and Local Laws, Codes, and Regulations Relate to the PST

Federal Laws

Federal laws are those enacted by the United States Congress and apply throughout the country. PSTs must be familiar with a variety of federal laws that impact their work including, but are not limited to:

- **The Telecommunications Act:** This law regulates the use of telecommunications networks and services, including the obligation to provide assistance to persons with disabilities.

- **HIPAA:** HIPAA is a federal law that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding confidential and **protected health information (PHI).** PSTs must be able to quickly identify the seriousness of the problem, dispatch the appropriate response, and provide instructions to the caller, when necessary, which may include dissemination of PHI to emergency responders. HIPAA does not prevent PSTs from relaying information to emergency responders; it does prevent PSTs from relaying information to curious callers.

- **Kari's Law:** Kari's Law ensures that anyone can reach an ECC when dialing 911 from a **Multi-Line Telephone Service (MLTS).** The law is named in honor of Kari Hunt, who was killed in a hotel room by her estranged husband. Her daughter tried to call 911 four times, but the calls never went through because the motel's phone system required dialing "9" before any call to secure an outbound phone line. Under the statute, MLTS vendors and manufacturers must configure new systems to support direct dialing 911. The system must also send a notification to a central location on- or off-site, such as a front desk or security kiosk. The notification will provide an alert that a 911 call was placed and include a callback number and information about the caller's location.

- **Ray Baum's Act**: Ray Baum's Act emphasizes the importance of making dispatchable location information from all 911 calls available to PSAPs, regardless of the technological platform used. The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** states "dispatchable location means a location delivered to the PSAP with a 911 call that consists of the validated street address of the calling party, plus additional information such as suite, apartment or similar information."

State Laws

State laws are those enacted by state legislatures and apply within the specific state. PSTs must familiarize themselves with the relevant state laws that govern their work including, but not limited to:

- **Florida Sunshine Law:** Mandates governmental transparency by granting public access to most meetings, records, and communications of public agencies, ensuring accountability and openness in government operations.

- **Florida's Public Records Law:** Specifies that "public records" encompass a broad range of materials, including documents, tapes, photographs, data processing software, and more, created or received by any agency in the course of official business. These records are accessible to any requestor, irrespective of reason, emphasizing transparency and accessibility in government operations.

- **Emergency Call Laws:** These laws mandate how PSTs must handle emergency calls, including the requirement to promptly dispatch emergency responders.

- **Confidentiality Laws:** These laws protect the privacy of individuals by limiting the disclosure of personal information. PSTs must adhere to these laws when handling sensitive information.

- **Recording Laws:** These laws govern the recording of telephone calls, including emergency calls. PSTs must be aware of the specific recording laws in their state.

- **Alyssa's Law:** This law requires public elementary and secondary schools to be equipped with "silent panic alarms directly linked to law enforcement." The law is named in honor of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting victim Alyssa Alhadeff.

Local Laws

Local laws are those enacted by municipalities, such as cities or counties. PSTs may need to be familiar with local ordinances that are specific to their jurisdiction, including, but not limited to:

- **Noise Ordinances:** These laws regulate the level of noise that is permitted, which may impact how PSTs handle calls related to noise disturbances.

- **Fire Code Regulations:** These regulations govern the safety of buildings and occupancy, which may impact how PSTs handle calls related to fire hazards.

- **Animal Control Ordinances:** These ordinances regulate the control and ownership of animals, which may impact how PSTs handle calls related to animal-related incidents.

Codes and Regulations

In addition to laws, PSTs must also be familiar with various codes and regulations that govern their work. These codes and regulations may be issued by federal, state, or local agencies. Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- **FCC Regulations:** The FCC regulates the use of telecommunications equipment and services, and PSTs must comply with these regulations when handling emergency calls.

- **Department of Transportation (DOT) Regulations:** The DOT regulates the transportation of hazardous materials, and PSTs must be aware of these regulations when handling calls related to hazardous material spills or accidents.

- **State and Local Building Codes:** These codes govern the construction and safety of buildings, and PSTs may need to be familiar with these codes when handling calls related to structural failures or other building-related emergencies.

PSTs operate within a complex legal and regulatory environment, and understanding the implications of federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations is essential for their professional practice. By adhering to these laws and regulations, PSTs can minimize the risk of legal repercussions and fulfill their duties responsibly. They must also ensure that they are providing accurate and timely information to emergency responders, which is crucial for protecting the lives and property of the public they serve.

02.05 Understand the Impact and Importance of Disseminating Information

What is Information Dissemination?

Information dissemination refers to the process of sharing and distributing information to a wider audience. In the context of public safety, dissemination involves sharing critical information with emergency responders, and the public to ensure a coordinated and informed response to emergencies.

Why is Information Dissemination Important?

Effective dissemination of information is essential for several reasons:

- **Enhances Situational Awareness:** Accurate and timely information sharing helps emergency responders and officials gain a clear understanding of the unfolding situation, allowing them to make informed decisions and deploy resources effectively.

- **Facilitates Coordinated Response:** By sharing information with relevant agencies and personnel, PSTs ensure that all parties involved in an emergency are working from the same set of facts and can coordinate their efforts accordingly.

- **Promotes Public Safety:** Keeping the public informed about developing situations and emergency instructions helps mitigate risks, reduce panic, and promote overall safety.

Methods of Information Dissemination

PSTs utilize various methods to disseminate information, including, but not limited to:

- **Radio Communication:** PSTs communicate directly with emergency responders using radio channels, providing real-time updates, and dispatching instructions.

- **Telephone Communication:** PSTs relay information to other law enforcement agencies, neighboring fire jurisdictions, and other relevant personnel via phone calls.

- **CAD Systems:** PSTs enter critical information into CAD systems, which automatically update and share data with relevant agencies and personnel.

- **Public Warning Systems:** PSTs notify appropriate public warning systems, to activate warning signals, such as sirens, alert notifications, and media broadcasts, to inform the public of imminent threats or emergency instructions.

Impact of Effective Information Dissemination

Effective information dissemination has a positive impact on various aspects of emergency response:

- **Reduced Response Times:** Timely information sharing allows emergency responders to arrive at incident scenes more quickly, potentially saving lives and minimizing property damage.

- **Improved Decision-Making:** Accurate and comprehensive information empowers emergency personnel to make informed decisions, leading to better resource allocation and tactical strategies.

- **Reduced Public Anxiety:** Clear and consistent communication with the public helps alleviate anxiety, prevent panic, and promote compliance with emergency instructions.

- **Enhanced Public Trust:** Effective information dissemination fosters trust in emergency services and reinforces the public's confidence in their ability to respond effectively.

Challenges of Information Dissemination

PSTs may face challenges in disseminating information, including:

- **Information Overload:** In fast-paced and complex emergency situations, managing and filtering information effectively can be challenging.

- **Communication Barriers:** Language barriers, technological limitations, or physical obstructions can hinder communication and information sharing.

- **Misinformation and Disinformation:** The spread of false or misleading information can complicate emergency response and undermine public trust.

Strategies for Effective Information Dissemination

To overcome these challenges, PSTs can employ effective strategies for information dissemination:

- **Verification and Validation:** Efficiently evaluate information sources and cross-check details to ensure accuracy before disseminating.

- **Prioritization:** Prioritize information based on its relevance, urgency, and potential impact on emergency response and public safety.

- **Clear and Concise Communication:** Use clear, concise language, avoiding technical jargon, and ensuring the message is tailored to the intended audience.

- **Consistent Communication:** Maintain consistent messaging across all channels to avoid confusion and reinforce key messages.

- **Monitoring and Feedback:** Continuously monitor the effectiveness of information dissemination and gather feedback to adapt strategies accordingly.

Effective information dissemination is a critical component of public safety. PSTs play an important role in gathering, analyzing, and sharing information with emergency responders, officials, and the public. By employing sound strategies and overcoming challenges, PSTs can ensure that information is disseminated accurately, timely, and effectively, contributing to a coordinated and successful emergency response.

02.06 Explain the Importance of and Procedure for Testifying in Court

Importance of Testifying in Court

PSTs may be called to testify in court for various reasons including, but not limited to:

- **To Provide a Factual Account of an Emergency Call or Incident:** PSTs are often the first point of contact for individuals in distress, and their recordings of emergency calls and their recollections of the events can provide valuable evidence in legal proceedings.

- **To Clarify Information or Answer Questions About Their Actions or Observations:** PSTs may be asked to explain their decision-making process, clarify details of an emergency call, or provide insights based on their training and experience.

- **To Corroborate or Refute Other Testimony:** PSTs may be called to testify in support of or against other witnesses, providing additional perspectives on the events in question.

Procedure for Testifying in Court

When called to testify, PSTs must adhere to the established procedures and protocols of the court. Agencies may provide legal guidance to their PSTs in preparation of court testimony. This typically involves the following steps:

- **Subpoena:** A PST will receive a subpoena, a legal document ordering their appearance in court to testify. The subpoena will specify the date, time, and location of the hearing, as well as the subject matter of the testimony.

- **Preparation:** The PST should follow agency policies and procedures. The PST should thoroughly review any relevant records, such as emergency call recordings, incident reports, or notes taken during their shifts. They should also prepare to answer questions about their training, experience, and observations related to the specific case at hand. The PST should request any previous transcripts so that they can review previous testimonies. The PST should use this time to refresh their memory. This may include listening to related calls and reviewing any relevant CAD notes.

- **Deposition:** A PST may be subpoenaed to provide a deposition after an incident. Depositions can be used inside the court and outside the court as evidence.

- **Court Appearance:** The PST should arrive at court on time and dress professionally. They should be respectful of the judge, jury, and other court personnel.

- **Oath of Truthfulness:** Before testifying, the PST will be sworn in, promising to tell the truth under penalty of perjury.

- **Direct Examination:** The attorney calling the PST to testify will conduct a direct examination, asking questions to elicit relevant information and establish the PST's credibility.

- **Cross-Examination:** The attorney opposing the PST's testimony will conduct cross-examination, challenging the PST's recollection of events, questioning their expertise, or attempting to discredit their testimony.

- **Redirect Examination:** The attorney who called the PST to testify may have an opportunity for redirect examination, clarifying any points raised during cross-examination or reinforcing the PST's testimony.

- **Questions from the Judge:** The judge may also ask questions to clarify aspects of the PST's testimony or to ensure a fair and impartial hearing.

- **Dismissal:** Once the PST has completed their testimony, they will be excused from the witness stand.

Considerations to Remember While in Court

- **Speak Clearly:** The PST should ensure they speak at an adequate level and enunciate properly.

- **Tell the Truth:** The PST should not exaggerate, guess, or agree to anything that they are unsure about.

- **Make Corrections:** Correct any mistakes, if needed.

- **Do Not Volunteer Information:** The PST should only answer questions asked of them.

Additional Considerations

- **Confidentiality:** The PST must maintain the confidentiality of any sensitive information they possess, even in court. They should only disclose information that is relevant to the case and authorized by the court.

- **Professionalism:** A PST should conduct themselves with professionalism and respect throughout the legal process. They should be truthful, accurate, and avoid embellishment or speculation. This includes dressing appropriately and using proper titles.

- **Seek Guidance:** If unsure about any aspect of testifying in court, the PST should seek guidance from their supervisor or legal counsel.

End of Section 02 Worksheet

1. PSTs must avoid situations where personal interests could influence their professional judgment. This includes refraining from accepting _____ or favors from individuals or businesses that may be involved in emergency situations.

2. PSTs should exercise _____ when using social media and other online platforms, ensuring their posts and interactions align with professional standards.

3. PSTs have a responsibility to _____ any instances of unethical or illegal behavior observed within the workplace.

4. The actions and decisions of a PST have a profound impact on the _____ and well-being of their communities.

5. PSTs must demonstrate _____ and understanding during times of crisis, offering support and guidance.

6. _____ defines the PST's demeanor and approach to their work.

7. _____ law deals with offenses against society, where the government prosecutes individuals who violate established laws. PSTs may face criminal liability if their actions or inactions directly contribute to harm or endangerment.

8. PSTs must adhere to established protocols and procedures to ensure the proper handling of emergency calls and dispatching of responders _____ to follow these guidelines could result in civil liability.

9. Breach of _____ occurs when a person fails to meet the legal standard of care owed to another person.

10. The Telecommunications Act regulates the use of telecommunications networks and services, including the obligation to provide assistance to persons with _____.

11. The Federal _____ Commission regulates the use of telecommunications equipment and services, and PSTs must comply with these regulations when handling emergency calls.

12. The Department of _____ regulates the transportation of hazardous materials, and PSTs must be aware of these regulations when handling calls related to hazardous material spills or accidents.

13. PSTs enter critical information into _____ systems, which automatically updates and shares data with relevant agencies and personnel.

14. PSTs may face challenges in disseminating information, including:

_____

_____

_____

15. Language barriers, technological limitations, or physical obstructions can hinder _____ and information sharing, creating challenges to disseminating information.

16. List the three (3) key reasons why a PST could testify in court.

_____

_____

_____

17. PSTs will receive a _____, a legal document ordering their appearance in court to testify. It will specify the date, time, and location of the hearing, as well as the subject matter of the testimony.

18. PSTs must maintain the _____ of any sensitive information they possess, even in court. They should only disclose information that is relevant to the case and authorized by the court.

Section 03 Objectives

03.0 Identify and explain the operation of communication equipment and resources. The student will be able to:

03.01   Describe and explain the function and operation of typical components found within communication centers.

03.02   Explain the 911 various call routing processes.

03.03   Describe the various delivery methods of information into the communications center.

03.04   Understand the various three-digit call options such as N-9-1-1 code (411,711, 911,988 etc.)

03.05   Explain the operation of ADA services including TDD and telephone relay services.

03.06   Explain notification systems within the communications center (radio, mass notification, etc.)

03.07   Explain the overall radio systems and interoperability capabilities.

03.08   Explain the Florida Interoperability radio capabilities. Define the purpose of the Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC) and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

03.09   Explain the importance of cyber security in the communications center.

03.10   Explain the various resources available to the PST.

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03.01 Describe and Explain the Function and Operation of Typical Components Found Within Communication Centers

PSTs operate within a complex ecosystem known as the ECC. This centralized hub buzzes with activity, powered by various integrated components that enable them to effectively relay information and dispatch emergency services. Understanding the function and operation of these components is necessary for PSTs to navigate the ECC's workflow and perform their duties efficiently.

Equipment

- **Consoles:** Physical workstations where computers and phones are typically located.

- **Headsets:** Used to keep the overall volume in the ECC at a minimum while still allowing PSTs to communicate with callers and emergency responders.

- **Manuals:** Includes, but not limited to training manuals, dispatch manuals, reference guides, and equipment manuals.

Figure 8 Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Consoles

CAD System

The CAD system acts as a centralized database, storing information on addresses, caller history, resource availability, and incident details. PSTs enter information from calls into the CAD, which then prioritizes dispatch based on urgency and allocates appropriate resources. The CAD also displays detailed maps and navigation tools, aiding in accurate response localization.

Telephone Systems

Multiple phone lines are vital for incoming and outgoing communications. These lines typically include, but are not limited to:

- **911 Lines:** Dedicated for emergency calls requiring immediate dispatch.

- **Administrative Lines:** Used for non-emergency calls or communication with other agencies.

- **Dedicated Lines:** Also referred to as ringdowns, allow for direct calls into ECCs.

Radio Communications Systems

This equipment allows PSTs to communicate directly with firefighters, police officers, paramedics, and other emergency responders. Different channels may be dedicated to specific agencies or incident types. PSTs receive updates on response progress and coordinate deployments through these channels.

Recording Systems

Emergency calls and radio communications are recorded. They are used for training purposes, legal documentation, and incident review. These recordings can be used in reconstructing events or resolving disputes.

Monitoring Equipment

Some ECCs utilize video surveillance or audio monitoring systems to provide additional situational awareness. This equipment may be used to observe traffic conditions, monitor public events, or gather additional information during ongoing incidents.

Alerting and Notification Systems

These systems are necessary for mass notifications or widespread emergencies. They can send instant alerts through various channels, like text messages, phone calls, or public address systems, effectively informing the public about dangers or instructions.

- **Station Alerting:** These are typically found in fire stations. Utilized to announce calls via a PA system to emergency responders.

Backup and Redundancy Systems

ECCs prioritize uninterrupted operation during critical situations. Therefore, essential components often have redundancy built-in with backup systems or power generators. This ensures that even if one component fails, communication lines remain open and emergency response continues.

Understanding these interconnected components and their individual functions empowers PSTs to navigate the ECC effectively. By utilizing all the tools at their disposal, they can confidently and efficiently fulfill their critical role in ensuring public safety. This is just a general overview. Specific components and their configurations may vary depending on the individual ECC.

03.02 Explain the 911 Various Call Routing Processes

As a PST every second counts. When a 911 call comes in, the routing process plays a critical role in ensuring the fastest and most appropriate response. Understanding the different call routing methods and their nuances empowers the PST to effectively guide callers and connect them with the help they need.

Traditional Call Routing

This is the most common method, relying on caller location information from cell towers or landline identification. The call is automatically routed to the PSAP with jurisdiction for that specific area. This system works well in many cases, but limitations exist in areas with dense buildings or poor cell coverage.

E911

E911 provides additional functionalities like automatic caller identification and call back capabilities. This allows for faster verification of caller information and facilitates communication even if the call drops.

- **Automatic Number Identification (ANI):** ANI refers to the automatic identification and transmission of the phone number associated with an incoming call to the ECC. This includes both landline and mobile numbers.

- **Automatic Location Identification (ALI):** ALI refers to the automatic identification and transmission of the caller's approximate location to the ECC.

Cell Phone Locations

Contrary to popular belief, calling from a cell phone does not provide PSTs with pinpoint location information. Call routing plays a major role in determining the information received when the PST answers the phone.

- **Phase 1:** Phase 1 provides the PST with the caller's phone number and a generalized location of the caller based on an approximation of their location in relation to the nearest cell tower.

- **Phase 2:** Phase 2 provides the PST with the caller's phone number and the caller's approximate location. Phase 2 can also provide the longitude and latitude of the caller.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)

VoIP allows voice calls over the internet. While convenient, it presents unique challenges for 911 calls. Unlike traditional lines with inherent location data, VoIP relies on user-registered addresses or dynamic updates, which can be inaccurate and lead to misrouting. Additionally, VoIP calls depend on internet stability, and some providers use third-party services, introducing potential delays and failure points. Despite these challenges, regulations mandate VoIP providers to offer 911 service, route calls accurately, and transmit caller information.

Next Gen 911

Next Gen 911 offers a more advanced approach, leveraging technologies like **Global Positioning System (GPS)** data and mobile device location services. This allows for:

- **Precise Caller Location:** Next Gen 911 can pinpoint a caller's exact location, even within buildings, significantly improving response times.

- **Multimedia Sharing:** Callers can share pictures, videos, or text messages with the PSAP, providing richer context for emergency responders.

- **Text-to-911:** Users can send text messages to 911 in situations where speaking is difficult or dangerous.

<u>Call Routing Based on Call Type</u>

Some PSAPs implement call routing based on the nature of the emergency. For example, medical emergencies might be routed to ambulance dispatch, while fire incidents go directly to fire dispatch. This ensures specialized resources are dispatched promptly.

<u>Automatic Call Distribution (ACD)</u>

ACD systems distribute incoming calls among available PSTs, ensuring efficient workload management and minimizing caller wait times.

<u>Factors Influencing Call Routing</u>

Several factors can influence how a 911 call is routed:

- **Caller Location:** The primary driver in traditional routing determines which agency has jurisdictional coverage of a location. Next Gen 911 offers greater precision allowing PSTs ease in determining the caller's location.

- **Type of Emergency:** Some PSAPs route calls based on the nature of the incident.

- **Available Resources:** Calls may be routed to PSAPs with the closest available responders.

- **Technical Limitations:** Cell tower coverage or GPS accuracy can impact routing accuracy.

- **911 Spill-Over:** Calls can be rerouted from an assigned PSAP to another when the system is overwhelmed or during any failures at the primary PSAP.

<u>PST Role in Call Routing</u>

While the system plays a significant role, PSTs still have a crucial function in call routing:

- **Verifying Caller Information:** PSTs confirm the caller's location and nature of the emergency to ensure accurate routing and resource allocation.

- **Providing Instructions:** PSTs guide callers through any necessary actions while waiting for help, such as CPR or first aid.

- **Keeping Communication Open:** PSTs may maintain open communication with callers until help arrives, while providing pre-arrival instructions, reassurance, and obtaining updates for some incidents.

By understanding 911 call routing and effectively interacting with callers, PSTs can ensure the fastest and most appropriate help reaches those in need.

Technology and procedures may vary depending on the specific PSAP. PSTs should always consult their agency's guidelines for the most accurate information.

03.03 Describe the Various Delivery Methods of Information into the Communications Center

The role of a PST extends beyond answering 911 calls. PSTs receive and transmit data through various channels to ensure rapid and effective response. Understanding these delivery methods empowers PSTs to navigate the various delivery methods of information seamlessly.

Traditional Channels

- **911 Calls:** Emergency calls placed into the ECC.

- **Non-Emergency Calls:** Consist of calls for information or assistance with government services. Having a working knowledge of available resources and referral protocols is key.

- **Calls on Dedicated Lines:** Consist of specific lines that have direct access to the ECC. These lines are only used by those dedicated agencies or often used private entities.

Modern Communication Streams

- **Text-to-911:** Allows communication for those who cannot safely or effectively speak. PSTs must be trained to interpret text messages, prioritize needs, and provide appropriate guidance.

- **Video-to-911**: Allows communication with a one-way video call for help. The PST sends a link for the caller to click on and allows access for temporary video calls.

- **Social Media:** Agencies may receive information on crimes or other non-emergency events via their respective social media platforms.

- **Emails:** Non-emergency reports or requests for assistance may arrive via email. Efficiently categorize and route emails to ensure timely response.

Alternative Communication Methods

- **Walk-ins:** Some agencies may require PSTs to handle citizens that walk into the station. PSTs should remember to remain calm, assess the situation, and direct them to the appropriate resources or personnel.

- **Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD)/Teletypewriter (TTY):** Communication for the deaf and hard of hearing. PSTs utilize specialized equipment and protocols to effectively relay information and connect them with needed assistance.

Interconnected Ecosystem

- **Various Notification Systems:** From mass alert systems for emergencies to internal dispatch channels, understanding and utilizing these tools effectively facilitates coordinated response.

- **Agency to Agency:** Collaboration across emergency services is a requirement. Master communication protocols and technology are needed to seamlessly share information and coordinate resources.

- **Telematics:** Certain vehicles are equipped with emergency notification features. These features are activated and monitored by subscription to companies such as OnStar or Sync. When these services are activated, the request is routed through a **Telematic Call Center (TCC)**. When a vehicle is involved in an accident, the TCC may receive automatic notifications of the incident and relevant GPS or **Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL)**

data. TCCs may also be able to notify PSTs of the location of vehicles that have been reported stolen or any other assistance requested.

By understanding these diverse delivery methods, PSTs will become more than just call receivers. They become information conduits, ensuring vital communication flows seamlessly within the ECC and beyond, strengthening the overall emergency response network. This is just a general overview. Specific details and procedures may vary depending on PSTs' location and agency. PSTs should always consult their agency's guidelines for the most accurate information.

03.04 Understand the Various Three-Digit Call Options such as N-9-1-1 Code (411, 711, 911, 988 etc.)

A PST's role extends beyond answering 911 calls. PSTs are often the first point of contact for individuals seeking various types of assistance and understanding the different three-digit call options available can empower PSTs to guide callers effectively and connect them to the resources they need.

<u>Emergency Services</u>

- **911:** The universal emergency number in the Unites States for police, fire, and medical emergencies. PSTs must prioritize these calls and immediately dispatch the appropriate responders.

- **988:** The National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number. PSTs should be familiar with crisis intervention protocols and be able to connect callers with trained counselors or mental health resources. The 988 Lifeline does not currently have the capability to directly geolocate callers, chat, or text users in the same way that 911 providers do. The 988 Lifeline does attempt to route callers to the nearest ECC to them in the network using their area code to determine the most proximal ECC.

<u>Non-Emergency Services</u>

- **211:** Community services and information hotline. PSTs can connect callers with resources for food assistance, housing, healthcare, and other support services.

- **311:** Citizen hotline that gives access to non-emergency municipal services.

- **411:** Directory assistance. While some areas have phased out 411, PSTs may still encounter calls seeking phone number information. Knowledge of directory resources or referral protocols is essential.

- **511:** Traffic information hotline. PSTs can provide real-time traffic updates, road closures, and accident reports to help callers plan their routes.

- **611:** Most cell companies' direct line for customers. PSTs may need to refer callers to their provider's customer service or troubleshoot basic issues within their area of expertise.

- **711:** Relay service for the deaf and hard of hearing. PSTs can act as intermediaries, relaying communication between callers and emergency responders or other service providers.

By understanding and effectively utilizing three-digit call options, PSTs can expand their role beyond emergency response, becoming valuable community resources and facilitators of essential services.

03.05 Explain the Operation of ADA Services Including TDD and Telephone Relay Services

A TDD and TTY are both types of assistive technology. TDD and TTY are often used to refer to the same type of device. TTY is more commonly used now since it is not limited to deaf individuals. Allows a person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf/blind, or speech impaired to communicate with anyone by phone through an operator who reads the typed conversation to the hearing person and types the hearing person's response back to the deaf individual.

As a PST connecting and assisting everyone in need is paramount. This includes individuals with hearing and speech impairments, requiring clear understanding of the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** mandated accessibility services like TDD/TTY and telephone relay systems.

Figure 9 TDD

TDD/TTY for Direct 911 Access

- **ADA:** Ensures equal access to 911 services for everyone. Every PST position must have direct access to a TDD/TTY, allowing communication through typed text.

- **Biannual Training:** Mandatory training ensures PSTs possess the skills and protocols to effectively interact with TDD/TTY users.

- **Built-in or Standalone Units:** TDD/TTYs can be integrated into the phone system or be separate devices. Both facilitate direct 911 calls for hearing and speech-impaired individuals.

Communicating with TDD/TTY Users

- **Silent Open Line Protocol:** Any silent open line must be considered a TDD/TTY call until proven otherwise. Begin every silent call with TDD/TTY protocols.

- **Abbreviations:** Learn and utilize TDD/TTY abbreviations like "GA" (go ahead), "SK" (stop keying), "Q" (question), "XXXX" (used to correct a misspelling), "SKSK" (end of conversation), etc., to streamline communication.

- **Clear and Concise Communication:** Keep sentences short, ask one question at a time, use simple vocabulary, and repeat important information twice. Be specific, check for understanding, and be patient with typing speed.

- **TDD/TTY Limitations:** Small display screens limit text volume. PSTs should adapt their communication style to accommodate these limitations.

Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS)

- **TRS:** When a PST receives a call from someone using a TRS, they are connected to a trained **Communications Assistant (CA)** who acts as a bridge between them and the hearing/speech-impaired caller.

- **Relaying the Conversation:** The CA watches/reads what the caller says/types and reads responses aloud to the PST, facilitating seamless communication.

The PST should treat the CA with respect and professionalism. The PST should speak clearly and avoid jargon, allowing the CA to manage the flow of conversation.

Real-Time Text (RTT)

- A technology that allows text to be sent immediately as it is created through wireless handsets that use IP-based technology on networks that support RTT. With RTT, there is no need to press a "send" key as there generally is for SMS, chat, or other types of texting. A recipient can read a message while the sender types it. Instant text transmissions are similar to the instantaneous exchange of information in voice conversations over the phone and can be critical for emergency calls to 911.

- Wireless service providers and manufacturers of wireless handsets, which are required to support TTY technology, can now use RTT as they migrate to IP-based technology.

- For now, TTY and RTT technologies must be interoperable, which means TTY users and RTT users must be able to communicate with each other. However, communication between RTT and TTY users will be limited to the TTY character set, rather than the RTT international character set, and RTT and TTY users will need to take turns sending and receiving messages when texting each other. The FCC has an open proceeding about the length of time the TTY-RTT interoperability requirement should continue.

By understanding these ADA services and practicing clear communication, PSTs can ensure equal access to emergency response for everyone. Understanding TDD/TTY protocols and utilizing relay systems effectively paves the way for inclusivity and empowers the PSTs to serve all members of their community.

03.06 Explain Notification Systems Within the Communications Center (Radio, Mass Notification, etc.)

PSTs are the vital link between emergency responders and the public. Understanding the different notification systems at their disposal is imperative for effectively communicating important information during emergencies. PSTs must be equipped with the knowledge to navigate the complex network of communication channels and choose the most effective tools for each situation.

Radio Systems

- **Dispatch Radio:** A PST's primary tool for direct communication with emergency responders like police, fire, and EMS. Different channels cater to specific agencies and operations.

- **Interoperability:** Interoperable radios allow communication across different agencies and jurisdictions, vital for coordinated response during large-scale incidents.

- **Mobile Radios:** Handheld radios used by officers and firefighters in the field for real-time updates and coordination.

Mass Notification Systems (MNS)

- **Emergency Alert System (EAS):** National system that broadcast warnings and vital information through television, radio, and cable providers, reaching a wide audience instantly.

- **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA):** Text messages and audible alerts sent to mobile phones within designated areas for imminent threats like severe weather, active assailant incidents, or AMBER Alerts.

- **Reverse 911:** Targeted calls made to specific geographic areas, alerting residents of dangers or instructions.

Other Notification Channels

- **Social Media:** Platforms are increasingly used by public safety agencies to share updates, instructions, and resources during emergencies.

- **Outdoor Warning Sirens:** Used for immediate alerts in specific areas, often as a last resort.

- **Public Address Systems:** Used in buildings and public spaces to communicate with large crowds during emergencies.

- **School Alert Systems:** All schools in the State of Florida are required to have an alert system that directly links the school to local law enforcement agencies. This allows for immediate notification during any active assailant events without those in school having to call.

By understanding the diverse landscape of notification systems, PSTs become a vital information hub, empowering their community to stay informed and prepared during emergencies.

03.07 Explain the Overall Radio Systems and Interoperability Capabilities

The radio system is an elaborate communications infrastructure used to coordinate emergency responders or to facilitate interagency interactions. PSTs should understand its complexities and capabilities.

Radio System Basics

- **Analog vs. Digital:** Analog systems offer simpler technology but can be prone to interference. Digital systems provide clearer sound, better coverage, and additional features like data transmission.

- **Components:**

  o **Base Station:** The agency's main transmitter and receiver, relaying information between PSTs and emergency responders.

  o **Handheld Radios:** Portable radios for emergency responders, but with limited range compared to mobile radios.

  o **Mobile Radios:** Mounted in response vehicles, offering better coverage than handhelds.

  o **Radio Console:** PST's workstation, often with a computer interface, displays available channels and talk groups.

- **Talk Groups:** Groupings of channels and users based on agency needs. Think of them as dedicated radio chat rooms.

Figure 10 Handheld Radio

Key Functions and Equipment

- **Antennas:** Strengthen and broadcast transmissions.

- **Back-up Radios**: Utilized in case of radio console or system outages.

- **Clipping:** Cutting off parts of the transmission when utilizing the radio. This can be avoided by keying the mic and not immediately speaking and unkeying after the transmission has been completed.

- **Foot Pedals and Microphones:** Voice transmission tools.

- **Headsets:** Reduce background noise and improve sound quality compared to speakers.

- **Over-modulating:** Overloading the receiver can be avoided by speaking clearly and with an even tone.

- **Patching and Simulcasting:** Joining talk groups; patching allows interaction, while simulcasting enables everyone to hear base station transmissions but not interact across groups.

- **Radio Broadcasts:** Relay messages via radio to field personnel and other centers.

- **Radio Towers:** Ensure communication between field units and the base station.

- **Repeaters:** Extend signal range for wider coverage.

- **Transmitters and Receivers:** Devices that send and receive voice and data signals.

<u>PST Role in Interoperability</u>

- **Usage:** Interoperability allows emergency responders from different agencies the ability to communicate with each other while handling incidents together.

- **Clear Communication:** Use plain language, avoiding agency-specific codes or jargon, as other agencies may not understand.

- **Concise Communication:** Avoid unnecessary chatter and let the lead agency manage communication unless instructed otherwise.

- **Preparedness:** Regularly practice using interoperability tools and review protocols, ensuring seamless collaboration during critical situations.

By understanding these concepts and actively participating in interoperability efforts the PST becomes a critical bridge in the emergency response network. Their ability to navigate the airwaves and connect agencies empowers a coordinated and effective response, safeguarding the community.

Specific radio systems and interoperability tools may vary depending on a PST's location and agency. PSTs should always consult their agency's guidelines for detailed information and protocols.

03.08 Explain the Florida Interoperability Radio Capabilities. Define the Purpose of the Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC) and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC)

A PSTs role extends beyond answering calls. PSTs are often the first point of contact for inquiries and critical information requests. Understanding the **Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC)** and the **National Crime Information Center (NCIC)** provides access to vital data and contributes to effective law enforcement operations.

Florida Interoperability Radio Capabilities

Florida promotes seamless communication and collaboration between agencies through various interoperability tools:

- **Florida Interoperability Network (FIN):** This internet-based system bridges the gap between agencies with incompatible radio systems, enabling real-time communication during critical situations.

- **Mutual Aid Radio Cache (MARC):** A set of portable towers and repeaters that can be deployed to disaster zones or other locations with limited communication, ensuring responders stay connected.

- **Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS):** Trailers equipped with various communication technologies like radio, FIN, VoIP, satellite, and cellular, providing versatile communication options in the field.

Figure 11 Alachua County MARC

- **Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS):** A high-coverage radio system accessible to participating agencies, offering reliable communication across vast areas.

- **Project 25 (P25):** Radio protocols with built-in mutual aid features and a dedicated 700 MHz frequency designed to enable cross-agency communication regardless of the internal radio frequencies used.

- **National, State, and Local Mutual Aid Frequencies:** Dedicated channels across all radio frequencies specifically designated for interagency communication during emergencies.

FCIC

FCIC, administered by the **Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)**, serves as the state's central repository for criminal records, histories, and hot files.

- **Information Hub:** Collects, maintains, and delivers confidential criminal justice data to local, state, and federal agencies, promoting accuracy and completeness.

- **Assisting Law Enforcement:** The FCIC's goal is to provide timely and accurate information to facilitate investigations, apprehend criminals, and ensure public safety.

- **Accessible Data:** Information available in the FCIC includes, but is not limited to:
  - Wanted/missing persons

- o   Stolen property, guns, and vehicles

- o   Criminal histories

- o   Crime reports and investigation details

NCIC

NCIC serves as the national hub for criminal justice information, encompassing all fifty states, U.S. territories, and Canada.

- **Beyond State Borders:** NCIC goes beyond stolen property and missing persons, housing federal criminal and warrants data, providing a national picture for investigations.

- **International Justice and Public Safety Network (NLETS):** This high-speed message switching system facilitates the secure exchange of criminal justice information between agencies across the nation.

- **NCIC Data Files:** In addition to state-specific data, NCIC maintains crucial national files, including, but not limited to:

  - o   Securities data

  - o   Unidentified persons

  - o   U.S. Secret Service protective file

  - o   Immigration violator file

  - o   Foreign fugitive file

  - o   Gang file

  - o   Known or appropriately suspected terrorist (KST) file

  - o   Federal supervised release file

Florida interoperable radio capabilities, FCIC, and NCIC are vital information resources. PSTs can access and contribute to a vast network of critical data, supporting investigations, facilitating interagency collaboration, and contributing to a safer Florida.

03.09 Explain the Importance of Cyber Security in the Communications Center

Understanding the importance of cybersecurity and embracing safe practices equips PSTs to stand guard against digital threats and ensure the uninterrupted flow of life-saving communication.

Cybersecurity: The state of being protected against the criminal or unauthorized use of electronic data, or the measures to achieve this.

Why Cybersecurity is Important

- **Disrupted Operations:** Cyberattacks can cripple communication systems, hindering PSTs' ability to receive calls, dispatch resources, and coordinate responses. Every second can make a difference in an emergency, and even a brief outage can have devastating consequences.

- **Compromised Data:** From caller information to dispatch records, a PSTs ECC holds a wealth of sensitive data. A breach could expose this information to criminals, putting individuals at risk of identity theft and other harm.

- **Erosion of Trust:** A cyberattack on an ECC can shatter public trust in emergency services. People need to know their calls will be answered and their information protected. Cybersecurity safeguards this trust and ensures the public has unwavering faith in the lifeline PSTs provide.

Cybersecurity Best Practices

Robust cybersecurity measures are a PST's shield against these threats. Here are some key practices, but are not limited to:

- **Strong Passwords:** Implement and enforce complex, unique passwords for all users and systems. Encourage regular password changes and avoid sharing login credentials.

- **Phishing Awareness:** PSTs need to be able to identify and avoid phishing scams that attempt to steal login credentials or sensitive information. Be wary of suspicious emails, links, and attachments.

- **Security Awareness:** PSTs should work to educate themselves and colleagues about cybersecurity best practices. Foster a culture of security awareness within the ECC.

By embracing these practices, PSTs become a cyber first responder, actively protecting the critical infrastructure that keeps communities safe. Cybersecurity is not just an IT issue; it is everyone's responsibility. Through vigilance and proactive measures, PSTs can ensure the 911 ECC remains a secure and reliable fortress, safeguarding lives and upholding the sacred trust placed in their hands.

Please note: Specific cybersecurity policies and procedures may vary depending on a PST's agency and location. PSTs should always consult their agency's guidelines for detailed information and protocols.

03.10 Explain the Various Resources Available to the PST

PSTs must possess the knowledge and skills to navigate through the resources available to them and utilize them effectively.

<u>Internal Resources</u>

- **CAD:** Provides caller information, incident details, and dispatch options. This includes mapping features, search functions, and reporting capabilities.

- **Databases**: Access to various databases like criminal records, driver's licenses, and property records is crucial for background checks and investigations. Learn search methods and data limitations.

- **Internal Communication Tools:** Utilize chat, email, and voice communication systems to collaborate with colleagues, and emergency responders. PSTs should practice clear and concise communication to ensure seamless coordination.

- **Training Manuals and Protocols:** Agency policies, procedures, and emergency response protocols.

<u>External Resources</u>

- **Local, State, and Federal Databases:** Access databases like NCIC and FCIC for nationwide criminal and missing person information. Understand their specific data sets and reporting protocols.

- **Social Media:** Agencies may monitor social media platforms for real-time updates during emergencies or potential threats.

- **Interpreters and Translation Services:** Agencies may have access to language assistance for non-English speaking callers.

- **Mental Health and Crisis Resources:** Agencies may have local mental health resources and crisis hotlines to provide appropriate referrals for individuals in distress.

- **Community Resources:** Agencies may provide information regarding local shelters, food banks, and other community organizations that can offer assistance in various situations.

<u>Utilizing Resources Effectively</u>

- **Ask the Right Questions:** Gather accurate and detailed information from callers to identify the appropriate resources needed.

- **Prioritize and Triage:** Assess the urgency of the situation and prioritize dispatching resources based on the severity of the call.

- **Clear Communication:** Provide clear instructions and directions to both callers and responders, ensuring efficient response and minimizing confusion.

- **Documentation:** Document all actions and information accurately and concisely. This is crucial for accountability and future reference.

- **Stay Informed:** PSTs should maintain updated knowledge of available resources and their contact information. Staying informed about changes in policies and protocols ensures effective resource allocation.

Through comprehensive understanding and effective utilization of available resources, PSTs transform into vital conduits, connecting individuals to the critical support they need in any circumstance. Cultivating a collective spirit, embracing continuous learning, and fostering a commitment to serving others are the cornerstones of becoming the best PST possible.

Please note: This list is not all inclusive. Specific resources and protocols may vary depending on the PST's agency and location. The PST should always follow their agency's guidelines for detailed information and instructions.

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End of Section 3 Worksheet

1. What type of phone line is used for non-emergency calls or communication with other agencies?
   a) Dedicated 9-1-1 line
   b) Administrative line
   c) 3-1-1 line
   d) VoIP line

2. List three (3) types of mass notification systems available to inform the public about an emergency.

_____

_____

_____

3. What are the two (2) additional functionalities included in Enhanced 9-1-1?

_____

_____

4. Traditional call routing methods rely on caller location information from cell towers or landline identification. The system works well but does have some limitations. List those limitations.

_____

_____

_____

5. Vehicles with emergency notification features have _____.
   a) telecommunications
   b) teletype
   c) telephones
   d) telematics

6. Text to 9-1-1, social media, and emails are all considered modern communications streams.
   a) True
   b) False

7. The number for deaf and hard of hearing callers to communicate with when requesting emergency responders or other service providers.
   a) 4-1-1
   b) 6-1-1
   c) 7-1-1
   d) 5-1-1

8. Understanding _____ can empower a PST to guide callers effectively and connect them to the resources they need.

9. What special devices are used to communicate with the deaf or speech impaired?
   a) Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)
   b) TDD/TTY
   c) Radio
   d) Telephone

10. What law ensures equal access to 9-1-1 for everyone.
   a) Americans with Disabilities Act
   b) Americans with Abilities Act
   c) Citizen's Act of 1999
   d) Relay Systems Act

11. List the four (4) components of a radio system.

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Matching

A.	Radio Console	E. Base Station
B.	Clipping	F. Repeaters
C.	Preparedness	G. Patching/Simulcasting
D.	Handheld Radios	H. Mobile Radios

	PSTs workstation, often with a computer interface, displays available channels and talk groups.
	Mounted in response vehicles, offering better coverage than handhelds.
	The agency's main transmitter and receiver, relaying information between PSTs and emergency responders.
	Portable radios for emergency responders, but with limited range compared to mobile radios.
	Cutting off parts of the transmission when utilizing the radio.
	Joining talk groups to allow interaction.
	Extend signal range for wider coverage.
	Regularly practice using interoperability tools and reviews protocols, ensuring seamless collaboration during critical situations.

13. Radio protocols with built-in mutual aid features and a dedicated 700 MHz frequency designed to enable cross-agency communication regardless of the internal radio frequencies used is known as _____.

14. _____ are Trailers equipped with various communication technologies like radio, FIN, VoIP, satellite, and cellular, providing versatile communication options in the field.

15. List three (3) reasons Cybersecurity is important in a Communications Center:

_____

_____

_____

16. Scams that attempt to steal login credentials or sensitive information are known as _____.

17. List four (4) internal resources within the Communications Center:

_____

_____

_____

18. Chat, email, and voice communication systems are examples of _____ resources.

Section 04 Objectives

04.0 Demonstrate communication and interpersonal skills. The student will be able to:

04.01   Understand the communication cycle.

04.02   Demonstrate interpersonal skills.

04.03   Demonstrate the proper use of pronunciation and enunciation.

04.04   Demonstrate the ability to give and follow instructions.

04.05   Explain the difference between a fact and an inference.

04.06   Demonstrate. professional customer service skills.

04.07   Demonstrate problem solving and critical thinking skills.

04.08   Demonstrate specific call management techniques.

04.09   Demonstrate the ability to recognize when information received is appropriate to the situation or appears suspicious.

04.10   Discuss the impact of cultural diversity as it relates to public safety.

04.11   Demonstrate the ability to communicate with challenging callers.

04.12   Utilize voice techniques to control radio transmissions and telephone calls.

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04.01 Understand the Communication Cycle

Communication is the cornerstone of human interaction, encompassing the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and information. At its core lies the communication cycle, a fundamental concept that illustrates how messages are transmitted, received, and interpreted between individuals or groups. Understanding this cycle is pivotal in enhancing the effectiveness of communication for PSTs.

<u>Stages of the Communication Cycle</u>

- **Sender:** The cycle initiates with a sender, the individual or source encoding a message to convey. This stage involves formulating thoughts or ideas and translating them into a format (verbal, non-verbal, written) understandable to the intended receiver.

- **Message:** The information or content being communicated constitutes the message. It may include words, gestures, symbols, or any form of expression used to convey the sender's thoughts or intentions.

- **Transmission:** The message is transmitted through a selected channel or medium. Channels can vary from face-to-face conversations, emails, phone calls, to social media platforms or even body language. Non-verbal cues such as body language, tone, and facial expressions can significantly impact message delivery and interpretation.

- **Receiver:** At this stage, the message reaches the intended recipient. The receiver decodes the message, interpreting its content based on their perceptions, experiences, and understanding.

- **Feedback:** Communication is a two-way process. The receiver generates feedback, a response or reaction to the message. This feedback can be verbal, non-verbal, or through actions, indicating comprehension, agreement, disagreement, or a request for clarification.

- **Context:** The context surrounding the communication influences its meaning. Factors such as cultural background, environment, timing, and emotional state contribute to how messages are perceived and understood.

- **Noise:** Noise refers to any interference that distorts the message during transmission. It could be external, like physical distractions, or internal, such as biases, emotions, or differing language proficiency.

<u>Importance of the Communication Cycle</u>

Understanding the communication cycle facilitates:

- **Effective Communication:** Awareness of each stage enables individuals to convey messages more clearly and receive feedback accurately.

- **Conflict Resolution:** By understanding the cycle, individuals can identify communication breakdowns and work toward resolving conflicts that arise due to misinterpretation or misunderstandings.

- **Improved Relationships:** Clear and effective communication fosters better relationships, both personally and professionally, promoting trust and understanding among individuals.

04.02 Demonstrate Interpersonal Skills

In emergency services, PSTs are the first point of contact during crises. Their ability to effectively communicate and demonstrate strong interpersonal skills is crucial in managing high-stress situations, providing assistance, and ensuring the safety of both callers and responders.

Factors Influencing Effective Communication

- **Active Listening:** Attentive listening by the receiver ensures better comprehension and allows for appropriate feedback.

- **Empathy:** Understanding the perspectives of others fosters effective communication and relationship-building.

- **Clarity:** Clear and concise messages enhance understanding and minimize misinterpretation.

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Being aware of cultural differences helps avoid misunderstandings and promotes respectful communication.

Active Listening

- Active listening goes beyond simply receiving words, it involves grasping the emotions and needs behind them.

- Skilled active listening forms the foundation for productive and supportive interactions with callers.

- Utilizing tools like paraphrasing, summarizing, and asking clarifying questions fosters mutual understanding and ensures accurate information exchange.

- By actively listening to and understanding the caller's situation, PSTs can effectively tailor their support and offer solutions.

- Active listening fosters stronger relationships, improves problem-solving, and leads to better caller outcomes.

Empathy

- Understanding and sharing the emotional state of callers is essential in building trust and calming distress.

- PSTs should convey sincere empathy through their voice and words, acknowledging the caller's emotions without losing professionalism.

- Empathy builds rapport, reduces anxiety, and helps de-escalate tense situations.

Clear and Concise Communication

- Every second matters in emergencies, so PSTs must communicate information quickly and accurately.

- Avoid jargon and technical terms; use simple, direct language that callers can easily understand.

- Ensure instructions for both callers and emergency responders are clear and unambiguous to facilitate appropriate actions.

- Focus on the essential details and avoid unnecessary information that could confuse or delay response.

<u>Cultural Sensitivity</u>

- PSTs encounter individuals from various cultures and ethnicities, each with unique communication styles and needs.

- Understanding and respecting these differences is essential to effective and respectful interaction.

- Recognizing cultural nuances in communication styles, nonverbal cues, and preferred methods of support helps bridge potential misunderstandings.

- Adapting communication and support approaches to cater to individual cultural backgrounds ensures everyone receives appropriate and effective help.

<u>Team Collaboration and Coordination</u>

- PSTs are crucial players in a complex emergency response network, collaborating with fellow PSTs, responders, and other agencies.

- Clear and consistent communication within the team is essential for coordinating efforts, sharing vital information, and ensuring a unified response.

- Effective collaboration minimizes delays and duplication of efforts, leading to faster and more effective outcomes.

- By working together as a cohesive unit, the entire emergency response system functions more smoothly, leading to better support for those in need.

<u>Training and Continuous Development</u>

- Training and simulations sharpen PSTs' communication, emotional intelligence, and cultural awareness, ensuring readiness for any situation.
- PSTs should embrace continuous learning through workshops, conferences, and resources. Knowledge empowers.
- Building trust and providing effective support requires PSTs to be mindful of diverse communication styles and cultural nuances.
- Lifelong learning fuels PSTs' growth. Seeking feedback, exploring challenges, and evolving are key to becoming the best PST possible.

Interpersonal skills form the backbone of a PST's effectiveness in managing emergency situations. The ability to actively listen, communicate clearly, empathize, and collaborate ensures that PSTs provide optimal assistance, contributing significantly to public safety and well-being. Learning these skills not only enhances the quality of service but also fosters trust and confidence in emergency response systems.

04.03 Demonstrate the Proper use of Pronunciation and Enunciation.

Effective communication is the foundation of a PST's role in emergency response. Pronunciation and enunciation are vital aspects of communication that ensure clarity and understanding during high-stress situations.

Understanding Pronunciation and Enunciation

- **Pronunciation:** Refers to the correct way of saying words, including the sounds, stress, and intonation patterns specific to a language.

- **Enunciation:** Involves the articulation and clarity with which words are spoken. It emphasizes the precise formation of sounds and syllables to ensure they are distinctly heard and understood.

Importance in Emergency Communication

During emergencies, clarity in communication can be a matter of life or death. PSTs must ensure that their speech is easily comprehensible to callers and responders. Proper pronunciation and enunciation minimize misunderstandings and facilitate quick and accurate information exchange.

Guidelines for Proper Pronunciation and Enunciation

- **Articulate Sounds Clearly:** Focus on articulating each sound in words to ensure clarity. Pay attention to consonants, vowels, and syllables, avoiding slurring or rushing words together.

- **Practice Pronunciation:** Regularly practice words that are commonly used in emergency situations. This includes names of locations, streets, medical terms, and specific codes or protocols.

- **Control Speed and Intonation:** Speak at a moderate pace, allowing enough time for the listener to process the information. Maintain a natural rhythm and avoid monotone speech by varying intonation appropriately.

- **Use Phonetic Alphabet:** Employ a standardized phonetic system when conveying critical information like spellings or codes. This ensures precision and reduces ambiguity.

- **Seek Feedback and Review Recordings:** Regularly seeking feedback from trainers or supervisors and reviewing recordings of their communication allows PSTs to identify and address areas for improvement, driving their continuous professional development.

Training and Development

- **Speech Exercises:** Engage in speech exercises designed to enhance pronunciation and enunciation, including tongue twisters, vocal warm-ups, and diction drills.

- **Simulation and Role-Playing:** Participate in simulations and role-playing exercises that mimic real emergency scenarios. This allows practice in applying pronunciation and enunciation techniques under pressure.

- **Continual Improvement:** Attend workshops, seminars, or courses focused on improving communication skills. Stay updated on best practices and technologies that aid in clearer communication.

The ability of PSTs to properly pronounce and enunciate words is a critical component of their communication toolkit. Clear and precise speech ensures that information is conveyed accurately and swiftly during emergencies, contributing significantly to efficient and effective emergency response. By prioritizing proper pronunciation and enunciation, PSTs elevate the standard of communication, enhancing public safety.

04.04 Demonstrate the Ability to Give and Follow Instructions

In emergency services, the ability of PSTs to give and follow instructions accurately and efficiently is paramount. PSTs must understand the significance of clear instruction delivery, the ability of giving instructions effectively, and the importance of following instructions.

The Importance of Clear Instruction Delivery

- **Critical in Emergency Response:** Clear and concise instructions are essential during high-stress situations. They facilitate prompt and accurate actions by callers and responders, potentially saving lives and mitigating risks.

- **Minimizes Misunderstandings:** Well-delivered instructions minimize the chance of misinterpretation, ensuring that the intended actions are carried out correctly.

- **Builds Trust and Confidence:** Clear and confident instructions instill trust in callers and responders, fostering a sense of confidence in the PST's ability to manage the situation effectively.

Strategies for Effective Instruction Giving

- **Clarity and Simplicity:** Use straightforward language, avoiding jargon or technical terms. Break down complex instructions into simpler steps for easy comprehension.

- **Be Specific and Detailed:** Provide precise instructions, including details such as location, actions required, and any safety precautions.

- **Confirm Understanding:** Encourage feedback to ensure that the recipient comprehends the instructions. Ask the caller to repeat or summarize the instructions to confirm their understanding.

- **Maintain Calmness and Confidence:** Project a composed and confident demeanor while giving instructions, even in high-pressure situations. This reassures the caller and reinforces trust.

The Importance of Following Instructions

- **Ensures Safety and Efficiency:** Following instructions accurately is crucial for the safety of both the caller and responders. It allows for a coordinated and efficient response to the emergency.

- **Reduces Errors and Risks:** Compliance with instructions minimizes the likelihood of errors or misunderstandings that could exacerbate the situation.

- **Supports Effective Communication:** When callers and responders follow instructions, it facilitates smoother communication and coordination between all parties involved.

Strategies for Following Instructions Effectively

- **Active Listening:** Pay close attention to the instructions being given. Ask for clarification if any part is unclear.

- **Repeat and Confirm:** Repeat the instructions back to the caller or responder to ensure mutual understanding. Confirm any critical details to avoid confusion.

- **Take Immediate Action:** Act promptly on the instructions provided, prioritizing safety measures, and following the steps as directed.

- **Seek Clarification if Necessary:** If circumstances change or new information arises, seek clarification or updated instructions from the caller or responder.

The ability of PSTs to give clear and precise instructions and ensure their accurate execution is vital in emergency response. Effective instruction delivery and compliance significantly contribute to the safety and efficiency of emergency operations, emphasizing the role that PSTs play in managing and mitigating crises. By understanding the art of instruction giving and following, PSTs elevate the standard of emergency response and contribute to public safety.

04.05 Explain the Difference Between a Fact and an Inference

In emergency services, accurate information is critical. PSTs must discern between facts and inferences to effectively manage emergency situations. PSTs must be sure that they understand the difference between a fact and an inference.

<u>Understanding Facts</u>

- **Definition:** A fact is a statement that can be objectively verified or proven to be true. It is based on observable, concrete evidence and is not subject to interpretation.

- **Characteristics:** Facts are specific, verifiable, and universally accepted. They are based on direct observations, measurements, or documentation.

- **Example:** "The caller reported a vehicle collision at the intersection of Main Street and Maple Avenue."

<u>Understanding Inferences</u>

- **Definition:** An inference is a conclusion or interpretation drawn from available evidence or facts. It involves making deductions or educated guesses based on the information at hand.

- **Characteristics:** Inferences are not directly observable or verifiable but are reasoned interpretations based on available evidence or context.

- **Example:** "Due to the skid marks and the damage pattern observed, it is inferred that the vehicle was speeding before the collision."

<u>Significance for PSTs</u>

- **Accurate Information Processing:** PSTs must differentiate between factual information provided by callers and inferences drawn from the details provided. This ensures the dissemination of reliable information to responders.

- **Critical Thinking and Decision Making:** Recognizing the distinction between facts and inferences enables PSTs to critically analyze information, make informed decisions, and prioritize actions during emergencies.

- **Communication Clarity:** Communicating facts versus inferences to responders helps in conveying the level of certainty and the nature of the information received, aiding in a more effective response.

<u>Challenges and Considerations</u>

- **Subjectivity:** Differentiating between facts and inferences can be challenging, especially when dealing with incomplete or conflicting information.

- **Caller Statements:** PSTs must discern between direct observations reported by the caller (facts) and conclusions drawn by the caller based on their perception (inferences).

- **Documentation and Reporting:** It is crucial to accurately record and report both facts and inferences while clearly distinguishing between the two to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

The ability of PSTs to differentiate between facts and inferences is fundamental in managing emergency situations. By accurately processing information and conveying it to responders, PSTs contribute significantly to the efficiency and safety of emergency response operations. Understanding this distinction enables PSTs to make informed decisions and facilitate a coordinated and effective response to emergencies.

04.06 Demonstrate Professional Customer Service Skills

As the bridge between distressed callers and emergency responders, PSTs must prioritize professional customer service skills. This ensures efficient and effective assistance during high-stress situations. Outstanding customer service extends beyond callers to encompass all interactions, including, but not limited to:

- Co-Workers

- Supervisors

- Trainees

- Emergency responders

- Other Agencies

- Callers

- Private entities that provide a service, for example, tow companies, utilities, phone companies, etc.

Professionalism and Courtesy

- **Respectful Interaction:** Maintaining professionalism involves treating every caller with respect and dignity, irrespective of the circumstances. PSTs should always uphold courteous behavior.

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Being aware of cultural differences and adapting communication styles accordingly helps in building rapport and ensuring respectful interactions.

- **Go the Extra Mile:** Leaving the caller with a sense that they are important to the agency. An example would be to not just transfer the caller but give them the number that they are being transferred to, in case the transfer does not work. For responders, do not wait for them to ask for information, anticipate their needs and be prepared with an answer.

Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

- **Analytical Skills:** PSTs need strong problem-solving abilities to assess situations quickly and make informed decisions under pressure. This involves evaluating information and choosing the best course of action.

- **Critical Thinking:** The ability to think critically enables PSTs to identify patterns, prioritize information, and respond appropriately to varying emergency situations.

Time Management and Prioritization

- **Efficient Handling of Calls:** PSTs must manage multiple calls simultaneously and prioritize based on the severity of the situation. Effective time management ensures prompt assistance to all callers.

- **Prioritizing Urgent Situations:** The skill of swiftly identifying and prioritizing life-threatening emergencies is crucial in dispatching immediate help.

Knowledge of Resources and Protocols

- **Geography:** Become familiar with the agency's response area and the surrounding jurisdictions to provide a higher level of service to both callers and responders.

- **Responder Capabilities:** Learn the diverse types of responders to assure the proper unit is sent to assist caller specific complaints more effectively. Especially the specialty units that are not always needed. Example: SWAT, **Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU)**, Arson Investigator, **Hazardous Material (HazMat)** Team, etc.

- **Protocols:** Have knowledge of or know where to find the agency's policies and procedures specific to job performance to ensure the best answers to callers asking for assistance.

Techniques and Control

- **Call Taking Techniques:** Know techniques such as repetitive persistence for highly emotional callers and information gathering techniques such proper people and vehicle description line of questioning. This will demonstrate the PST's confidence and proficiency to the caller.

- **Controlling the Radio:** Use voice tone and speed to take control the flow of information and radio transmissions to and from responders.

Continuous Training and Development

- **Simulated Scenarios:** Engage in simulations to practice applying customer service skills in various emergency scenarios, refining the ability to manage calls effectively.

- **Ongoing Education:** Attend workshops or courses focusing on communication, conflict resolution, and customer service in emergency response settings to enhance skill sets continually.

The proficient execution of professional customer service skills by PSTs is pivotal in managing emergency calls effectively. By embodying empathy, clear communication, professionalism, and critical thinking, PSTs ensure the provision of timely and empathetic assistance, ultimately contributing to the safety and well-being of callers and emergency responders. Having these skills elevates the quality of emergency response and enhances the overall effectiveness of the public safety system.

04.07 Demonstrate Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills

PSTs serve as the initial responders during emergencies, requiring sharp problem-solving and critical thinking skills to assess situations swiftly and guide appropriate responses.

Problem-Solving Skills

- **Analytical Thinking:** PSTs must analyze complex situations into manageable components, enabling them to process information efficiently and identify core issues.

- **Adaptability:** Being able to adapt to changing circumstances or information is crucial. PSTs should quickly adjust their approach based on evolving details during an emergency.

- **Resourcefulness:** PSTs need to be resourceful in finding solutions. This involves utilizing available tools, protocols, and expertise to address challenges effectively.

Critical Thinking Abilities

- **Evaluating Information:** PSTs assess the credibility and relevance of information received from callers. They must discern factual details from assumptions or biases to make informed decisions.

- **Predictive Analysis:** Anticipating potential outcomes based on available information allows PSTs to make proactive decisions and provide appropriate guidance.

- **Decision-Making Under Pressure:** Critical thinking enables PSTs to make quick and effective decisions even in high-stress situations, considering the impact of their choices.

- **Self-Initiated Decision Making:** PSTs must be able to make decisions in the absence of direct policy and supervision, while also anticipating the needs of callers or field units.

Application in Emergency Response

- **Assessing Urgency:** PSTs utilize problem-solving skills to assess the severity of emergencies and prioritize responses based on the level of urgency.

- **Providing Clear Instructions:** Critical thinking aids in formulating clear and concise instructions for callers and responders, ensuring efficient and effective communication.

- **Coordination and Collaboration:** PSTs engage critical thinking to collaborate with multiple agencies and responders, coordinating efforts for a unified response.

The proficiency of PSTs in problem-solving and critical thinking is fundamental in managing emergency situations. By leveraging these skills, PSTs make informed decisions, prioritize responses, and facilitate efficient coordination, contributing to the safety and well-being of both callers and emergency responders. Mastery of problem-solving and critical thinking elevates the effectiveness of emergency response systems and ensures swift and appropriate assistance during crises.

04.08 Demonstrate Specific Call Management Techniques

In emergency response, the skillful management of incoming calls is fundamental for PSTs. Call management techniques allow PSTs to handle emergency situations efficiently, prioritize responses, and ensure timely assistance.

Active Listening and Information Gathering

- **Focused Listening:** PSTs employ active listening techniques, allowing callers to convey information without interruption while gathering crucial details about the emergency.

- **Asking Clarifying Questions:** Strategic questioning helps in obtaining essential information, clarifying details, and ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

Prioritization and Triage

- **Assessing Urgency:** PSTs swiftly evaluate the severity of emergencies using standardized protocols to determine the level of response required, prioritizing calls based on urgency.

- **Triage Techniques:** Categorizing calls according to their urgency enables effective resource allocation, ensuring that critical incidents receive immediate attention.

- **Call Categorization:** PSTs must make sure to handle each call appropriately either by sending a responder, having a responder call them back, transferring the call to the appropriate department or agency, giving a referral to appropriate provider for the service being requested, or taking the information and relaying it to the proper parties.

Call Handling Protocols

- **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):** PSTs follow established protocols for different types of emergencies, adhering to predetermined procedures to streamline call handling.

- **Protocol Adaptation:** Flexibility within protocols allows PSTs to adapt responses based on unique or evolving situations, ensuring a tailored approach to each call.

Stress Management and Empathy

- **Calm Demeanor:** Maintaining composure and projecting a calm and reassuring tone helps in managing both the caller's stress and the PST's own emotions.

- **Empathetic Communication:** Expressing empathy and understanding reassures callers, building rapport and trust, thereby facilitating clearer communication.

Multitasking and Time Management

- **Handling Multiple Calls:** PSTs manage multiple calls concurrently, utilizing efficient note-taking techniques and prioritization to address each call effectively.

- **Time Efficiency:** Effective time management ensures prompt responses and minimizes delays in dispatching appropriate assistance.

Team Communication and Collaboration

- **Effective Coordination:** PSTs connect with emergency responders and other agencies, communicating vital information accurately and in a timely manner for a coordinated response.

- **Team Support:** Collaboration within the telecommunication team ensures seamless handoffs and continuous support, enhancing overall call management efficiency.

Training and Development

- **Simulation Exercises:** Engaging in simulated scenarios allows PSTs to practice and refine call management techniques in a controlled environment.

- **Continual Learning:** Participating in workshops or courses focusing on call handling strategies and emerging technologies improves proficiency and keeps skills updated.

Becoming proficient with call management techniques empowers PSTs to handle diverse emergency situations effectively. By employing active listening, prioritization, adherence to protocols, stress management, and fostering collaboration, PSTs ensure prompt and appropriate responses, contributing to the safety and well-being of callers and emergency responders. Proficiency in these techniques elevates the standard of emergency response and enhances the efficiency of public safety systems.
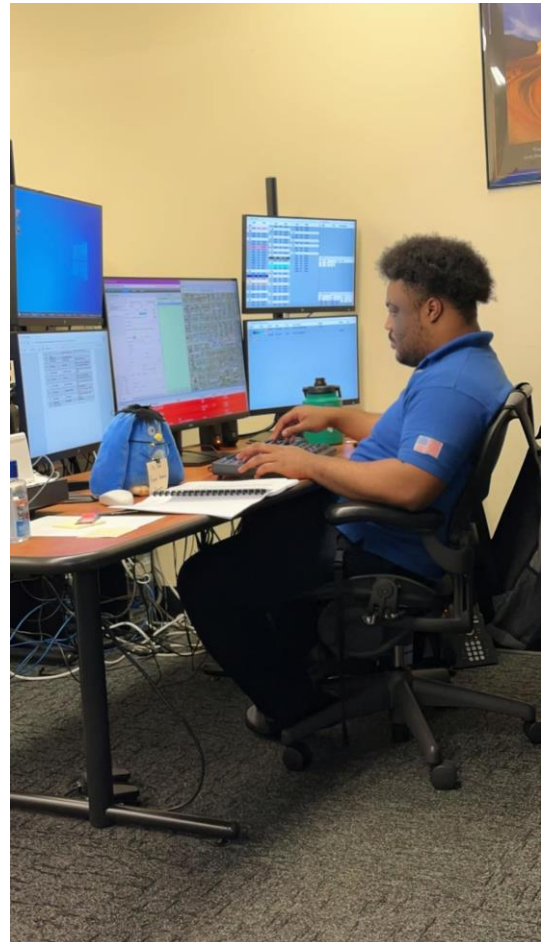
Figure 12 Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Trainee

04.09 Demonstrate the Ability to Recognize When Information Received is Appropriate to the Situation or Appears Suspicious

PSTs are the first to evaluate the credibility of information received during emergency calls. PSTs must be able to discern between appropriate and suspicious information, ensuring accurate and reliable responses in emergency situations.

Recognizing Appropriate Information

- **Relevance to the Emergency:** PSTs assess the information's relevance to the reported emergency, ensuring that details provided align with the nature of the incident.

- **Consistency and Clarity:** Appropriate information is consistent and clear, with details that logically connect and contribute to understanding the situation.

- **Corroboration with Caller's Behavior:** PSTs observe the caller's behavior and statements, seeking coherence between their actions and the information provided.

Identifying Suspicious Information

- **Inconsistencies or Contradictions:** PSTs look for discrepancies within the caller's narrative or between provided details, as inconsistencies might indicate a lack of credibility.

- **Vague or Evasive Responses:** Suspicion arises when callers evade direct questions or provide vague, non-specific information that does not contribute to the assessment of the emergency.

- **Unusual Requests or Behavior:** Requests for unnecessary information or unusual behavior from callers can raise suspicion about the authenticity of the emergency reported.

Techniques for Assessment

- **Questioning and Probing:** PSTs employ strategic questioning to gather additional details or clarification, aiming to verify the authenticity of the information provided.

- **Active Listening for Context Clues:** Attentive listening helps in identifying contextual clues that may reveal inconsistencies or suspicious elements in the caller's narrative.

- **Verifying Information:** Using available resources or databases, PSTs attempt to verify certain details provided by cross-referencing information.

Handling Suspicious Information

- **Maintaining Professionalism:** PSTs handle suspicious information calmly and professionally, avoiding confrontations while continuing to gather necessary details.

- **Engaging Protocols and Supervisors:** In cases of suspicion, PSTs involve supervisors or follow established protocols for handling potentially dubious information.

- **Documenting and Reporting:** Documenting suspicious calls and reporting to appropriate authorities or departments ensures that incidents are documented for further investigation if needed.

PSTs' ability to recognize appropriate information and identify suspicious details is crucial in ensuring accurate responses and maintaining the integrity of emergency services. By honing their skills in assessing information credibility, PSTs contribute significantly to the reliability and efficiency of emergency response systems, enhancing public safety and security.

04.10 Discuss the Impact of Cultural Diversity as it Relates to Public Safety

The public safety landscape is intertwined with cultural diversity, presenting challenges and opportunities for PSTs.

<u>Understanding Cultural Diversity</u>

- **Diverse Communities:** Cultural diversity encompasses varying beliefs, languages, customs, and practices within communities served by PSTs.

- **Intersectionality:** Diversity goes beyond ethnicity and includes factors such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, and language diversity, among others.

- **ECC Cultures:** PSTs play a vital role in fostering respectful workplaces by recognizing and appreciating the diverse cultural backgrounds and beliefs of their colleagues. Disagreement with cultural differences or personal convictions should never be a barrier to treating others with respect.

<u>Impact on Emergency Communication</u>

- **Language Barriers:** Language diversity poses a challenge in effective communication during emergencies, potentially hindering the conveyance of critical information.

- **Cultural Norms and Perceptions:** Differences in cultural norms influence perceptions of emergencies and appropriate responses, impacting the information shared by callers.

- **Access to Services:** Cultural diversity affects access to and trust in emergency services, influencing the likelihood of seeking assistance during crises.

<u>Challenges Faced by PSTs</u>

- **Communication Hurdles:** Overcoming language barriers and ensuring clear communication with callers from diverse linguistic backgrounds poses a significant challenge.

- **Misinterpretation of Cultural Cues:** PSTs must navigate potential misunderstandings arising from misinterpreting cultural cues or context provided by callers.

- **Cultural Sensitivity and Bias:** PSTs need to be aware of their own cultural biases to avoid misjudgments or assumptions based on cultural differences.

<u>Importance of Cultural Competence</u>

- **Enhanced Communication:** Cultural competence enables PSTs to adapt communication styles and overcome language barriers, ensuring clear and effective communication.

- **Building Trust and Rapport:** Understanding diverse cultural backgrounds fosters trust between PSTs and callers, encouraging more accurate information sharing.

- **Improved Response Accuracy:** Cultural competence aids PSTs in interpreting information contextually, allowing for more accurate assessment and response to emergencies.

<u>Strategies for Cultural Competence</u>

- **Language Training:** PSTs undergo language training or utilize language interpretation services to bridge communication gaps.

- **Cultural Awareness Training:** Training programs focus on educating PSTs about diverse cultural practices, beliefs, and norms prevalent within their service areas.

- **Engagement with Diverse Communities:** PSTs engage in community outreach programs to foster understanding and build relationships with diverse communities.

<u>Continuous Learning and Adaptation</u>

- **Feedback and Reflection:** PSTs reflect on interactions, seek feedback, and continually adapt their approaches to improve cultural competence.

- **Updated Training Programs:** Regularly updated training programs ensure that PSTs stay informed about evolving cultural dynamics within their service areas.

Cultural diversity significantly impacts the landscape of emergency response for PSTs. By embracing cultural competence, PSTs bridge communication gaps, build trust, and ensure more accurate and effective emergency responses. Understanding and respecting diverse cultural backgrounds are essential for PSTs to provide inclusive and reliable public safety services to all communities they serve.

04.11 Demonstrate the Ability to Communicate with Challenging Callers

PSTs frequently encounter challenging callers during emergency situations. This explores strategies and techniques PSTs utilize to communicate effectively and manage interactions with callers who may be distressed, agitated, or difficult to engage with.

Understanding Challenging Callers

- **Types of Challenging Callers:** Challenging callers can range from those experiencing high levels of distress, to those exhibiting aggressive or uncooperative behavior.

- **Causes of Challenges:** Challenges may arise due to the caller's emotional state, cognitive impairment, language barriers, or frustration with the emergency.

Approaches for Effective Communication

- **Remain Calm and Composed:** PSTs maintain a composed demeanor, projecting a calm and reassuring tone to diffuse tension and create a sense of reassurance.

- **Active Listening and Empathy:** Active listening allows PSTs to understand the caller's concerns, while expressing empathy helps build rapport and trust.

- **Use Clear and Simple Language:** Employing plain language and avoiding technical jargon ensures that instructions and information provided are easily understood.

De-escalation Techniques

- **Stay Neutral and Non-confrontational:** PSTs remain neutral and avoid escalating the situation by using non-confrontational language and tone.

- **Acknowledge Feelings and Validate Concerns:** Validating the caller's emotions and concerns without necessarily agreeing with their perspective helps in calming them down.

- **Offer Reassurance and Support:** Providing reassurance about the response process and offering support instills confidence and helps in calming anxious or distressed callers.

Strategies for Engagement

- **Establish Rapport:** Engaging in brief conversation to establish rapport helps in building a connection and gaining the caller's trust.

- **Set Clear Expectations:** PSTs communicate the steps being taken or the expected course of action, managing the caller's expectations during the emergency response process.

- **Maintain Control of the Call:** PSTs guide the conversation by asking open-ended questions and directing the caller toward providing essential information while keeping the conversation focused.

Safety Protocols and Support

- **Safety Assessment:** PSTs assess the situation for potential safety risks, ensuring the safety of the caller, responders, and themselves.

- **Involvement of Supervisors or Specialized Teams:** In challenging situations, involving supervisors or specialized teams equipped to handle difficult calls ensures appropriate support and intervention.

Training and Development

- **Role-Playing Scenarios:** Engaging in simulated scenarios with challenging callers helps PSTs practice communication techniques in a controlled environment.

- **De-escalation Training Programs:** Participating in training programs focusing on de-escalation techniques and conflict resolution equips PSTs with the skills needed for managing challenging interactions.

Continuous Improvement

- **Post-Call Analysis and Feedback:** Reflecting on challenging calls and seeking feedback helps PSTs identify areas for improvement and refine their communication approaches.

- **Learning from Experience:** Sharing experiences and learning from successful strategies used in managing challenging calls contributes to the collective knowledge of PSTs.

Effectively communicating with challenging callers is a crucial skill for PSTs. By employing active listening, de-escalation techniques, and maintaining control of the conversation, PSTs ensure the provision of necessary assistance and contribute to de-escalating stressful situations, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response services.

04.12 Utilize Voice Techniques to Control Radio Transmissions and Telephone Calls

The ability to effectively control voice transmissions over radios and telephone calls is pivotal for PSTs in managing emergency responses. PSTs use voice control techniques to ensure clarity, efficiency, and professionalism in their communications.

Radio Transmission Techniques

- **Clear Enunciation:** PSTs articulate words clearly, emphasizing pronunciation to ensure that messages are easily understood by responders despite potential background noise.

- **Appropriate Pacing and Tone:** Maintaining a moderate pace and utilizing an authoritative yet calm tone helps convey urgency without causing panic.

- **Radio Discipline:** Adhering to established protocols such as using clear and standardized language (10-codes or plain language) enhances communication efficiency. PSTs should ensure that all radio transmissions are professional in nature. PSTs voice, tone and rate of speech are reassuring to responders and should be consistent throughout every call.

Telephone Call Handling Techniques

- **Answering Techniques:** PSTs employ a standard greeting, speaking clearly and confidently, providing a professional introduction to reassure callers.

- **Active Listening on Calls:** Active listening involves using verbal cues like "I understand" or "Please continue" to demonstrate engagement and assure callers that they are being heard.

- **Empathetic Tone:** Utilizing an empathetic tone conveys compassion, especially in sensitive or distressing situations, helping to calm callers and build trust.

Voice Control Strategies

- **Modulation and Pitch:** Modulating voice pitch aids in maintaining interest and engagement, while varying pitch appropriately emphasizes urgency or importance in communication.

- **Breath Control:** PSTs practice breath control to avoid speaking too quickly or running out of breath during longer transmissions, ensuring consistent and clear communication.

- **Avoiding Vocal Fatigue:** Training in techniques to prevent vocal fatigue helps PSTs maintain voice clarity and effectiveness during extended shifts.

Reducing Noise and Distractions

- **Background Noise Management:** PSTs minimize background noise by speaking directly into the microphone and using noise-canceling headsets, ensuring clarity in transmissions.

- **Focused Listening:** Concentrating on the caller's voice and minimizing distractions enhances active listening, ensuring accurate comprehension and response.

Continuous Improvement

- **Self-Assessment and Feedback:** PSTs regularly assess their voice control techniques and seek feedback from supervisors or peers to refine their communication skills.

- **Professional Development:** Continuous learning through workshops or courses focusing on voice control and communication enhances PSTs' proficiency and adaptability.

Voice control techniques are essential for PSTs to effectively manage radio transmissions and telephone calls in emergency response scenarios. By employing clear enunciation, appropriate pacing, modulation, and minimizing distractions, PSTs ensure accurate and efficient communication, contributing significantly to the success of emergency responses and overall public safety.

End of Section 04 Worksheet

1. What are the stages of the communication cycle?

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2. What factors influence effective communication?

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3. What is active listening?

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4. Why is cultural sensitivity important?

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5. _____ refers to the correct way to say words, including the sounds, stress, and intonation patterns specific to a language.

6. _____ involves the articulation and clarity with which words are spoken. It emphasizes the precise formation of sounds and syllables to ensure they are distinctly heard and understood.

7. Why is it important to provide clear instruction delivery and to follow instructions?

_____

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8. What are strategies for effectively giving and following instructions?

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_____

9. A _____ is a statement that can be objectively verified or proven to be true. It is based on observable, concrete evidence and is not subject to interpretation.

10. An _____ is a conclusion or interpretation drawn from available evidence or facts. It involves making deductions or educated guesses based on the information at hand.

11. Customer service skills should apply to who?

_____

_____

_____

12. What are some professional customer service skills that play a vital role in the PST role?

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_____

13. Mastery of _____ and _____ elevates the effectiveness of emergency response systems and ensures swift and appropriate assistance during crises.

14. _____ helps in obtaining essential information, clarifying details, and ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

15. Categorizing calls according to their urgency enables effective _____ _____, ensuring that critical incidents receive immediate attention.

16. Collaboration within the _____ ensures seamless handoffs and continuous support, enhancing overall call management efficiency.

17. What are three (3) main ways to identify suspicious information?

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_____

_____

18. How do PSTs handle suspicious information?

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_____

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19. What are some challenges faced by PSTs in regard to cultural diversity?

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20. What are strategies for cultural competence?

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21. How does a PST approach a challenging caller for effective communication?

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22. PSTs may use de-escalation techniques such as:

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23. What are some radio transmission techniques that PSTs utilize?

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_____

_____

24. What voice control strategies do PSTs utilize?

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Section 05 Objectives

05.0 Describe guidelines and operational standards of incident classification and prioritization. The student will be able to:

05.01   Explain the importance of incident types, incident classification, and incident prioritization.

05.02   Identify and describe incident types.

05.03   Identify and describe incident classification.

05.04   Identify and describe incident prioritization.

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05.01 Explain the Importance of Incident Types, Incident Classification, and Incident Prioritization

As the vital link between the public and emergency services, PSTs play a critical role in ensuring timely and effective response to incidents. The ability to distinguish between different types of incidents, accurately classify them, and prioritize them accordingly, is crucial for saving lives and protecting communities.

Incident Types

PSTs encounter a wide range of incidents, from medical emergencies and fires to crimes in progress and mental health crises. Understanding the specific types of incidents helps them:

- Ask appropriate questions to gather accurate information.

- Dispatch the right resources based on the nature of the emergency.

- Provide guidance to callers based on established protocols.

Incident Classification

Classifying incidents involves assigning them a severity level based on their potential impact. This helps PSTs:

- Prioritize calls effectively, ensuring immediate attention for emergencies.

- Allocate resources efficiently, directing more personnel and specialized equipment to high-priority incidents.

- Manage expectations with callers accordingly depending on the severity of the situation.

Incident Prioritization

Prioritizing incidents involves balancing urgency with resource limitations. PSTs must consider factors including, but not limited to:

- **Severity of the Incident:** Under the general rule it is life over property.

- **Number of People Affected:** Usually the more people affected in the situation the greater the possibility of more personnel needed to respond to the situation.

- **Availability of Resources:** If there are not enough police, firefighters, or medical personnel available to respond to a situation then a plan may need to be established on how to find assistance from other area resources.

- **Public Safety Risks:** Some larger scale incidents, such as large fires, HazMat situation, natural disasters, etc. may not only impact citizens in the agency's jurisdiction but other nearby communities.

Effective Prioritization Ensures That

- Critical incidents receive immediate attention.

- Resources are used efficiently and effectively.

- Response times are minimized, potentially saving lives.

05.02 Identify and Describe Incident Types

As the frontline for emergency response, PSTs need to be adept at quickly identifying and understanding the nature of incoming calls. This skill allows them to dispatch the right resources and provide the most effective assistance in emergencies.

Major Incident Types

- **Police Emergencies:** These involve potential criminal activity or threats to public safety.

- **Medical Emergencies:** These involve life-threatening situations requiring immediate medical attention.

- **Fire Emergencies:** These involve fires or potential fire hazards that require immediate response.

Additional Incident Types

- **Environmental Emergencies:** These involve natural disasters or hazardous environmental situations.

- **Public Service Calls:** These involve requests for non-emergency assistance or information.

Importance of Accurate Identification

Accurately identifying the type of incident allows PSTs to:

- **Dispatch the Appropriate Resources:** Police, fire, ambulance, or other specialized units.

- **Provide Callers with the Most Relevant Instructions:** CPR, first aid, fire evacuation, etc.

- **Prioritize Calls Effectively:** Ensure critical emergencies receive immediate attention.

- **Maintain Situational Awareness:** Track the overall incident landscape and allocate resources accordingly.

Tips for PSTs

- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Encourage callers to provide details about the situation.

- **Listen Actively and Pay Attention to Key Words:** Identify potential threats or urgency indicators.

- **Use Call-Taking Protocols and Scripts:** Ensure consistency and accuracy in information gathering.

- **Stay Calm and Professional:** Reassure the caller and provide clear instructions.

PSTs are more effective in their critical role as the first point of contact for emergency situations when they can identify and describe various incident types. Their ability to quickly understand the nature of the call and dispatch the right help can make a life-saving difference in countless situations. Every second counts in an emergency. By honing their skills in identifying and describing incident types, PSTs can contribute significantly to the safety and well-being of their community.

05.03 Identify and Describe Incident Classification

Incident classification assures that correct resources are deployed in a timely manner. Signals, codes, and other terminology provide ways of classifying incidents. The PST must pay close attention to the actual complaint to classify the incident correctly. A caller may have multiple complaints, but it should be classified according to the issue with the highest priority. The following lists illustrate why it is important to differentiate between seemingly similar classifications:

Police

- **Robbery vs Burglary:** A robbery is an intentional and unlawful taking of property from a person through the use of force, violence, assault, or threat. A burglary is unlawfully entering a dwelling, structure, or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense inside.

- **Fight vs Disturbance:** A fight is a physical altercation whereas a disturbance is a verbal argument which has not yet resulted in physical contact.

- **Assault vs Battery:** Assault is a threat of bodily harm that reasonably causes fear. A battery is when some type of physical contact has occurred.

- **Fraud vs Theft:** Fraud is wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in personal or financial gain. Theft is the unauthorized removal or concealment of property.

- **Abduction vs Missing Person:** An abduction indicates that the missing person is in danger or was forcibly taken against their will. A missing person is not necessarily believed to be in physical danger at the time of their disappearance.

- **Silent Alarm vs Audible Alarm:** A silent alarm may be used to conceal a call for help from a suspect. An audible alarm provides a visual cue or tone to direct attention to the source.

Fire

- **Residential vs Commercial Structure Fire:** A residential fire may require fewer units than a commercial structure fire which may require more units or specialty units, depending on the contents of the structure.

- **Hazards Material (HazMat) Incident:** There are different types of hazardous materials, so it is important for the PST to understand that these substances may pose different risks to the environment and responders.

- **Brush Fire:** A large fire involving bushes, scrubs, brush, or other low-growing plants. They may require specialized equipment, can escalate quickly, and may or may not be near a structure.

- **Forest Fire / Wildfire**: A non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland. This does not include prescribed burns. Wildfires may escalate quickly, particularly during droughts. Specialized fire plans are executed to extinguish wildfires and often include the use of an air tanker to drop fire retardants or suppressants.

- **Vehicle Accidents:** The response may vary depending on whether there are injuries, if extrication is needed, if a fire is involved, or if the vehicle is overturned.

- **Rescue:** Specialty rescues may be necessary for a person entrapped, building collapses, and other incidents requiring specialized, technical personnel and equipment.

- **Fire Alarms:** Audible and visual notifications tell occupants that emergency conditions exist. Fire alarms can be detected through smoke detectors, heat sensors, and water flow systems.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

- **Advanced Life Support (ALS):** Emergency medical care provided by paramedics that involve invasive procedures.

- **Basic Life Support (BLS):** Emergency medical care provided by emergency medical technicians and paramedics that involve non-invasive procedures.

- **Medical Incidents:** Acute or chronic illness, disease, or ailment.

- **Trauma Incidents:** A physical wound or injury caused by an external force whether accidental or intentional.

05.04 Identify and Describe Incident Prioritization

As the first point of contact in emergency situations, PSTs play a crucial role in triaging and prioritizing incidents. Their ability to quickly assess the urgency and potential impact of each call ensures timely and appropriate deployment of resources, ultimately saving lives and protecting communities.

Understanding Incident Priority Systems

Most emergency response agencies use a formal incident prioritization system, typically based on a graded scale (e.g., high, medium, low). This system helps PSTs:

- **Standardize Call Assessment:** Ensuring consistent application of criteria across different incidents.

- **Facilitate Decision-Making:** Guiding resource allocation based on urgency and severity.

- **Optimize Response Times:** Directing immediate attention to critical situations.

Factors Influencing Incident Prioritization

Several factors contribute to determining the priority of an incident, including, but not limited to:

- **Threat to Life:** Is there an immediate danger to human life or limb.

- **Potential for Injury or Damage:** Could the incident cause significant harm or property damage.

- **Number of People Involved:** How many individuals are potentially affected by the incident.

- **Public Safety Risk:** Does the incident pose a threat to the broader community or infrastructure.

- **Availability of Resources:** Are there enough personnel and equipment available to respond to all incidents effectively.

Examples of Priority Levels

- **High Priority:** Life-threatening emergencies, imminent danger situations, ongoing criminal activity.

- **Medium Priority:** Serious incidents requiring prompt attention, non-life-threatening medical emergencies, suspicious activity.

- **Low Priority:** Non-emergency situations, requests for information or assistance, minor disturbances.

Challenges and Considerations

- **Limited Information:** PSTs often make initial priority decisions based on incomplete or evolving information from callers.

- **Emotional Pressure:** Maintaining composure and clear thinking during high-pressure calls is crucial for accurate assessment.

- **Resource Limitations:** Balancing urgency with available resources can be challenging, requiring effective decision-making.

<u>Improving Prioritization Skills</u>

- **Thorough Call-Taking:** Ask open-ended questions to gather detailed information about the incident.

- **Active Listening:** Pay attention to key words and indicators of urgency or danger.

- **Critical Thinking:** Analyze the information received and apply established prioritization criteria.

- **Utilizing Technology:** Leverage call-taking software and incident management systems for efficient assessment and resource allocation.

- **Ongoing Training and Practice:** Regularly participate in training exercises and simulations to hone prioritization skills.

PSTs are more effective in safeguarding their communities when they can prioritize incidents. Their ability to quickly assess urgency, allocate resources efficiently, and guide emergency responders to the most critical situations makes them invaluable members of the public safety chain.

End of Section 05 Worksheet

1. PSTs must ask _____ questions to gather accurate information.

2. Prioritizing incidents involves balancing urgency with resource limitations. PSTs must consider factors such as:

_____

_____

_____

3. What are the three (3) major incident types?

_____

_____

_____

4. Are there other incident types PSTs may have to provide assistance for?

_____

_____

_____

5. What is the difference between assault and battery?

_____

_____

_____

6. What is the difference between Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support?

_____

_____

_____

7. What are factors influencing incident prioritization?

_____

_____

_____

8. What are skills that help PSTs improve prioritization?

_____

_____

_____

Section 06 Objectives

06.0 Identify and perform the operational skills of a public safety telecommunicator. The student will be able to:

06.01   Obtain and organize pertinent information.

06.02   Identify the difference between emergency and non-emergency incidents.

06.03   Utilize available resources properly.

06.04   Correctly complete appropriate forms, logs, and files.

06.05   Obtain and process requests for service and/or resources from field units in a timely manner.

06.06   Explain geographical jurisdictions and mutual aid agreements, and how they affect day-to-day activities.

06.07   Demonstrate multi-functional dexterity.

06.08   Identify various resources for crisis call handling.

06.09   Explain the importance of informing other PST's and supervisors of pertinent activities and incidents as they relate to operations.

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06.01 Obtain and Organize Pertinent Information

It is important for the PST to receive, process, and dispatch all pertinent information from callers and emergency responders quickly and accurately. Whether dispatching emergency responders to an incident or taking information for a responder-initiated call, the PST must obtain the information from callers/responders and then organize it in a logical manner so that others can interpret it and respond accordingly.

<u>Obtaining Pertinent Information</u>

- **6 W's:** Where, What, Weapons, When, Who, Why is the most commonly used method of gathering information. This may vary by agency protocol and/or severity of the incident. This order of information gathering allows PSTs to focus on:

  - **Prioritizing Location:** The most important information for dispatching is the "where". In the event contact is lost, a responder can be sent to investigate.

  - **Nature of Incident:** In order to send an appropriate response, ask specific questions to determine the "what" (defined by agency policy).

  - **Weapons**: Identify presence or potential for "weapons" when applicable.

  - **Time of Event:** "When" did it occur: In the past, is it still ongoing, or just occurred (defined by agency policy).

  - **Parties Involved:** "Who" are the parties involved: a complainant, suspect, witness, etc.

  - **Why:** Finding the underlying reason will sometimes explain the "why." PSTs should use caution to avoid offending, agitating, or confusing callers.

- **Hold and Prioritize:** Non-emergency calls can be placed on hold for emergencies calls.

- **Explain Actions and Delays:** Keep caller informed about holds and pauses.

- **Avoid Arguments:** Stay professional and focused on the situation.

- **Document Everything:** Accurately document all relevant information provided by callers. This ensures a clear understanding of the situation and facilitates efficient response.

- **Know When to Disconnect the Call:** Ensure all necessary information is collected. The PST will learn techniques to control conversations based on agency policies.

- **Listen for Background Noises:** This might offer an opportunity to ask for clarifying information about the emergency being reported.

<u>Organizing Pertinent Information</u>

- **Incident Location:** Address, intersection, business name, landmarks, direction of travel.

- **Phone number:** Call back number, in case of disconnect or additional information is needed.

- **Incident Type:** Nature of the emergency for accurate dispatch or reason for calling.

- **Person Description:** It is best to control the flow of information by asking in logical order. Example: Sex, race, age, clothing (go from head to toe) height, weight, etc.

- **Vehicle Description:** Use CYMBALS mnemonic to help remember line of questioning:

    o   Color

    o   Year

    o   Make/Model

    o   Body,

    o   Additional descriptors

    o   License/Tag

    o   State

- **Paraphrase Information:** Summarize key points for clarity and brevity.

Transferring a Call

- **1st Gather Necessary Details:** Location, call back phone number, incident type.

- **2nd Inform Caller of Transfer:** Explain the reason and what agency will be receiving the call.

- **3rd Stay on the Line and Notify:** Provide receiving agency with details of the call.

- **4th Ensure Acceptance:** Confirm receiving agency is ready before disconnecting.

06.02 Identify the Difference Between Emergency and Non-Emergency Incidents

Identifying Call Types

- **Emergency:** Serious, unexpected events with potential for injury, loss of life, or property damage.

- **Non-Emergency:** An unexpected situation that does not require immediate response.

Prioritizing Calls and Messages

- **Sort Calls Based on Urgency:** Prioritize incidents posing the greatest threat to life then property.

- **Consider Agency-Specific Response Protocol:** Match incident type to appropriate situation being described according to agency protocols.

Communication Tools and Methods

- **Alert Tones:** Differentiates between incident severities and attracts field personnel's attention.

- **Emergency Radio Traffic:** Prioritize high-risk situations with immediate threat to responders or public safety.

- **Simulcasting:** Disseminate information to multiple teams or agencies simultaneously.

- **Silent Dispatch:** Send dispatch information via CAD instead of radio for discreet response.

- **Radio Silence:** Maintain silence during dangerous incidents (bomb threats, active assailant, etc.) to conceal responder location.

- **Notifications:** Inform supervisors, other agencies, and any other officials (per agency policy) about significant incidents.

06.03 Utilize Available Resources Properly

Efficient resource utilization is key for any PST to excel in their role. It ensures timely response, minimizes waste, and leads to better outcomes for both callers and responders.

<u>Assess Before Allocation</u>

- **Understand the Situation:** Prior to assigning resources, the PST should take a moment to fully comprehend the nature and severity of the incident. Analyzing the details will determine the type and level of support needed.

- **Consider Available Options:** PSTs should evaluate all available resources - personnel, equipment, and technology - considering factors like expertise, location, and response time to make the optimal choice.

- **Prioritize Effectively:** Recognizing that not all calls demand the same response level, the PST should prioritize emergencies and allocate resources accordingly.

<u>Communicate and Coordinate</u>

- **Clear Communication:** PSTs prioritize clear communication of incident details and resource allocation plans to other PSTs and emergency responders. This ensures everyone is informed and avoids duplication of effort.

- **Collaboration/Teamwork is Key:** PSTs should cultivate a collaborative space where information is shared, progress updates are exchanged, and resource adjustments can be made quickly when needed.

- **Utilize Technology:** PSTs can optimize response coordination by utilizing technology like CAD systems and communication platforms to track deployed resources, share updates, and adjust plans as needed.

<u>Reflect and Adapt</u>

- **Review and Analyze:** Following an incident, PSTs should dedicate time to review the resource allocation plan and actively seek areas for improvement. This review should involve assessing whether assigned resources effectively met the situation's needs and identifying potential improvements for future responses.

- **Learn and Adapt:** PSTs should leverage insights from each incident to refine resource utilization strategies. Stay open to adapting approaches based on new information and evolving situations.

- **Continuous Learning:** PSTs should prioritize staying updated on the latest best practices and advancements in resource management for emergency response. Engaging in training workshops, participating in professional development programs, and actively seeking feedback from colleagues and supervisors will empower PSTs to refine resource allocation strategies.

Effective resource utilization is an ongoing process for PSTs. By incorporating these tips, actively seeking knowledge, and adapting their approach as needed, PSTs can optimize available resources and provide the best possible support during critical situations.

06.04 Correctly Complete Appropriate Forms, Logs, and Files

Accurate and thorough documentation is required of PSTs. It ensures clear communication, protects against liability, and provides valuable data for improving response strategies.

Understanding Forms

- **Familiarization:** PSTs must have a thorough understanding of the purpose and format for all relevant forms, logs, and files encountered, including incident reports, dispatch logs, evidence logs, and any agency-specific documents.

- **Ask for Clarification:** PSTs should readily seek guidance from supervisors or colleagues when filling out specific forms, particularly for new or complex procedures. Do not hesitate to ask - clear understanding ensures accurate completion.

- **Maintain Consistency:** PSTs should strictly follow established protocols and consistently utilize standardized language in all documentation. This allows clarity for all parties involved and enables efficient data analysis for informed decision-making.

Capture Details Accurately

- **The 6 W's:** Employing the 6 W's (Where, What, Weapons, When, Who, Why) as a guide. PSTs should accurately document all details, including call time, caller information, incident specifics, and actions undertaken.

- **Active Listening:** PSTs should actively seek out critical details. The PST should ask clarifying questions guaranteeing accurate comprehension of the emergency.

- **Document Accurately:** PSTs should use clear and concise language in all communication. Avoid jargon and technical terms that could be misinterpreted.

Organize and Secure Information

- **Timely Completion:** To ensure accurate information and prevent memory lapses, PSTs will complete forms and logs while details are fresh in their mind.

- **Proper Filing:** Follow designated procedures to ensure easy retrieval of information.

- **Data Integrity:** PSTs are entrusted to follow agency protocols for data security and access restrictions to protect personal details and confidential case information.

By prioritizing accuracy, efficiency, and organization, PSTs ensure documentation meets the highest standards and creates a seamless emergency response.

06.05 Obtain and Process Requests for Service and/or Resources from Field Units in a Timely Manner

PSTs are the link between field units and resources, ensuring timely and accurate response to requests for service.

Gather and Verify Information

- **Active Listening:** Pay close attention to the emergency responder's request, asking clarifying questions to ensure complete understanding of the emergency and resource needs.

- **Verify Details:** Double-check information like location, type of resource required, and any potential hazards. This reduces the risk of errors and ensures accurate resource allocation.

- **Document Clearly:** Take detailed notes of the request, including time, unit identification, nature of the emergency, and any specific requirements. This serves as a vital record for future reference and potential follow-up.

Prioritize and Categorize

- **Understand the Urgency:** PSTs analyze the nature of each request and its potential impact to prioritize emergencies requiring immediate resource allocation.

- **Categorize Based on Need:** Understanding the distinction between requests for personnel, equipment, or specialized support allows PSTs to effectively identify the most appropriate resources for each emergency.

Communicate and Coordinate

- **Clear Instructions:** Provide clear and concise instructions to field units regarding resource allocation, response protocol, and any necessary updates.

- **Maintain Open Communication:** Keep the field unit informed throughout the process, updating them on resource availability, ETA, and any changes.

- **Collaboration is Key:** PSTs shall foster a collaborative environment, actively partnering with other agencies to streamline resource deployment and optimize response efforts. This ensures timely and effective assistance in emergencies.

By actively prioritizing requests, gathering accurate information, and maintaining clear communication, PSTs ensure timely and effective processing for field units.

06.06 Explain Geographical Jurisdictions and Mutual Aid Agreements, and How They Affect Day-To-Day Activities

Understanding geographical boundaries and mutual aid agreements and applying this knowledge is essential for PSTs. It ensures efficient resource allocation, clarifies responsibilities, and facilitates collaboration across agencies.

<u>Jurisdictional Familiarization</u>

- **Map it Out:** PSTs shall have knowledge of their agency's jurisdiction, incorporating boundaries, landmarks, and neighboring agencies.

- **Identify Partners:** PSTs shall have knowledge of mutual aid agreements established with nearby agencies. Understand the types of resources that can be shared per mutual aid agreements.

<u>Collaboration</u>

- **Build Relationships:** Regular communication and interactions with neighboring agencies foster positive relationships.

- **Embrace Flexibility:** PSTs should be prepared to adapt their approach based on the specific situation encountered. Different agreements may necessitate unique protocols for resource deployment or communication channels. Remaining flexible ensures effective response regardless of the circumstances.

Understanding mapping and collaboration empowers PSTs to leverage geographical boundaries and mutual aid agreements as valuable tools in achieving effective response.

06.07 Demonstrate Multi-Functional Dexterity

<u>Multi-Functional Dexterity</u>

Multi-functional dexterity is the ability to:

Figure 13 Coral Springs PST

- **Process Information from Multiple Sources:** Listen to calls, read computer screens, enter information into the CAD system, and monitor radio transmissions simultaneously.

- **Respond to Diverse Situations:** By adapting seamlessly between calming an agitated caller, providing CPR instructions, and dispatching emergency resources.

- **Prioritize Critical Tasks:** Quickly assess the urgency of each call and allocate proper response units accordingly.

- **Maintain Focus Under Pressure:** Remain calm and composed even during stressful and chaotic situations.

- **Communicate Effectively:** Deliver clear instructions, gather information accurately, and de-escalate tense situations with verbal skills.

<u>Why Multi-Functional Dexterity is Important for PSTs</u>

- **Faster Response Times:** Accurate information gathering and quick decision-making lead to faster deployment of emergency services.

- **Improved Caller Experience:** Clear communication and efficient problem-solving build trust and reduce caller anxiety.

- **Enhanced Situational Awareness:** Tracking multiple incidents and resource availability ensures informed decisions and optimal response strategies.

<u>Developing Multi-Functional Dexterity</u>

- **Training and Simulations:** Through participation in realistic training exercises, PSTs develop their multi-tasking skills, building confidence and readiness for the demands of real-world emergencies.

- **Technology Utilization:** Call-taking software and incident management systems are available to streamline information processing and resource allocation.

- **Mindfulness and Stress Management Techniques:** Practice mindfulness exercises and relaxation techniques to maintain focus and manage stress in high-pressure situations.

- **Communication Skills Training:** PSTs should prioritize refining their active listening, questioning, and de-escalation skills to effectively handle diverse callers and situations. Mastering these communication tools ensures successful interactions regardless of the circumstance.

Building multi-functional dexterity requires continuous dedication. Through ongoing learning, practicing effective techniques, and maintaining a calm and focused mindset, PSTs can evolve into highly skilled individuals able to handle the responsibilities that are require of working in the environment of emergency response.

06.08 Identify Various Resources for Crisis Call Handling

Crisis Call: Any calls involving a high degree of urgency, emotional distress, or potential for harm. These calls often require PSTs to go beyond basic information gathering and dispatching resources. They demand enhanced communication skills, emotional intelligence, and a deep understanding of crisis intervention techniques.

<u>Key Characteristics of Crisis Calls</u>

- **High Urgency:** The caller may be experiencing a life-threatening situation, imminent danger, or significant emotional distress.

- **Emotional Intensity:** Callers may be crying, yelling, or exhibiting other signs of extreme emotions.

- **Complexity:** Crisis calls often involve multiple factors, such as mental health issues, domestic violence, suicidal thoughts, or substance abuse.

- **Unpredictability:** The nature of the crisis and the caller's behavior can be unpredictable, requiring PSTs to adapt their approach at moments notice.

- **Demand for Immediate Action:** Crisis calls often require immediate intervention, whether it is dispatching emergency services, providing de-escalation techniques, or offering crisis hotline information.

<u>Examples of Crisis Calls</u>

- Suicidal threats or attempts

- Domestic violence incidents

- Active assailant situations

- Medical emergencies involving severe pain or potential loss of consciousness.

- Mental health crises involving panic attacks, hallucinations, or psychosis.

- Hostage situations or other violent crimes in progress

It is important to note that the specific definition of "crisis call" can vary depending on the policies and procedures of each agency. However, the general characteristics outlined above apply to most situations where PSTs need to go above and beyond their typical call handling duties to provide effective support and ensure the safety of the caller and others involved.

As a PST, navigating crisis calls requires more than just quick thinking and a calm demeanor. It demands access to a diverse toolkit of resources to effectively support callers in distress and ensure their safety.

<u>Internal Resources</u>

- **Crisis Protocols and Scripts:** Every agency should have established protocols for handling specific crisis types (e.g., suicide threats, domestic violence, mental health emergencies). PSTs should familiarize themselves with these protocols and utilize call-taking scripts for consistent and effective communication.

- **Supervisor and Peer Support:** Difficult calls are part of the job. PSTs should not hesitate to seek support from supervisors or peers. Their guidance, de-escalation strategies, and emotional support can help PSTs navigate challenging situations effectively.

- **Crisis Response Teams:** Agencies may have dedicated crisis response teams trained to provide emotional and psychological support to PSTs after handling traumatic incidents.

- **Internal Databases:** Utilize agency databases for information on mental health resources, hotlines, shelters, and other local support systems.

External Resources

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (988):** This confidential lifeline provides 24/7 crisis intervention and prevention services. PSTs can connect callers directly or offer the number as a resource.

- **Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor trained to provide support and resources for mental health crises.

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE):** This hotline offers confidential support and resources for victims and survivors of domestic violence.

- **MentalHealth.gov:** This website provides comprehensive information on mental health resources, including hotlines, treatment options, and support groups.

- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** NAMI offers a wealth of resources and support for individuals and families living with mental illness.

- **Local Mental Health Agencies and Hotlines:** Proactive familiarization with local mental health resources empowers PSTs to effectively connect callers with the right support. Explore crisis hotlines, mobile crisis teams, and outpatient and inpatient treatment facilities, building a comprehensive network for diverse needs.

Technology Resources

- **Mapping and Navigation Tools:** Utilize mapping tools to locate resources like shelters, hospitals, and mental health facilities near the caller's location.

- **Translation Services:** Ensure access to translation services for non-English speaking callers or those with hearing impairments.

Remember

- **Keep Updated:** Continuous training with emerging resources and hotlines ensures PSTs remain equipped to support callers effectively.

- **Communicate Effectively:** Clearly explain available resources to callers and provide precise information for accessing them.

- **Prioritize Safety:** If immediate danger is present, prioritize dispatching emergency responders while offering support and guidance to the caller.

- **Self-Care:** Leveraging available well-being resources empowers PSTs to prevent burnout and cultivate emotional resilience.

Active engagement with available resources equips PSTs to navigate challenging crisis calls with confidence, competence, and compassion.

06.09 Explain the Importance of Informing Other PST's and Supervisors of Pertinent Activities and Incidents as they Relate to Operations

As the first point of contact in emergency situations, PSTs handle a multitude of tasks and responsibilities. Among the most critical, yet often overlooked, is the timely and accurate sharing of information with other PSTs and supervisors. This simple act can have profound implications for the effectiveness and safety of emergency response operations.

Information Sharing

- **Enhanced Situational Awareness:** PSTs ensure everyone remains informed and facilitate coordinated response strategies by sharing updates on ongoing incidents, resource deployment, and potential risks. This includes promptly communicating evolving situations and ensuring proper notifications reach the chain of command and neighboring communities, adhering to established agency policies.

- **Improved Resource Allocation:** Knowing about other ongoing calls and resource availability helps PSTs prioritize dispatch and ensure efficient utilization of personnel and equipment.

- **Reduced Redundant Efforts:** Sharing information prevents duplicate calls about the same incident, freeing up resources for other critical situations.

- **Increased Transparency and Accountability**: Clear communication fosters trust and collaboration within the team, leading to better decision-making and a more cohesive response.

- **Early Identification of Patterns and Trends:** Sharing information about recurring incidents or emerging threats can help identify potential issues and take proactive measures.

What Information Should be Shared?

- **Details of Ongoing Incidents:** Nature of the incident, location, severity, involved parties, resources deployed.

- **Updates on Incident Status:** Changes in situation, additional information gathered, progress made.

- **Resource Availability and Deployment:** Units on scene, units available for dispatch, potential resource limitations.

- **Potential Risks or Threats:** Suspicious activity, weather warnings, HazMat incidents.

- **Any Information Relevant to Ongoing Operations:** Traffic closures, roadblocks, power outages, etc.

Effective Information Sharing Practices

- **Utilize Established Communication Channels:** Use designated radio channels, chat platforms, or internal reporting systems.

- **Be Concise and Clear:** Provide key information in a structured and easy-to-understand manner.

- **Use Standardized Terminology:** Ensure everyone uses the same terms and codes to avoid confusion.

- **Prioritize Urgency:** Share critical information immediately and follow up with less urgent updates.

- **Document and Log Information:** Maintain accurate records of all shared information for future reference.

Active information sharing is the cornerstone of effective emergency response. Promptly relaying pertinent details about activities and incidents empowers PSTs to significantly contribute to community safety and well-being. Fostering a culture of open communication and information exchange creates a more efficient, informed, and safer environment for PSTs, emergency responders, and the public they serve.

End of Section 06 Worksheet

1. What is the correct order of the 6 W's?
    a)   Who, What, When, Where, Why, & Weapons
    b)   Where, What, Weapons, When, Who, & Why
    c)   Who, What, When, Where, Weapons, & Why
    d)   What, Where, Weapons, When, Who, & Why

2. What does the mnemonic CYMBALS stand for?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. How does a PST sort calls based on urgency?

_____

_____

_____

4. What communications tool differentiates between incident severities and attracts field personnel's attention?

_____

5. PSTs should cultivate a collaborative space where information is shared freely, progress updates are exchanged, and resource adjustments can be made quickly when needed.
    a)   True
    b)   False

6. PSTs prioritize clear communication of incident details and resource allocation plans to _____.

7. PSTs must possess a thorough understanding of the purpose and format for all relevant forms, logs, and files encountered, except for incident reports and dispatch logs.
  a) True
  b) False

8. PSTs are entrusted to follow agency protocols for data security and access restrictions to protect _____ & _____ information.

9. This serves as a vital record for future reference and potential follow-up.
  a) Communication
  b) Coordination
  c) Document Clearly
  d) Data Integrity

10. Keep the field unit informed throughout the process, updating them on _____, & _____, and any changes in the situation.

11. PSTs should thoroughly familiarize themselves with their agency's jurisdiction, incorporating _____, _____ & _____. Having a mental map fosters understanding of their authority and responsibility.

12. All of the following are key tips that empower the PSTs to leverage geographical boundaries and mutual aid agreements as valuable tools in achieving effective response, except:
  a) GPS availability
  b) Mapping
  c) Knowledge
  d) Collaboration

13. Multi-functional dexterity is the ability to listen to calls, read computer screens, enter information into a CAD system and monitor radio transmissions doing it one step at a time.
  a) True
  b) False

14. Name three (3) reasons why Multi-Functional Dexterity is important for PSTs.

_____

_____

_____

15. What is the name of the confidential lifeline that provides 24/7 crisis intervention and prevention services.

_____

16. This hotline offers confidential support and resources for victims and survivors of domestic violence.

    a)   Domestic Violence International Hotline

    b)   Domestics National Hotline

    c)   International Violence Hotline

    d)   National Domestic Violence Hotline

17. What is enhanced when PSTs play a vital role in ensuring everyone remains informed and facilitates coordinated response strategies by sharing updates on ongoing incidents, resource deployment, and potential risks.

_____

18. List at least three (3) effective information sharing practices. (5 possible)

_____

_____

_____

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Section 07 Objectives

07.0 Understand the principles of a command structure. The student will be able to:

07.01   Understand the need for structure within the communications center and internal chain of command.

07.02   Understand the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and identify the roles and responsibilities within the incident command system (ICS).

07.03   Understand the role of the PST in relation to the communications within ICS.

07.04   Understand the impacts to ICS from providing or receiving aid from other agencies.

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07.01 Understand the Need for Structure Within the Communications Center and Internal Chain of Command

Chain of Command: Established hierarchy of authority and responsibility within the ECC or any command structure.

PSTs operate within a dynamic and often high-pressure environment. To ensure efficient and effective response to emergencies, a well-defined structure and chain of command are essential.

Importance of Structure

- **Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities:** Everyone knows what is expected of them, minimizing confusion and duplication of efforts.

- **Improved Decision-Making:** A defined chain of command facilitates timely and informed decisions when situations escalate.

- **Enhanced Communication and Coordination:** Clear communication through proper channels and reporting procedures ensures everyone stays informed and works together effectively.

- **Accountability and Performance Improvement:** A structured system allows for performance monitoring and feedback, leading to continuous improvement.

- **Reduced Stress and Workload:** Knowing who to turn to for guidance and support reduces stress and allows PSTs to focus on their tasks.

Understanding the Chain of Command

The chain of command typically involves the following levels in an ECC:

- **PSTs:** The first point of contact for an agency who answers calls, gathers information, and dispatches resources.

- **Team Lead/Supervisor:** Oversees a team of PSTs, providing guidance, support, and ensuring adherence to protocols.

- **Shift Commander/Operations Manager:** Manages the overall operations of the ECC, allocating resources, and ensuring smooth workflow.

- **Chief/Director:** Provides leadership and strategic direction for the entire ECC. Addressing chiefs/directors by their rank in an ECC is crucial for maintaining a disciplined and efficient work environment. It reflects respect for authority, fosters clear communication, and ensures a smooth chain of command, contributing to swift decision-making and a well-organized response during emergency situations.

Benefits of a Strong Chain of Command

- **Faster Response Times:** Clear decision-making and efficient resource allocation lead to quicker responses to critical situations.

- **Improved Incident Management:** Effective coordination among different levels ensures incidents are handled effectively and resolved efficiently.

- **Reduced Risk of Errors:** A structured system minimizes the chances of miscommunication and errors in judgment.

- **Increased Morale and Teamwork:** Knowing who to turn to and having a clear support system fosters trust and collaboration among PSTs.

By embracing the structure and chain of command, PSTs can function as a cohesive unit, delivering the best possible service to their community in times of need.

07.02 Understand the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Identify the Roles and Responsibilities within the Incident Command System (ICS).

As the link between the public and emergency responders, PSTs play a vital role in ensuring efficient and effective incident management. Understanding the **National Incident Management System (NIMS)** and navigating the **Incident Command System (ICS)** are essential skills for every PST.

NIMS

NIMS is a standardized approach to incident management developed by the **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** to ensure consistent and effective response across all levels of government, private sector, and non-profit organizations. It provides a common framework for:

- **Resource Typing:** Classifying personnel, equipment, and other resources based on capability and compatibility.

- **Standardized Terminology:** Using consistent language to avoid confusion and miscommunication during emergencies.

- **Mutual Aid:** Facilitating the sharing of resources between different jurisdictions.

- **Command and Control Systems:** Establishing clear lines of authority and responsibility within the ICS.

Benefits of NIMS for PSTs

- **Improved Understanding of Incident Scope and Resource Availability:** Familiarity with NIMS terminology and resource typing helps PSTs prioritize calls and allocate resources effectively.

- **Enhanced Communication and Collaboration:** Using standardized language facilitates smooth communication with emergency responders from different agencies.

- **Streamlined Response and Recovery:** NIMS promotes consistent procedures and protocols for all types of incidents, leading to faster and more efficient response and recovery efforts.

ICS

ICS is an organizational structure for managing incidents of all sizes and complexities. It establishes clear roles and responsibilities for personnel involved in the response, ensuring coordinated and effective action.

Key ICS Positions

- **Incident Commander (IC):** Overall leader of the incident response, responsible for making key decisions and coordinating all resources.

- **Operations Chief (OC):** Oversees tactical operations and deployment of personnel and equipment at the scene.

- **Planning Chief (PC):** Develops and implements incident response plans, gathers information, and conducts ongoing analysis.

- **Logistics Chief (LC):** Manages resources, including personnel, equipment, supplies, and facilities.

- **Public Information Officer (PIO):** Responsible for managing public communication and media relations during critical incidents and large-scale events.

- **Branch Chiefs:** Lead specific functional areas like fire, medical, or rescue operations.

07.03 Understand the Role of the PST in relation to the Communications within ICS

The PST plays a critical role within the ICS communications network. As the link between the public, responders, and the incident itself, PSTs gather and disseminate information, ensuring smooth and effective communications throughout the response effort.

Roles of PSTs within ICS

- **Information Gathering**: PSTs gather initial information from callers about the nature and location of the incident, potential hazards, and any other relevant details.

- **Resource Dispatch:** Based on the information gathered, PSTs dispatch appropriate emergency responders to the scene.

- **Communication and Coordination:** PSTs relay information and facilitating communication throughout the response to the public, incident responders, and other agencies.

- **Documentation and Recordkeeping:** PSTs document all calls and actions taken, ensuring accurate records for future analysis and evaluation.

Benefits of ICS for PSTs

- **Clear Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities:** Knowing who is responsible for what helps PSTs focus on their tasks and avoid confusion or duplication of effort.

- **Efficient Resource Allocation:** ICS ensures resources are directed to where they are needed most, leading to faster and more effective response.

- **Improved Communication and Situational Awareness:** PSTs stay informed about the overall incident status and can relay updates to the public and emergency responders.

- **Enhanced Safety and Security:** A well-organized ICS structure helps ensure the safety of all personnel involved in the response.

07.04 Understand the Impacts to ICS from Providing or Receiving Aid from Other Agencies

The PSTs role is crucial in ensuring inter-agency cooperation within the ICS, facilitating resource sharing or relaying information between agencies. Inter-agency collaboration also presents unique challenges and impacts on ICS operations.

Positive Impacts of Inter-Agency Cooperation

- **Expanded Resource Pool:** Sharing resources across agencies broadens the available personnel, equipment, and expertise, leading to faster and more comprehensive response.

- **Enhanced Response Capabilities:** Different agencies bring specialized skills and knowledge to the table, enriching the approach to the incident and potentially unlocking innovative solutions.

- **Reduced Response Burden:** Resource sharing distributes the burden among agencies, minimizing response times and pressure on individual departments.

- **Strengthened Interoperability:** Regular collaboration fosters communication and understanding between agencies, improving future coordination and joint response efforts.

- **Unified Command Structure:** ICS provides a framework for integrating resources and personnel from multiple agencies under a single, coordinated command, ensuring overall coherence.

Challenges and Considerations

- **Communication Barriers:** Differing terminology, protocols, and technology platforms can lead to misunderstandings and delays in information exchange.

- **Jurisdictional Issues:** Clear delineation of responsibilities and decision-making authority is critical to avoid confusion and potential conflict between agencies.

- **Resource Allocation and Prioritization:** Determining how to best allocate shared resources and prioritize needs across agencies can be complex and require careful negotiation.

- **Training and Familiarity:** PSTs need training and understanding of ICS protocols and inter-agency cooperation procedures to facilitate communication and resource sharing.

- **Cultural Differences and Communication Styles:** Recognizing and adapting to diverse agency cultures and communication styles is crucial for building trust and ensuring smooth collaboration.

Strategies for Effective Inter-Agency Cooperation in ICS

- **Establish Clear Communication Protocols:** Standardize terminology, utilize designated channels, and verify information exchange to minimize ambiguity and misunderstandings.

- **Prioritize Joint Training and Planning:** Regularly conduct exercises and simulations together to familiarize personnel with ICS protocols and inter-agency procedures, fostering trust and collaboration.

- **Form Joint Communication Teams:** Dedicated teams with representatives from various agencies to streamline communication and resource allocation decisions, enhancing coordination.

PSTs are a bridge between agencies, facilitating collaboration and ensuring the seamless flow of resources and communication within the ICS structure. By actively engaging in and understanding the nuances of inter-agency cooperation, PSTs can contribute significantly to a safer and more prepared community.

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End of Section 07 Worksheet

1. Established hierarchy of authority and responsibility within the ECC or any command structure.
   a) Chain of Control
   b) Chain of Command
   c) Chain of Order
   d) Chain of Instruction

2. List three (3) reasons why structure is important.

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. A well-defined structure and chain of command are not meant to restrict but to empower the PST.
   a) True
   b) False

4. The acronym NIMS stands for.
   a) National Information Management System
   b) National Incident Main System
   c) National Incident Management System
   d) National Incident Supervision System

5. NIMS is a standardized approach to incident management developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure consistent and effective response across all levels of government, private sector, and non-profit organizations.
   a) True
   b) False

6. The Incident Command System (ICS) is an organizational structure for managing incidents of all sizes and complexities. It establishes clear roles and responsibilities for personnel involved in the response, ensuring coordinated and effective action. List the six (6) key positions.

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. While the PST plays an important role in the ICS, the PST is not a vital link between the public, responders, and the incident itself.
   a) True
   b) False

8. Name two (2) positive impacts of inter-agency cooperation. (5 possible)

_____

_____

9. List at least three (3) challenges and considerations of inter-agency cooperation. (5 possible)

_____

_____

_____

10. Forming joint communication teams and establishing clear communications protocols are strategies for establishing effective inter-agency cooperation.
   a) True
   b) False

Section 08 Objectives

08.0   Understand the basic principles of law enforcement communications. The student will be able to:

08.01   Identify the most commonly used terms in law enforcement.

08.02   Understand the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement officers.

08.03   Know the different types of law enforcement units.

08.04   Understand the various reasons that citizens request police assistance.

08.05   Understand the difference between criminal and civil complaints.

08.06   Understand why a PST should not give legal advice.

08.07   Understand the difference between in-progress, just occurred, and past event incidents.

08.08   Comprehend the various types of emergency response modes.

08.09   Understand the role of the PST during critical incidents to include active assailant, barricaded subjects, hostage situations, suicide threats, and missing or abducted persons.

08.10   Understand why some law calls may require EMS and/or fire service response.

08.11   Describe the PST's role in officer safety.

08.12   Understand the various types of law enforcement related broadcast alerts.

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08.01 Identify the Most Commonly Used Terms in Law Enforcement

Law enforcement agencies often use similar terminology and acronyms to describe incidents and systems. Some of the most used terms are:

- **Assault:** The threat of bodily harm by a person with the apparent, present ability to carry out the threat.

- **Attempt to Locate (ATL):** Initiation of efforts to find and identify a person or object.

- **Back-up:** Sending additional field resources to assist other field resources on scene or enroute to scene.

- **Battery:** The intentional touching or striking of another person in a harmful or offensive manner, without that person's consent.

- **BOLO**: Establish, maintain, and/or broadcast a description of persons or property of interest.

- **Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS):** A division of the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** that provides information about people's criminal history, stolen property, criminal organizations/activities, and other law enforcement-related data to qualified entities.

- **Criminal Mischief:** Vandalism; destroying or damaging public or private property maliciously.

- **Cyber Stalking:** To communicate words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communications, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person, and serving no legitimate purpose.

- **Domestic Dispute:** A quarrel within a family or between members of the same household, which may or may not include violence.

- **Driving Under the Influence (DUI):** Operating a vehicle while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

- **Felony:** A serious crime punishable by death or imprisonment in a state penitentiary or in correctional facilities for a minimum of one day over a year.

- **Field Information Reports (FIR):** A short narrative completed by field units after contact with citizens.

- **FCIC:** Florida's central database for tracking crime-related data.

- **Gone on Arrival (GOA):** No longer on scene when responder arrived.

- **Homicide:** Unlawful killing of a human being.

- **Internal Affairs (IA):** A division of a law enforcement agency that investigates citizen complaints of police misconduct and handles internal disciplinary matters.

- **Misdemeanor:** A criminal offense that is punishable by a term of imprisonment in a county correctional facility for up to a year.

- **NCIC:** The national hub for criminal justice information, encompassing the fifty states, U.S. territories, and Canada.

- **Pursuit:** The act of chasing in the attempt to apprehend whether on foot or by vehicle.

- **Resisting Arrest:** Knowingly and willfully resisting, obstructing, or opposing a law enforcement officer engaged in the execution of legal process, or lawful execution of a legal duty.

- **Restraining Order:** An injunction or protective order issued by the court which requires one person to stop harming another.

- **Sexual Battery:** Any non-consensual touching of the intimate parts of another. This could include union with the sexual organ of another; or oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by someone or some object.

- **Stalking:** A person who maliciously and repeatedly follows, harasses, or cyber stalks another person.

- **Trespass:** Willfully remaining on a property without authorization.

- **Warrant:** A written order issued by authority of the state and commanding the seizure of the person named.

- **Writ of Bodily Attachment:** A warrant issued as a result of civil contempt.

Figure 14 Nassau County Sheriff's Office

08.02 Understand the Roles and Responsibilities of Law Enforcement Officers

As a PST, interacting with law enforcement officers is inevitable. Understanding their roles and responsibilities allows PSTs to collaborate effectively and provide the best possible support during critical situations.

<u>Enforcing the Law and Maintaining Public Safety</u>

- **Primary Duty:** Law enforcement officers are sworn to uphold the law, investigate crimes, and apprehend offenders. They work to maintain order, prevent crime, and protect individuals and communities.

- **Varied Responsibilities:** Their duties extend beyond responding to emergencies. They may conduct traffic stops, enforce traffic laws, patrol designated areas, and serve warrants or arrest individuals.

- **Specialized Units:** Different units within law enforcement focus on specific areas, like narcotics, forensics, or SWAT teams. Understanding their expertise can help PSTs direct resources effectively.

<u>Recognizing Limitations and Supporting Roles</u>

- **Distinguishing Roles:** While PSTs play a vital role in emergency response, remember that law enforcement officers have the authority to make arrests and enforce the law.

- **Sharing Information:** Provide officers with accurate and timely information about the situation, caller details, and potential risks. This helps them make informed decisions and take appropriate action.

- **De-escalation and Support:** In situations involving emotional distress or conflict, offer support to officers through active listening, calming techniques, and requesting additional resources if needed.

By understanding the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement officers, PSTs can build effective partnerships, facilitate smooth communication, and contribute to a safer community for all. Collaboration and mutual respect are key to navigating even the most challenging situations.

08.03 Know the Different Types of Law Enforcement Units

PSTs serve as vital link between the public and law enforcement. Knowing the different types and their specialties is crucial for efficient response and accurate resource allocation. Law enforcement units include, but are not limited to:

- **Aviation Unit:** Provides aerial surveillance, assists in search and rescue operations, and tracks suspects from the air.

- **Canine (K9) Units:** These highly trained dogs and their handlers excel in tracking suspects, detecting narcotics and explosives, and assisting in search and rescue operations.

- **Civil Units:** Handle non-criminal matters like traffic citations, noise complaints, and animal control issues. PSTs should direct citizens to the appropriate civil unit for these specific concerns.

- **Corrections Units:** Responsible for the safe and secure custody of incarcerated individuals in jails and prisons.

Figure 16 Aviation Unit

Figure 17 K9 Unit

- **Crisis Response Teams:** Comprised of specially trained personnel equipped to handle situations involving individuals experiencing mental health crises or suicidal ideation.

- **Federal Law Enforcement Agencies:** Agencies like the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and Secret Service have specific national or global jurisdictions to investigate specific crimes or threats.

- **Hazardous Device Unit:** Trained in identifying and neutralizing explosives and hazardous materials.

- **Investigations Unit:** Comprised of detectives who specialize in in-depth investigations of specific crimes, gather evidence, interview witnesses, and apprehend suspects.

- **Marine Units:** Patrol waterways, enforce boating laws, respond to maritime emergencies, and investigate crimes on the water.

Figure 18 Marine Unit

- **Mounted Unit:** Patrols large areas on horseback, providing crowd control, unique access to difficult terrain, and community engagement opportunities.

- **Patrol Unit:** The backbone of local law enforcement, patrol officers respond to calls for service, conduct traffic stops, and investigate crimes in their assigned areas.

- **PIO:** Responsible for managing public communication and media relations during critical incidents and large-scale events.

- **School Resource Officer (SRO):** Build relationships with students, staff, and the community to promote safety and prevent crime within schools.

- **Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT):** A group of responders trained to deal with unusually dangerous or violent situations and having special, or superior, weapons more powerful than standard issue. SWAT teams handle high-risk situations like hostage negotiations, active assailant incidents, and serving warrants in dangerous environments.

Figure 19 Mounted Unit

08.04 Understand the Various Reasons that Citizens Request Police Assistance

Understanding the multiple reasons why people call 911 will assist PSTs to effectively triage calls, dispatch resources, and provide support to callers in distress.

The Spectrum of Police Calls

Citizen requests for police assistance can be broadly categorized into three main areas:

- **Crimes in Progress or Immediate Threats:** These calls involve ongoing criminal activity, imminent danger, or potential violence. Examples include domestic violence incidents, active assailants, robbery in progress, or assault.

- **Suspicious Activity or Concerns:** These calls involve reports of potentially criminal activity or situations that raise concern for public safety. Examples include suspicious persons loitering, vandalism, reports of drug use, or potential child endangerment.

- **Non-Criminal Requests for Assistance:** These calls involve situations requiring police intervention but are not necessarily criminal in nature. Examples include requests for welfare checks, assistance with mental health crises, traffic accidents, or noise complaints.

Factors Influencing Citizen Requests

Several factors can influence why citizens call the police:

- **Fear and Vulnerability:** People experiencing fear, danger, or feeling unsafe will often reach out to the police for protection and intervention.

- **Lack of Alternative Resources:** In some situations, the police may be the only readily available resource for assistance, especially in areas with limited access to social services or mental health support.

- **Misunderstanding of Police Role:** In some situations, citizens may not be aware of the appropriate use of police services and may call for non-criminal situations due to lack of knowledge or alternative options.

- **Cultural and Community Norms:** Different communities may have varying expectations and norms regarding police involvement in specific situations.

PSTs as Gatekeepers and Navigators

PSTs need to navigate citizen requests by actively listening to callers, understanding the underlying context, and skillfully assessing the situation, PSTs can:

- **Triage Calls Effectively:** Differentiate between urgent threats, potential crimes, and non-criminal requests, ensuring appropriate resource allocation.

- **Provide Support and Guidance:** Offer callers emotional support, de-escalate tense situations, and direct them to relevant resources beyond police intervention when necessary.

- **Gather Accurate Information:** Obtain detailed information from callers to facilitate efficient dispatch and ensure the safety of responding officers and the public.

- **Contribute to Data-Driven Decision Making:** Analyze call data to identify trends, understand community needs, and inform police resource allocation and training strategies.

By developing a thorough understanding of the varied reasons why citizens seek police assistance, PSTs can become more effective, contributing to a safer and more responsive community.

Figure 15 Jacksonville Sheriff's Office

08.05 Understand the Difference Between Criminal and Civil Complaints

PSTs often serve as the first point of contact for citizens seeking assistance, navigating a multitude of situations. Distinguishing between criminal and civil complaints is crucial for PSTs to guide individuals toward appropriate resources and ensure the most effective response.

<u>Clarifying the Differences</u>

Criminal and civil complaints represent fundamentally different legal avenues for addressing wrongs. Grasping these core distinctions empowers PSTs to provide accurate information and connect individuals with the right support.

<u>Criminal Complaints</u>

- **Focus:** Violations of criminal laws punishable by local, state, and federal governments.

- **Objective:** Hold the offender accountable through arrest, prosecution, and potential incarceration.

- **Initiated by:** The appropriate government agency, represented by the prosecutor's office.

- **Evidence Required:** Beyond a reasonable doubt, proving the defendant committed a specific crime.

- **Examples:** Reporting a robbery, assault, or vandalism.

<u>Civil Complaints</u>

- **Focus:** Disputes between individuals or entities seeking compensation or resolution of a non-criminal matter.

- **Objective:** Receive financial compensation, enforce a contract, or obtain a court order to address the issue.

- **Initiated by:** The individual or entity seeking relief, through a lawyer or on their own.

- **Evidence Required:** Preponderance of the evidence, showing it is more likely than not that the claim is true.

- **Examples:** Reporting a contract breach, property damage, or a neighbor dispute.

<u>Key Distinctions for PSTs</u>

- **Nature of the Wrong:** Criminal complaints address violations of public law, while civil complaints address private wrongs between individuals.

- **Burden of Proof:** Criminal cases require a higher standard of proof ("beyond a reasonable doubt") than civil cases ("preponderance of the evidence").

- **Remedies:** Criminal cases aim for punishment and rehabilitation, while civil cases seek compensation or resolution.

- **Initiation:** Criminal cases are initiated by the appropriate government agency, while civil cases are initiated by the individual seeking relief.

<u>PST Responsibilities in Action</u>

- **Active Listening and Clarification:** Actively listening to the caller's explanation, asking clarifying questions to understand the situation fully, and document key details.

- **Identifying the Legal Pathway:** Based on the information gathered, analyze whether the complaint falls under criminal or civil jurisdiction.

- **Resource Navigation:** Provide accurate information and connect the caller to the appropriate resources, such as law enforcement for criminal complaints or legal counsel for civil matters.

- **Maintaining Neutrality:** Avoid expressing personal opinions or offering legal advice. A PST's role is to remain objective and provide information while guiding callers towards relevant resources.

Understanding the legal distinctions between criminal and civil complaints empowers PSTs to handle situations with assurance. This knowledge allows them to guide callers effectively towards the most suitable resources. PSTs' primary focus remains gathering accurate information, assessing the situation, and connecting callers to the right resources.

Figure 16 City of Orlando Police Department

08.06 Understand why a PST Should not Give Legal Advice

Providing legal advice is prohibited by PSTs since it falls outside the scope of their certification. Here are three key reasons why:

- **Unqualified Expertise:** PSTs are trained in communication, emergency protocols, and resource management, not legal statutes, and court rulings. Their primary focus is on immediate response, not complex legal analysis. Providing inaccurate or misleading legal advice could have serious consequences for both the caller and the responding agency.

- **Ethical Boundaries:** Crossing the line into legal advice violates professional ethics and potentially puts the PST at risk of legal liability. Their role is to gather information, not offer legal interpretations or recommendations.

- **Resource Misdirection:** Offering legal advice may divert the caller's attention from the immediate emergency and hinder their ability to provide accurate information or follow safety instructions. Directing them to qualified legal professionals ensures they receive appropriate guidance and support.

Instead of offering legal advice, PSTs can:

- Actively listen and validate the caller's concerns.

- Gather relevant information about the situation.

- Provide information about available resources, such as legal aid organizations or hotlines.

- Emphasize the importance of seeking professional legal counsel for complex situations.

Staying within their clearly defined responsibilities and avoid offering legal advice protects both the PST and the caller from potential harm. By focusing on their core skills and directing individuals to appropriate legal resources, PSTs can contribute significantly to effective emergency response and ensure everyone receives the support they need.

Figure 17 St. Johns County Sheriff's Office

08.07 Understand the Difference Between In-Progress, Just Occurred, and Past Event Incidents

As a PST, understanding the difference between in-progress, just occurred, and past events is necessary for prioritizing calls, providing accurate information, and ensuring appropriate response.

In Progress Events

- **Think "Present Tense":** These are events happening right now, unfolding as the call is being made.

- **Examples:** A fire in progress, an active assailant situation, a medical emergency in real-time.

- **Action:** Immediate response is required. PSTs prioritize these calls, dispatching resources like firefighters, paramedics, or police officers without delay.

Just Occurred Events

- **Think "Past Tense, but Fresh":** These events have just happened within the past few minutes but are no longer actively unfolding. Each agency usually has a policy to determine how many minutes would be considered a just occurred event.

- **Examples:** A car accident that just happened, a robbery that was completed minutes ago, a witness reporting a suspicious activity they just observed.

- **Action:** While urgency is still high, the situation may not require immediate dispatch. PSTs gather details, assess potential risks, and determine the appropriate response, which could involve dispatching resources or providing further instructions.

Past Events

- **Think "Distant Past":** These events happened some time ago, often hours or even days before the call.

- **Examples:** Reporting a missing person who disappeared a week ago, seeking information about a crime that happened yesterday, requesting assistance with a non-urgent issue like lost property.

- **Action:** While important, these calls are generally lower priority. PSTs gather information, document the details, and direct the caller to appropriate resources like non-emergency police lines or social services agencies.

Differentiating These Event Types

- **Active Listening:** Pay close attention to the caller's description of the situation and the timing of the event. Ask clarifying questions to pinpoint the exact timeframe.

- **Understanding Context:** Consider the nature of the event and its potential for immediate danger or ongoing harm.

- **Prioritizing Effectively:** Allocate resources and support based on the urgency and potential impact of each situation.

By understanding how to differentiate between event types, PSTs can ensure timely and effective response to all situations, making a greater impact in their crucial role.

Specific timelines for these events may vary depending on the PST's agency and location. PSTs should always consult their agency's guidelines for detailed information and protocols.

08.08 Comprehend the Various Types of Emergency Response Modes

Most agencies have policies that dictate the response, as well as laws that are in place that dictate how an officer can respond to a call. The most common responses are:

- **Emergency Response:** Includes utilizing lights and sirens.

- **Non-Emergency Response:** Involves not utilizing lights and sirens.

Figure 18 Coral Springs Police Department

08.09 Understand the Role of the PST During Critical Incidents to Include Active Assailant, Barricaded Subjects, Hostage Situations, Suicide Threats, and Missing or Abducted Persons

The role of the PST is to gather and summarize pertinent information and relay it in a timely manner to the responder. The PST will continue to relay updates as they are received, keeping responder and citizen safety in mind. The PST will understand when radio silence is appropriate. If necessary, the PST will coordinate other resources to include specialized units and mutual aid.

Critical Incidents Definitions

- **Active Assailant:** An armed person who has, or intends to use, any type of weapon to inflict deadly physical force on others and continues to do so while having unrestricted access to additional victims.

- **Hostage Situation:** Involves an individual being held against their will. Keep in mind, the PST might be speaking with the suspect, a hostage, or both.

- **Barricaded Subject:** A subject that has blocked themselves in an area. Keep in mind, the PST might be speaking with the barricaded subject.

- **Suicide:** The act of taking one's own life.

    o **Suicide Attempt:** Deliberately doing harm to oneself that results in injury or the potential for injury or death.

    o **Suicidal Threat:** A threat to take one's own life whether they have the means or ability to carry out the threat.

- **Missing Persons:** Anyone whose whereabouts are unknown, regardless of the circumstances of the disappearance.

- **Abduction:** Wrongfully taking or carrying away of one person by another by force, fraud, or persuasion.

Information Gathering and Communication

- **Active Listening and Assessment:** Remain calm and focused. Actively listen to the caller, gather crucial details, and assess the immediate threat level. Prioritize information like location, weapon presence, and number of people involved.

- **Clear and Concise Communication:** Communicate effectively with responders, relaying the situation accurately and concisely. Avoid jargon and use clear language for efficient information sharing.

- **Maintain Open Communication Lines:** Keep all involved parties, including supervisors and other agencies, informed of the situation's developments. This ensures coordinated response and avoids confusion.

Resource Management and Support

- **Prioritizing and Dispatching Resources:** Based on the threat level and situation specifics, prioritize the dispatch of appropriate resources like police, medical personnel, or specialized units.

- **Providing Emotional Support:** Offer emotional support to the caller, maintaining a calm and reassuring tone. Guide them through any necessary safety measures and provide resources like crisis hotlines or suicide prevention lines if applicable.

- **De-escalation and Negotiation:** Depending on the situation, PSTs may need to assist with de-escalation efforts or relay messages between negotiators and the involved individuals.

Documentation

- **Accurate and Detailed Documentation:** Document all information gathered throughout the call, including caller details, timeline of events, and any specific instructions or actions taken. This serves as a vital record for future reference and potential investigations.

Figure 19 Fort Pierce SWAT

08.10 Understand why some Law Calls May Require EMS and/or Fire Service Response

Law enforcement calls may require EMS and/or fire service response due to several factors; examples include but are not limited to:

- Potential injuries

- Potential loss of life

- Hazardous situations

- Standby

Figure 20 Fort Myers Police / Lee County EMS

08.11 Describe the PST's Role in Officer Safety

The PST's top priority is responder safety. They must put all personal feelings aside and attend to each field unit in a professional and ethical manner. PSTs contribute to officer safety by, but are not limited to:

- Relaying pertinent information, such as weapons and other safety concerns in a timely manner

- Assuring the officer can copy information prior to releasing sensitive information.

- Rebroadcasting pertinent information during crisis incidents

- Keeping track of perimeter locations

- Ensuring the proper number and type of units are sent for back-up.

- Checking on units in a timely manner, according to policy

- Being aware of changes in the officer's tone and pitch

- Following up on officers who do not answer the radio or key the mic without verbally transmitting.

- Utilizing resources to find units who do not respond to the radio (cell phone, GPS/AVL, alert tones, dispatch of units to last known location, etc.)

Figure 21 Florida Highway Patrol

08.12 Understand the Various Types of Law Enforcement Related Broadcast Alerts

PST's role extends beyond answering calls. Understanding broadcast alerts is essential to effectively disseminating critical information.

Amber Hagerman

Emergency Broadcasts

- **AMBER Alert:** Issued for missing children under 18 in imminent danger. Details include the child's description, vehicle information, and suspect description (if available). Requires immediate action and dissemination through all channels.

- **Purple Alert:** Issued for missing adults 18 and older with an intellectual or developmental disability, brain injury, or other physical, mental, or emotional disability (not related to substance abuse) who are at risk of harm. Similar to Silver Alert but emphasizes disability as a factor.

- **Silver Alert:** Issued for missing elderly adults with dementia or cognitive impairments who are at risk of harm. Similar to AMBER Alert but tailored for vulnerable adults.

- **Blue Alert:** Issued for law enforcement officers in imminent danger. Details include the officer's description, suspect information, and last known location. Requires immediate public assistance and vigilance.

Public Safety Broadcasts

- **BOLO:** Issued for wanted suspects, missing persons, or stolen vehicles. Details include suspect or vehicle description, direction of travel, and potential danger level. Requires public awareness and reporting of any sightings.

- **Evacuation Notices:** Issued during natural disasters or HazMat incidents. Inform residents about evacuation routes, shelters, and potential dangers. Requires immediate action and clear communication to avoid panic.

- **Shelter-in-Place:** Issued during active assailant situations or hazardous material releases. Instructs residents to stay indoors, lock doors, and take cover. Requires clear instructions and updates on the situation.

Investigative Broadcasts

- **Witness Requests:** Issued to seek information from the public about a specific crime or incident. Details include time, location, and specific details witnesses can provide. Requires public cooperation and watchful awareness.

- **Suspicious Activity Reports:** Issued to alert the public about suspicious activity patterns or individuals potentially involved in criminal activity. Details include descriptions and potential areas of operation. Requires public vigilance and reporting of suspicious behavior.

PST Role in Broadcast Alerts

- **Accuracy and Clarity:** Ensure all information received is accurate and relayed clearly to the public. Double-check details and avoid using jargon or abbreviations.

- **Timeliness:** Disseminate alerts promptly through all available channels, including radio, social media, and emergency notification systems.

- **Target Audience:** Consider the affected area and tailor the message to reach the relevant population effectively.

- **Continual Updates:** Provide updates as the situation evolves and new information becomes available.

- **Coordination:** Collaborate with other agencies and public information officers to ensure consistent and accurate messaging.

Specific procedures and protocols for handling broadcasts may vary depending on the PST's agency and local guidelines. PSTs should always consult their agency's training materials and guidelines for detailed information.

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End of Section 08 Worksheet

1. A(n) _____ is the threat of bodily harm by a person with the apparent, present ability to carry out the threat while a(n) _____ is the intentional touching or striking of another person in a harmful or offensive manner, without that person's consent.

2. FCIC is an acronym for the _____.

3. List the primary duties of law enforcement officers.

_____

_____

_____

4. The sharing of information by the PST provides officers with _____ information about the situation, _____ details, and potential _____.

5. Knowing the different types and their specialties is crucial for _____ response and accurate _____.

6. List examples of federal law enforcement agencies.

_____

_____

_____

7. Citizen requests for police assistance can be broadly categorized into three main areas:

_____

_____

_____

8. By carefully listening to callers, understanding the underlying context, and skillfully assessing the situation, PSTs can:

_____

_____

_____

9. Identify the following as a criminal or civil complaint:

Robbery	
Breach of Contract	
Assault	
Vandalism	
Property Damage	
Neighbor Dispute	

10. As a PST, your primary focus is on gathering _____, _____, and _____ .

11. List three (3) key reasons PSTs should not offer legal advice.

_____

_____

_____

12. Crossing the line into legal advice violates professional _____ and potentially puts the PST at risk of legal _____.

13. When prioritizing calls, events are classified as either _____,-_____, or _____.

14. To prioritize effectively the PST must allocate resources and support based on the _____ and potential impact of each situation.

15. The two (2) modes of response are _____ and _____.

16. During critical incidents, the role of the PST is to _____

_____

_____

_____

17. Wrongfully taking or carrying away of one person by another by force, fraud, or persuasion is defined as a(n) _____.

18. Potential injuries, potential loss of life, hazardous situations and standby are all situations that may require _____response.

19. The PST's top priority is _____.

20. List the various roles of the PST in broadcast alerts.

_____

_____

_____

21. A(n) _____ is issued for missing children under 18 in imminent danger. Details include the child's description, vehicle information, and suspect description (if available). Requires immediate action and dissemination through all channels.

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Section 09 Objectives

09.0   Understand the basic principles of emergency medical services (EMS) communications. The student will be able to:

09.01   Identify the most commonly used terms in EMS.

09.02   Understand the roles and responsibilities of the emergency medical technician or paramedic and the patient care provided.

09.03   Understand the various transportation methods used.

09.04   Comprehend the various types of emergency response modes.

09.05   Define multi-casualty incident (MCI).

09.06   Describe the role and responsibility of the PST during an MCI.

09.07   Define Trauma Center and Trauma Alert criteria.

09.08   Understand why some EMS calls may require law enforcement and/or fire service response.

09.09   Describe the PST's role in EMS responder safety.

09.10   Understand the PST's role in referral to other resources

09.11   Understand the role of the PST in relation to telecommunicator CPR.

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09.01   Identify the most commonly used terms in EMS.

PSTs should be familiar with terms and acronyms commonly used by EMS agencies. Familiarization of commonly used terms may facilitate effective and timely classification and prioritization of EMS incidents. Some of the most commonly used terms are, but not limited to:

- **Abdominal Thrust (formerly known as the "Heimlich Maneuver"):** An emergency technique that utilizes upward thrusts just below the rib cage, to force air from the lungs and up through the trachea to dislodge a foreign body from a choking person's airway.

- **Airway Obstruction:** A partial or full blocking of the airway. An airway may be obstructed by the tongue, foreign bodies, swelling, trauma, and some infections.

- **ALS:** Emergency medical care provided by paramedics that involve invasive procedures. Paramedics are trained to provide cardiac life support, administer medications, and perform various invasive procedures. Outside the hospital, paramedics provide the highest level of care.

- **Automated External Defibrillator (AED):** A portable device which can analyze the heart rhythm and deliver an electrical shock (when necessary) to restore the heart to a normal rhythm.

- **Blood Pressure (BP):** Pressure of circulating blood against the walls of the blood vessels.

- **BLS:** Emergency medical care is provided by **Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs)** and paramedics that involve non-invasive procedures. EMTs must complete classroom and practical education in trauma care, cardiac and stroke care. They are trained in CPR, advanced first aid, oxygen therapy, AED usage, childbirth, and assisting with basic medication administration.

- **Cardiac Arrest:** The abrupt loss of effective heart function.

- **Cardiac or Cardio:** Pertaining to the heart.

- **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR):** A technique which utilizes rescue breathing and chest compressions when a patient has suffered from cardiac arrest.

- **Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA):** An interruption or severe reduction of oxygen-rich blood supply to a part of the brain. The interruption may be caused by a clot, plaque fragments, or a ruptured or leaking vessel. A CVA is commonly referred to as a stroke.

- **Dead on Arrival (DOA)**

- **Diabetic:** A person whose body is unable to regulate blood sugar. Some symptoms may mimic those of intoxication.

- **Do Not Resuscitate (DNR):** Medical order written by a doctor instructing health care providers not to do CPR if a patient's breathing or heart stops.

- **Edema:** Swelling.

- **Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA):** Estimation of the time a responder or person may arrive at their destination.

- **ETOH**: Intoxication from ethyl alcohol.

- **Gun Shot Wound (GSW):** Wound caused by a gun shot.

- **Hypertension:** High blood pressure.

- **Hyperthermia:** A state of abnormally high internal body temperature.

- **Hypotension:** Low blood pressure.

- **Hypothermia:** A state of abnormally low internal body temperature.

- **Intravenous (IV):** An apparatus used to administer a fluid into a vein.

- **Laceration:** A cut or tear of the skin or flesh.

- **Landing Zone (LZ):** A secure area for landing emergency aircraft.

- **Level of Consciousness (LOC):** The measure of a person's responsiveness to stimuli.

- **Overdose (OD):** An excessive and/or dangerous dose of a drug, whether intentional or accidental.

- **Rescue:** A unit used to respond and/or transport for medical emergencies.

- **Rescue Breathing:** Mouth to mouth resuscitation, a form of artificial ventilation. The act of assisting or stimulating respiration in which a rescuer presses their mouth against that of the victim and blows air into the person's lungs.

- **Respiratory Arrest:** Cessation of breathing due to a failure of the lungs to effectively function.

- **Respiratory:** relating to or affecting respiration or the organs of respiration.

- **Seizure:** A sudden surge of electrical activity in the brain that typically affects how a person acts or feels for a short time. Symptoms may range from dramatic shaking to barely noticeable.

- **Syncope:** Fainting

- **Telecommunicator CPR (T-CPR):** The delivery of high-quality CPR instruction by trained 911 PSTs for acute events requiring CPR. Could also be referred to as Dispatch Directed CPR.

- **Vital Signs:** Measurements of the body's most basic functions. Blood pressure, heart rate (pulse), respiratory rate, and body temperature are the four main vital signs routinely obtained by responders. Vital signs are measured to obtain a quick evaluation of a person's physical condition and are very useful in monitoring or detecting medical issues.
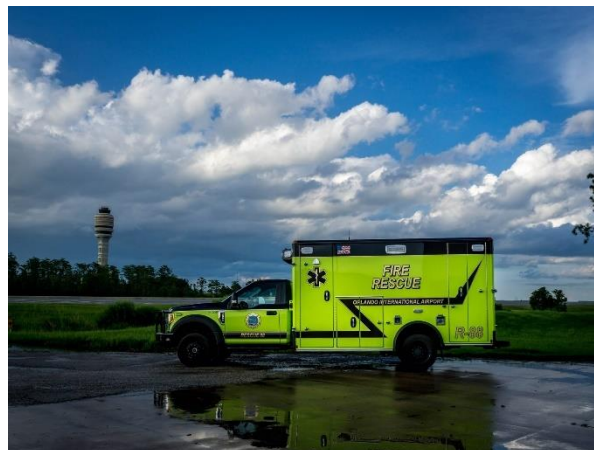
Figure 22 Orlando International Airport Rescue

09.02 Understand the Roles and Responsibilities of the Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic and the Patient Care Provided

Who are EMTs and Paramedics?

- **EMT:** EMTs provide BLS care in pre-hospital settings. Their training includes:

  o First aid and CPR.

  o Oxygen administration.

  o Basic airway management and stabilization.

  o Immobilization techniques.

  o Monitoring vital signs.

  o Patient assessment and reporting.

- **Paramedics:** Paramedics possess advanced medical training and equipment, providing a higher level of care. They not only provide the BLS care, but they additionally can do the following:

  o Administer medications and fluids.

  o Perform advanced airway management, including intubation.

  o Interpret EKGs and monitor cardiac activity.

  o Deliver critical interventions like defibrillation.

  o Manage complex medical emergencies.

Key Responsibilities of EMTs and Paramedics

- **Scene Assessment:** Upon arrival, they assess the scene and patient for potential hazards and prioritize care based on urgency.

- **Patient Assessment:** They conduct a thorough physical and neurological examination, gathering vital information and identifying potential injuries or illnesses.

- **Initiating Care:** Based on their assessment, they provide appropriate medical interventions, including:

  o Airway management (ensuring adequate breathing).

  o Bleeding control.

  o Pain management.

  o Immobilization of injuries.

  o Monitoring vital signs and adjusting care as needed.

09.03 Understand the Various Transportation Methods Used

Transportation Methods

- **ALS:**

    o   Paramedic-staffed transportation units.

    o   Handle critical situations.

    o   Provide advanced medical care on-site.

- **BLS:**

    o   EMT staffed transportation units.

    o   Provide essential medical care.

- **Medical Evacuation (Medevac):**

    o   Helicopters or specialized vehicles.

    o   Swift transportation for critically ill or injured patients.

    o   Access to advanced care facilities.

- **Tiered Response System:**

    o   Matches transportation method to urgency level.

    o   Ensures timely and appropriate care for all patients.

Figure 28 Rescue Unit

Figure 29 Medevac

09.04 Comprehend the Various Types of Emergency Response Modes

Most agencies have policies that dictate the response of how EMTs/Paramedics can respond to a call. The most common responses are:

- **Emergency Response:** Includes utilizing lights and sirens.

- **Non-Emergency Response:** Involves not utilizing lights and sirens.

Figure 23 Gilchrist County Rescue

09.05 Define Multi-Casualty Incident (MCI)

Multi-Casualty Incident (MCI), commonly known as a Mass-Casualty Incident, is an incident where the number and severity of casualties exceeds the capability of the responder's initial resources. Examples of MCIs are, but not limited to:

- Terrorist attacks

- Mass shootings / active assailant

- Natural disasters

- Vehicle crashes with numerous patients

- Aircraft emergencies
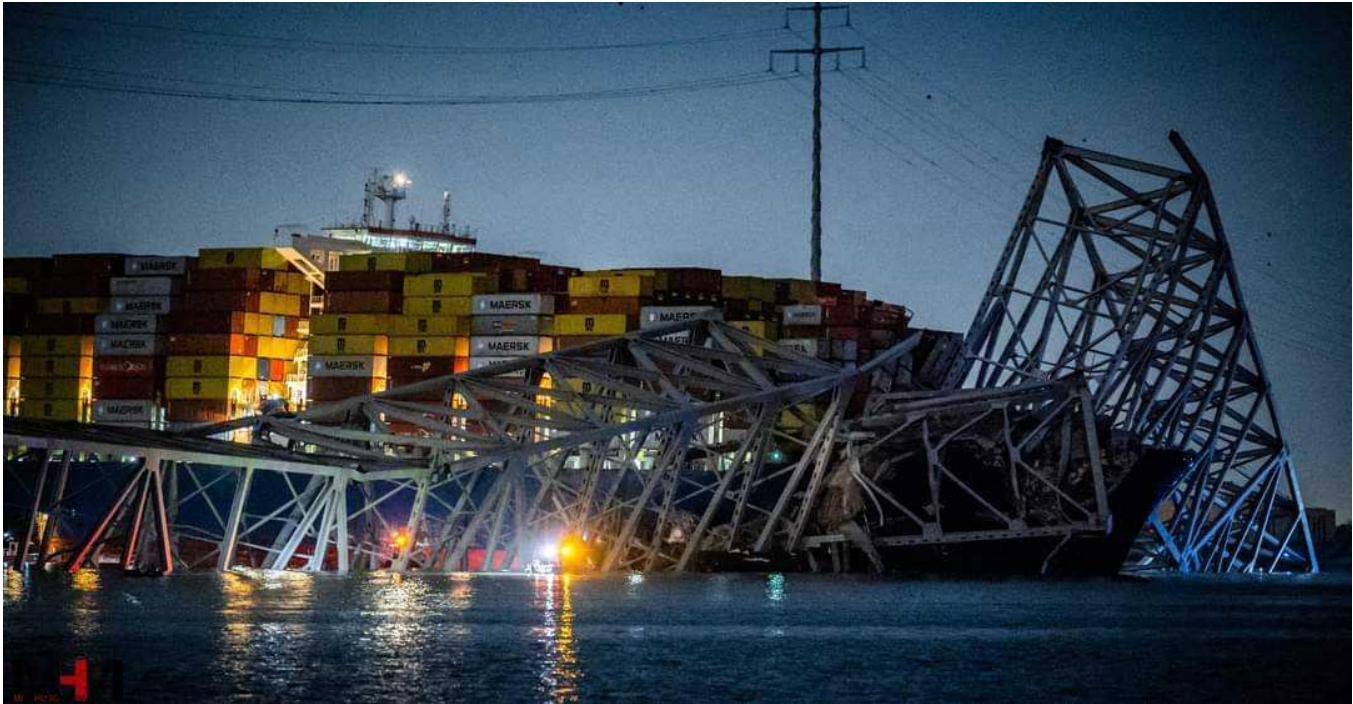
Figure 24 Francis Scott Key Bridge MCI

09.06 Describe the Role and Responsibility of the PST During an MCI

PSTs are the first line of defense in any emergency. But when faced with a **MCI**, the stakes rise significantly. A PST's role transforms from call taker/dispatcher to the coordinator, and their actions can directly impact the survival and well-being of multiple victims.

<u>Understanding the MCI</u>

- A MCI is any event that overwhelms local resources, resulting in numerous casualties requiring immediate medical attention. Examples include natural disasters, explosions, shootings, and transportation accidents.

- Every MCI is unique, requiring adaptability and quick decision-making.

<u>The PST's Critical Responsibilities</u>

- **Rapid Triage:**

    o Gather information quickly and accurately to prioritize calls and allocate resources effectively.

    o Ask concise questions to determine the nature of the incident, number of casualties, and severity of injuries.

    o Utilize triage protocols to categorize victims based on their need for immediate medical attention.

- **Clear Communication:**

    o Maintain clear and concise communication with all responders, ensuring accurate information transfer.

    o Avoid using jargon or abbreviations that may be misunderstood in a high-pressure situation.

    o Relay updates on the situation, resource deployment, and arrival times to keep everyone informed.

- **Resource Mobilization:**

    o Dispatch appropriate resources based on the incident's nature and severity.

    o This includes ambulances, fire departments, law enforcement, and medical personnel.

    o prioritize critical resources like trauma teams and specialized equipment.

- **Scene Management:**

    o Provide instructions to callers within the affected area, guiding them to safety and minimizing further harm.

    o Relay important information to responders arriving on scene, such as potential hazards and entry points.

    o Maintain a calm and professional demeanor, reassuring both callers and responders.

- **Documentation:**

    o Document all calls, and actions taken throughout the incident for future reference and potential investigations.

      o   This includes details like time of calls, reported information, and resource deployments.

Additional Skills for Success

- **Emotional Resilience:** MCIs can be emotionally challenging. Develop coping mechanisms to maintain composure and focus under pressure.

- **Multi-Functional Dexterity:** Juggling multiple calls, coordinating resources, and managing information flow requires exceptional multitasking skills.

- **Critical Thinking:** Analyze situations quickly and make sound decisions based on limited information.

- **Adaptability:** PSTs must be prepared to tailor their approach to the unique circumstances of each MCI.

Understanding the role, developing skills, and maintaining a calm and focused demeanor empowers PSTs to become coordinators for a MCI response. Every action taken contributes significantly to saving lives and easing the impact of this critical situation.

Figure 25 Jacksonville Sheriff's Office MCI

09.07 Define Trauma Center and Trauma Alert Criteria

Trauma Centers

- Hospital units specializing in acute and life-threatening injuries.

- Divided into levels based on resources and capabilities.

- Not all hospitals are trauma centers.

Trauma Alert Criteria

- Method for grading injury severity and determining trauma center transport.

- Final decision by emergency responders, but PSTs should:

    o Use situational awareness skills.

    o Prepare to allocate additional resources.

Conditions Potentially Requiring Trauma Alert

- Falls > 10 feet.

- Severe head, neck, or torso injuries.

- Advanced airway assistance(i.e., intubation).

- Paralysis.

- Other life-threatening conditions.

Additional Notes

- PSTs coordinate resources and facilitate timely transport to appropriate trauma centers.

- Understanding trauma criteria and potential resource needs improves PST preparedness and contributes to optimal patient care.

Figure 26 Trauma One

09.08 Understand why some EMS Calls May Require Law Enforcement and/or Fire Service Response

Law enforcement response may be required with any call where the safety of patients, responders, or the public may be in question. The EMS unit may be requested/required to stage if any of these conditions are present, but not limited to:

- Any call that involves a potential crime (arson, shooting, stabbing, suspicious death, etc.).

- Any call where crowd/traffic control may be required.

- Combative patients.

- Suicide calls/suspected drug overdoses/domestic violence cases.

- Standby with unattended minors.

- To secure a structure if entry was forced in the response.

- Evacuations.

- Any call as defined by local policy.

09.09 Describe the PST's Role in EMS Responder Safety

The PST's top priority is responder safety. They must put all personal feelings aside and attend to each field unit in a professional and ethical manner. PSTs contribute to officer safety by but not limited to:

- Relaying pertinent information, such as weapons and other safety concerns in a timely manner.

- Assuring the emergency responder can copy information prior to releasing sensitive information.

- Rebroadcasting pertinent information during crisis incidents.

- Checking on emergency responders in a timely manner, according to policy.

- Following up on emergency responders who do not answer the radio or key the mic without verbally transmitting.

- Utilizing resources to locate emergency responders who do not respond to the radio (cell phone, GPS/AVL, alert tones, dispatch of units to last known location, etc.).

Figure 27 Brevard County Fire Rescue

09.10 Understand the PST's Role in Referral to Other Resources

The PST plays a crucial role in saving lives and promoting public safety by connecting individuals in crisis to immediate help. By using skills like active listening, PSTs can connect individuals in distress to crucial resources like suicide crisis line (988), poison control, animal control, wildlife resources, and other available resources based on agency demands.

Figure 28 Broward County Fire Rescue

09.11 Understand the Role of the PST in Relation to Telecommunicator CPR

PSTs are far more than just the voice that answers the call, they are the first point of contact. As the 911 first responder, their actions during a cardiac arrest event can mean the difference between life and death. This is where **T-CPR** comes in, and their role becomes nothing short of life saving.

What is T-CPR?

T-CPR involves PSTs providing clear and concise instructions to callers over the phone, guiding them through life-saving chest compressions and rescue breaths until professional help arrives. This crucial intervention can significantly increase the chances of survival for individuals in cardiac arrest.

The PST's Role in T-CPR

- **Lifesaver:** PSTs equip them self with **Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)** training to become qualified in providing T-CPR instructions.

- **Situation Assessment:** PSTs quickly analyze the situation to determine if CPR is needed, asking key questions about the victim's condition and surroundings.

- **Calm Amidst the Chaos:** PSTs must maintain composure and speak clearly with the caller, guiding them through the initial phase of shock and fear.

- **Instructional Expertise:** PSTs provide step-by-step instructions for chest compressions, emphasizing proper hand placement, compression depth, and rate.

- **Breathing Coach:** If appropriate, PSTs guide the caller in delivering rescue breaths effectively, ensuring proper mouth-to-mouth seal and ventilation.

- **Empowering Support:** PSTs encourage the caller throughout the process, reminding them of their crucial role in saving a life.

- **Lifeline:** PSTs remain on the line, providing continuous support and instructions until medical personnel arrive, ensuring a seamless handover.

The Impact of the PST's Role

- **Increased Survival Rates:** Studies show that T-CPR significantly increases the chances of survival for individuals in cardiac arrest.

- **Enhanced Community Safety**: PST's skilled intervention contributes to a safer community by reducing fatalities from cardiac arrest.

- **Lifesaver:** PSTs make a tangible difference in someone's life, leaving a lasting impact on not only the victim but their loved ones as well.

PST Skill Development

- **Embrace EMD Training:** PSTs should dedicate them self to learning EMD protocols and practicing T-CPR scenarios regularly.

- **Refine Communication Skills:** PSTs should continue to work on their ability to communicate clearly, calmly, and effectively under pressure.

- **Empathy is Key:** Develop and utilize empathy to connect with callers in distress and motivate them to act.

- **Stay Prepared:** Every call holds the potential for life-saving intervention. PSTs must remain ready to assume their T-CPR role instantaneously.

Specific T-CPR protocols and procedures may vary depending on the PST's agency and local guidelines. PSTs should always consult their agency's resources and training materials for detailed information.
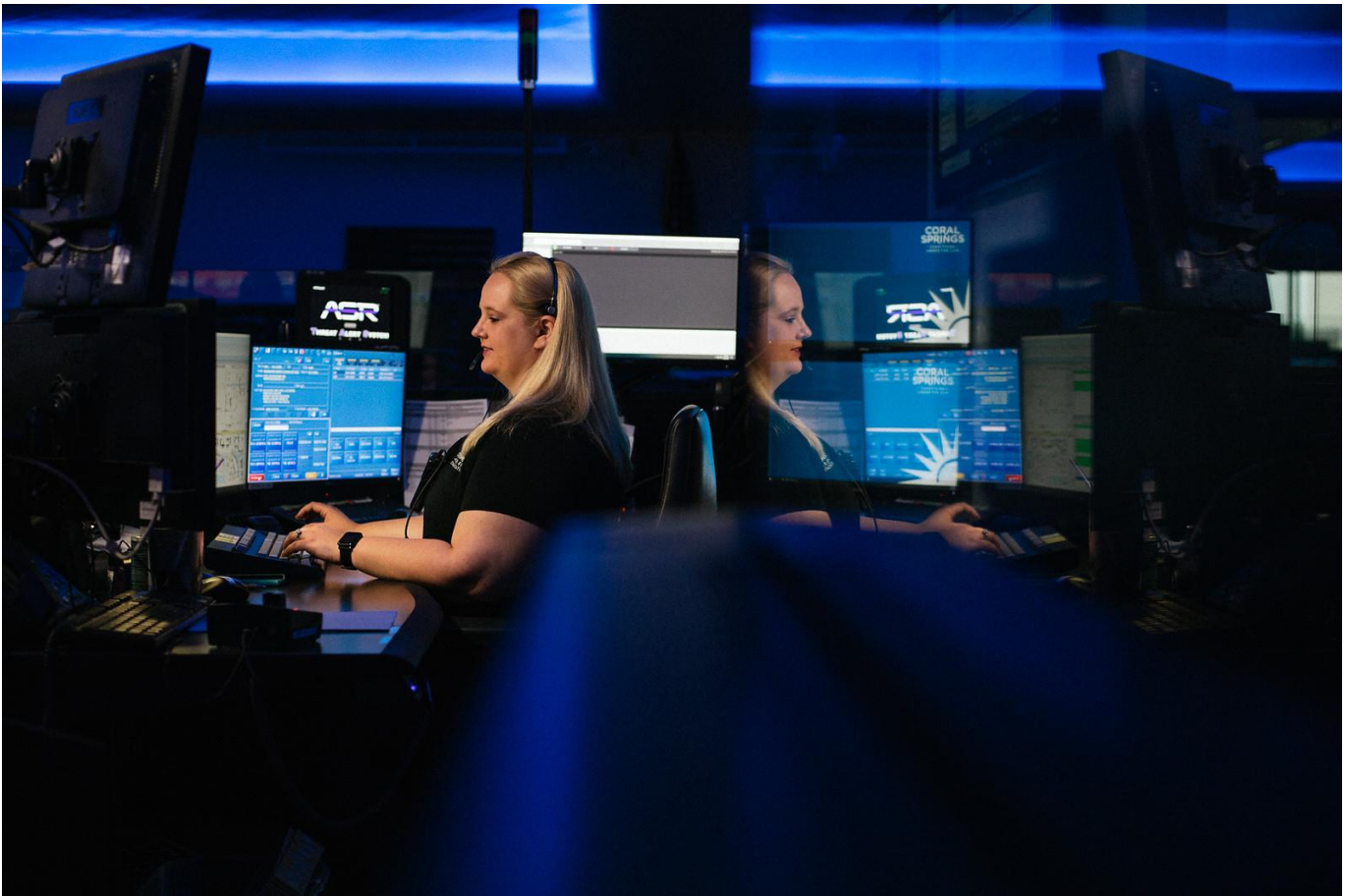
Figure 29 Coral Springs PST

End of Section 09 Worksheet

1. Match commonly used EMS terms:

A. Seizure	D. Do not Resuscitate
B. Syncope	E. Automated External Defibrillator
C. Diabetic	F. Intoxication from Ethyl Alcohol

	Sudden surge of electrical activity in the brain that typically affects how a person acts or feels for a short time. Symptoms may range from dramatic shaking to barely noticeable
	Medical Order written by a doctor instructing health care providers not to do CPR if a patient's breathing or heart stops
	Fainting
	A portable device which has the ability to analyze the heart rhythm and deliver an electrical shock (when necessary) to restore the heart to a normal rhythm
	A person whose body is unable to regulate blood sugar. Some symptoms may mimic those of intoxication
	Intoxication from ethyl alcohol

2. _____ possess advanced medical training and equipment, providing a higher level of care.

3. _____ provide basic life support care in pre-hospital settings.

4. Define Advanced Life Support (ALS):

_____

_____

_____

5. Define Basic Life Support (BLS):

_____

_____

_____

6. Define emergency response and non- emergency response modes.

_____

_____

_____

7. Give two (2) examples of a mass casualty incident.

_____

_____

8. The PST has critical responsibilities during an MCI incident. Explain the importance of rapid triage.

_____

_____

_____

9. List four (4) skills a PST should use during an MCI to ensure success.

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. A method used for grading injury severity and determining trauma center transport is known as trauma alert criteria.
    a) True
    b) False

11. List two (2) conditions that could potentially require a trauma alert.

_____

_____

12. List two (2) reasons law enforcement would respond on an EMS incident.

_____

_____

13. List three (3) roles the PST plays in responder safety.

_____

_____

_____

14. The PST should never refer anyone to other resources.
   a) True
   b) False

15. _____ involves PSTs providing clear and concise instructions to callers over the phone, guiding them through life-saving chest compressions and rescue breaths until professional help arrives. This crucial intervention can significantly increase the chances of survival for individuals in cardiac arrest.

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Section 10 Objectives

10.0   Understand the basic principles of fire services communications. The student will be able to:

10.01   Identify the most commonly used terms in the fire service.

10.02   Understand the roles and responsibilities of fire service responders.

10.03   Define types of fire incidents.

10.04   Comprehend the various types of emergency response modes.

10.05   Know the different types of fire service apparatus used.

10.06   Comprehend the various types of fire response plans.

10.07   Identify basic precautions taken during a hazardous materials incident.

10.08   Identify typical locations and various containers used for the storage, transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

10.09   Understand various resources and notifications required for hazardous materials incidents.

10.10   Describe the PST's role when a mayday is called and overall firefighter safety.

10.11   Understand why some fire calls may require law enforcement and/or EMS response.

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10.01   Identify the Most Commonly Used Terms in the Fire Service

- **Acknowledged / Received:** Acknowledging that units have received the incident.

- **Alarm Levels:** A response matrix which determines the number and type of units that will respond.

- **All Clear:** There are no additional occupants or victims.

- **Arson:** The act of maliciously setting fires or causing an explosion.

- **Automatic Aid:** A pre-determined agreement between multiple agencies to provide mutual assistance for fires and other large-scale emergencies.

- **Bunker Gear:** The protective clothing worn by firefighters for interior structural firefighting.

- **Clear / Available:** Units have completed the assignment and are available for the next incident.

- **Emergency / Priority traffic:** An urgent message which takes precedence over routine radio traffic. Emergency traffic may involve the use of alert tones.

- **Extrication:** An incident in which a trapped victim must be removed from a vehicle or other type of machinery.

- **Fire Out:** Active flames have been extinguished; flare-ups are still possible.

- **Mayday:** Internationally recognized distress signal.

- **Mutual Aid:** Facilitating the sharing of resources between different jurisdictions.

Figure 30 Firefighter in Bunker Gear and PPE

- **On Scene / Arrival:** Units have arrived on the scene of an incident.

- **Personal Alert Safety System (PASS):** An audible alarm which notifies other firefighters when a team member becomes motionless.

- **Primary Search:** A rapid search to locate victims before or during the fire suppression operation.

- **Scene Safety:** Assessing the environment for any potential hazards (weapons, number of people involved, environmental concerns, downed power lines, spilled chemicals, unstable structures, violent patients, etc.)

- **Secondary Search:** A slow thorough search to ensure no occupants were overlooked during the prior search.

- **Self-contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA):** A device which allows firefighters to breathe fresh oxygen while in a hazardous environment. Radio transmissions can be muffled and difficult to understand when the SCBA is used.

- **Situational Awareness:** Being aware of one's surroundings, potential exposures, scene safety, and the wellbeing of the team.

- **Staging:** A location away from the scene where units wait for their assigned position.

- **Under Control:** A status called by incident command when the situation is no longer escalating.

ICS Terms:

- **Personnel Accountability Report (PAR):** Roll call of all units assigned to an incident, usually done with incident command.

- **Alpha:** Front side of a structure as established by incident command.

- **Bravo:** Left side of a structure as established by incident command.

- **Charlie:** Rear side of a structure as established by incident command.

- **Delta:** Right side of a structure as established by incident command.

- **Exposures:** Property or structures in close enough proximity that can be damaged by smoke, heat, or flames.

- **Incident Commander (IC):** The position of authority on a scene. The IC is responsible for all decision-making. It is the only position which must always be staffed.

- **Incident Command Time / Benchmark:** The incident time will be initiated by the PST and the incident commander will respond with a status update. Status updates are provided every ten to twenty minutes, or as defined by the agency.

- **Scene Size-Up:** Initial observations and evaluations from the first responding units.

Figure 38 Hillsborough County Fire Rescue HazMat Decontamination

10.02 Understand the Roles and Responsibilities of Fire Service Responders

Fire Service Responders (firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, inspectors, etc.) respond to emergencies and non-emergencies to protect life and property. As with law enforcement, they are usually the first to respond to a scene and render aid. Fire Service Responders selflessly rush into burning buildings, expose themselves to hazardous conditions, and have a myriad of specialized training which allows them to perform high angle rescues, water rescues, and neutralize HazMat incidents. Some of the main functions of Fire Service Responders are, but not limited to:

- Fight fires

- Supplement EMS personnel by providing ALS and/or BLS care

- Respond to HazMat incidents

- Extrication

- Provide mutual aid

- Respond to requests for assistance

- Provide public education and community relations

- Conduct fire inspections

- Maintain fire hydrants

Figure 31 Miami Dade Fire

10.03 Define Types of Fire Incidents

As a PST, understanding different types of fire incidents is crucial. It equips PSTs to gather accurate information, dispatch appropriate resources, and guide callers during potentially life-threatening situations. The key types of fire incidents include, but are not limited to:

Figure 32 Structure Fire

Structure Fires

- These involve buildings and structures, including residential homes, townhome, and apartments, commercial buildings, and industrial facilities.

Vehicle/Motorized Transportation Fires

- These involve cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, and other motorized transportation.

- Electric vehicles pose additional risk to responding units.

Vegetation/Grass Fires

- These involve wildlands, forests, grasslands, and other outdoor areas.

Other Types

- **Electrical Fires:** Caused by faulty wiring, overloaded circuits, or malfunctioning appliances.

- **Chemical Fires:** Involve hazardous materials and require specialized response procedures.

- **Hazardous Fires:** Large aircraft, train, gas tank farm, and industrial plants such as nuclear power plants, etc.

PST Role in Identifying Types of Fires

- **Active Listening:** Ask open-ended questions to understand the location, nature, and extent of the fire.

- **Key Details:** Identify the type of structure or vehicle involved, any hazardous materials present, and potential occupants.

- **Reporting Accuracy:** Clearly report the fire type for appropriate resource allocation.

Specific procedures and protocols for handling different fire incidents may vary depending on the PST's agency and local guidelines. PSTs should always consult their agency's resources and training materials for detailed information.

10.04 Comprehend the Various Types of Emergency Response Modes

Most agencies have policies that dictate the response of firefighters for a call. The most common responses are:

- **Emergency Response:** Includes utilizing lights and sirens.

- **Non-Emergency Response:** Involves not utilizing lights and sirens.

Figure 33 Coral Springs Fire

10.05 Know the Different Types of Fire Service Apparatus Used

- **Aerial Firefighting:** Helicopters or planes used to drop water or fire retardant in large quantities.

- **Aerials:** An engine with aerial capabilities.

  o **Quints:** Versatile all-in-one firefighting and rescue units.

  o **Platforms:** Specialized rescue and access tools reaching various heights and angles.

  o **Ladders:** Fire engines with built in ladders that allow personnel to climb to reach higher levels.

  o **Towers:** High-reach platforms for specialized scenarios requiring extended reach and capabilities.

- **Air Truck:** A truck which provides additional air supplies to the firefighters on scene.

Figure 42 Ladder

- **Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Vehicle (ARFF):** A specialty vehicle used exclusively for aircraft firefighting.

- **Brush Truck:** Four-wheel drive vehicle that can respond to off-road incidents.

- **Engine:** Basic fire apparatus that has a self-contained pump used for pumping water through hoses to extinguish the fire.

- **Fire Boat:** A boat used for fighting fires on waterways or for providing water rescues.

- **Foam Truck:** Trucks which carry large amounts of foam to fight fires accelerated by airplane fuel.

Figure 34 Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Vehicle (ARFF)

- **Tanker:** A mobile water source.

Figure 35 Tanker

10.06 Comprehend the Various Types of Fire Response Plans

PSTs should know the different types of fire response plans. It allows PSTs to relay clear instructions, coordinate resources effectively, and ultimately support safe evacuation and firefighting efforts during an emergency. Here is a breakdown of essential fire response plans:

<u>Building Evacuation Plans</u>

- Developed for specific buildings (schools, hospitals, offices) outlining evacuation routes and procedures for occupants.

- PSTs should:

    o **Gather Information:** Ask callers about the building type and location to identify the relevant plan.

    o **Relay Instructions:** Guide callers through the pre-determined evacuation routes based on their location within the building.

    o **Alert Emergency Services:** Immediately dispatch firefighters and notify building occupants (if possible) through internal communication systems.

<u>Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)</u>

- Established for communities prone to wildfires, outlining risk mitigation strategies and response protocols.

- PSTs should:

    o **Assess the Situation:** Ask callers about fire location, direction, and potential threats to structures or residents.

    o **Activate Warnings:** Follow established protocols to activate emergency alert systems and notify residents in affected areas.

    o **Coordinate Evacuation:** Work with emergency services to prioritize and facilitate evacuation based on the fire's trajectory and severity.

<u>Facility Emergency Response Plan (FERP)</u>

- Created for industrial facilities handling hazardous materials, detailing specific response procedures for chemical spills, fires, and other emergencies.

- PSTs should:

    o **Identify the Hazard:** Ask callers about the type of hazardous material involved and potential danger zone.

    o **Follow Protocols:** Refer to the facility's FERP or consult with on-site personnel for guidance on evacuation and containment measures.

    o **Dispatch Specialized Units:** Alert emergency services and request specialized HazMat teams if necessary.

Large-Scale Incident Plans

- Designed for events like high-rise fires or MCI involving multiple response agencies.

- PSTs should:

    o **Gather Information:** Quickly assess the situation's scope and identify the lead agency managing the response.

    o **Relay Instructions:** Follow the lead agency's directions and relay clear information to callers about evacuation or sheltering in place.

    o **Act as a Coordinator:** Facilitate communication between emergency services and the public, providing critical updates and maintaining order.

Specific fire response plans and protocols will vary depending on the PST's locality, building types, and potential hazards. PSTs should ensure that they consult their agency's resources and guidelines for detailed information.

Figure 45 Miami Dade Structure Fire

10.07 Identify Basic Precautions Taken During a Hazardous Materials Incident

During HazMat incidents, 911 first responders become a critical part in a complex response, both assisting emergency responders and safeguarding the public.

<u>Understanding the Challenges</u>

- Hazardous Materials are substances that can be solids, liquids, or gases. These substances can cause harm to people, the environment, and property if not handled properly.

- HazMat incidents require meticulous preparation. Responders don specialized gear for protection, leading to potentially time-consuming preparation procedures.

- Both PSTs and field personnel must prioritize safety, constantly evaluating risks and taking necessary precautions.

<u>Key Precautions for All Personnel</u>

- **Identify the Hazard:** If possible, gather information about the material involved without jeopardizing anyone's safety.

- **Evacuate and Warn:** Advise callers to avoid contact with the substance and evacuate if necessary.

- **Know the Wind:** Be aware of wind speed and direction, as this information is crucial for establishing command posts and containment zones.

<u>Additional Precautions for Field Units</u>

- **Establish Zones:** Set up clear perimeters for evacuation and safety zones, keeping everyone upwind and out of low-lying areas.

- **Isolate the Area:** Secure the scene without entering it directly, preventing further contamination and directing people away.

- **Avoid Contact:** Maintain a safe distance from the substance and implement procedures to avoid any personal contact.

- **Decontamination:** Establish decontamination areas and protocols to prevent secondary contamination from un-decontaminated individuals.

- **Evacuation Procedures:** Be prepared to evacuate the area if necessary, following established protocols and ensuring everyone's safety.

10.08 Identify Typical Locations and Various Containers Used for the Storage, Transport, Use, or Disposal of Hazardous Materials

As a PST, recognizing potential locations and containers for hazardous materials becomes vital in assessing risk and guiding responders when handling emergency calls.

Typical Locations

- Industrial Facilities

- Commercial Establishments

- Homes and Farms

- Transportation Conveyances

Common Container Types

- Drums

- Totes

- Cylinders

- Tanks

- Pallets

Identifying Signs

- **Labels and Placards:** Look for diamond-shaped placards on vehicles or hazardous material labels displaying symbols, hazard class information, and product names.

- **Color Codes:** Specific colors on tanks, drums, and cylinders often indicate the type of hazard held within (e.g., red for flammable materials, yellow for oxidizers).

- **Physical Characteristics:** Notice unusual smells, fumes, or leaks, potentially indicating a hazardous material release.

There are many other types of containers and every location has some type of hazardous material within it. PSTs should gather as much information as possible from callers about the container type, location, suspected material, and any observed dangers. By developing their knowledge of typical locations and container types, PSTs become essential emergency responders in identifying potential hazardous material threats, contributing to a swift and coordinated response that protects both the public and emergency responders themselves.

10.09 Understand Various Resources and Notifications Required for Hazardous Materials Incidents

HazMat incidents pose unique challenges for PSTs. Beyond the usual call-taking skills, PSTs need to be familiar with a diverse range of resources and notification procedures to ensure effective response and public safety.

Recognizing a HazMat Incident

- **Key Indicators:** Learn to identify keywords and phrases that suggest a potential HazMat incident, such as "chemical spill," "gas leak," "explosives," "strange odor," or "unidentified container."

- **Information Gathering:** Actively listen and obtain details like the type of material, container size, location, and any immediate dangers observed.

- **Hazardous Material Database Access:** PSTs should be familiar with available databases that provide information on specific hazardous materials, including their properties, risks, and recommended response protocols.

Resource Activation

- **Emergency Response Teams:** PSTs should understand the different types of HazMat response teams in their area and their capabilities (e.g., fire department HazMat units, specialized private contractors).

- **Medical Personnel:** Coordinate with EMS and medical facilities for potential exposure cases or decontamination needs.

- **Environmental Agencies:** Notify environmental agencies of spills or other environmental concerns.

- **Public Utilities:** Contact utility companies if infrastructure like gas lines or power grids are involved.

Notification Procedures

- **Alerting Emergency Responders:** Dispatch appropriate HazMat response teams and other necessary resources promptly.

- **Public Evacuation:** Follow established protocols for initiating public evacuations based on the severity of the situation and wind direction. Utilize available notification systems like sirens, radio broadcasts, and text alerts.

- **Media and Public Information:** Coordinate with public information officers to release accurate and timely information to the public while maintaining operational security for emergency responders.

- **State Warning Point:** PSTs should ensure that the State Warning Point is notified for incidents that fit the notification criteria, in line with their agency's procedures.

10.10 Describe the PST's Role When a Mayday Is Called and Overall Firefighter Safety

A "Mayday" call is a firefighter's desperate cry for help, a signal that their life is in immediate danger. When these precious seconds strike, the PST becomes the lifeline, the bridge between the chaos and coordinated rescue. PSTs must be prepared to act decisively and effectively in these critical moments.

Recognizing the Mayday

- **Listen for Distress:** Be hyper-aware of changes in tone, urgency, and broken transmissions that might indicate a Mayday. Words like "Mayday," "urgent," "down," or any mention of being trapped or injured are red flags.

- **Immediate Action:** Do not wait for confirmation. The moment the PST suspects a Mayday, they should activate emergency protocols instantly.

Gathering Information

- **Calm and Clear:** Maintain a calm and clear voice while questioning the firefighter. Ask concise, direct questions to gather crucial details:

    o **Location:** Where is the firefighter in trouble? Inside a burning building? Lost in the woods?

    o **Nature of Distress:** What is the immediate threat? Fire, collapse, falling debris, entanglement?

    o **Injuries:** Are they injured? Unconscious? Trapped?

- **Active Listening:** Pay attention to background noises that might provide clues about the situation (e.g., crackling flames, rushing water).

Initiating Rescue

- **Dispatch:** Alert the appropriate fire department units and any necessary additional resources (e.g., EMS, technical rescue teams) immediately.

- **Communication Relay:** Act as a relay between the firefighter and responding units. Clearly relay all gathered information, updates, and the firefighter's location.

Maintaining Situational Awareness

- **Track the Call:** Monitor the radio traffic and updates from responding units. Keep the firefighter informed about the progress of their rescue.

- **Document Everything:** Accurately document the entire Mayday call, including the time, location, details of the distress, and actions taken. This information is crucial for post-incident analysis and improvement.

Firefighter Safety

- **Prevention is Key:** Beyond Mayday response, understand the importance of firefighter safety protocols. PSTs should become familiar with common hazards firefighters face and preventive measures like proper gear, training, and risk assessment.

The PST's actions during a Mayday call can make the difference between life and death. Stay calm, focused, and follow established protocols to ensure the swiftest and most effective response. Every second counts. Do not hesitate to escalate the situation and request additional resources if needed. The well-being of firefighters is paramount. The PST's role extends beyond immediate rescue to providing emotional support and advocating for their safety.

Figure 46 Hillsborough County Fire

10.11 Understand why some Fire Calls may Require Law Enforcement and/or EMS Response

Law enforcement response may be required with any call where the safety of patients, responders, or the public may be in question.

EMS response may be required with any call where the health or well-being of patients, responders, or the public may be in question.

Figure 36 Water Rescue

End of Section 10 Worksheet

1. What is a location away from the scene where units wait for their assigned position called? _____

2. What is the Internationally recognized distress signal? _____

3. List three (3) functions of firefighters:

_____

_____

_____

4. Match fire incident types:

A. Structure Fire	**D.** Chemical Fire
B. Vegetation Fire	**E.** Electrical Fire
C. Vehicle Fire	

	Involves wildlands, forests, grasslands, and outdoor areas
	Involves buildings, including residential homes, commercial buildings, industrial facilities.
	Involves cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats
	Caused by faulty wiring, overload circuits, or malfunctioning appliances.
	Involves hazardous materials and requires specialized response procedures.

5. Define emergency response and non- emergency response modes:

_____

_____

6. What are trucks that carry large amounts of foam to fight fires accelerated by airplane fuel called?

_____

7. What is a mobile water source called?

_____

8. Define the fire response plan for Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPS) and the PSTs role.

_____

_____

9. Define large- scale incident plans and the PST's role.

_____

_____

10. During a hazardous material incident responders should be aware of wind, _____ ____ _____, as this information is crucial for establishing command posts and containment zones.

11. List three (3) typical locations hazardous materials could be stored:

_____

_____

_____

12. Define a mayday.

_____

_____

13. What kind of information should be gathered by the PST during a mayday?

_____

_____

14. Explain why law enforcement may be required on a fire call.

_____

_____

_____

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Section 11 Objectives

11.0   Understand the basic principles of emergency management functions, homeland security, and disaster operations. The student will be able to:

11.01   Understand the roles and responsibilities of the local, state, and federal emergency management operations.

11.02   Identify the various types of terrorist threats and disasters.

11.03   Explain the roles and responsibilities of the Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT).

11.04   Identify the different types of public notification resources utilized by local, state, and federal agencies.

11.05   Identify examples of incidents that are reported to the county and state watch office or warning point.

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11.01 Understand the Roles and Responsibilities of The Local, State, and Federal Emergency Management Operations

PSTs are the first point of contact during emergencies. But understanding the bigger picture of emergency management is crucial for effective coordination and resource allocation.

<u>Local Level</u>

- **Emergency Responders:** Fire departments, police, EMS, and other local agencies are the frontline defense, providing immediate response and lifesaving actions.

- **Emergency Management Agency (EMA):** Local EMAs coordinate local resources, assess the situation, initiate evacuations, and activate recovery plans.

- **PIOs:** Local PIOs communicate critical information to residents through press releases, social media, and emergency alert systems.

<u>State Level</u>

- **State Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** State EOCs coordinate disaster response across the state, providing resources and support to local agencies.

- **State Agencies:** Agencies like the National Guard, Department of Transportation, and Environmental Protection Agency are mobilized for specialized tasks like search and rescue, infrastructure repairs, and environmental cleanup.

- **State Funding and Recovery:** State government allocates funds for disaster relief, coordination with FEMA, and overseeing long-term recovery efforts.

<u>Federal Level</u>

- **FEMA:** FEMA plays a vital role in coordinating national response to major disasters, providing resources, funding, and technical assistance to state and local governments.

- **Other Federal Agencies**: Depending on the nature of the disaster, agencies like the Department of Defense, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Environmental Protection Agency can be involved in providing specialized resources and expertise.

- **National Policy and Guidance:** FEMA sets national standards and protocols for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery, guiding the overall response system.

11.02 Identify the Various Types of Terrorist Threats and Disasters

ECCs must be equipped to handle a range of terrorist threats and disasters.

- **Terrorism** is defined as the unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons. Terrorist threats encompass various scenarios, including bombings, chemical or biological attacks, radiological incidents, cyberterrorism targeting critical infrastructure, and active assailant situations.

    o **Cyberterrorism:** Any premeditated, politically motivated attack against information, computer systems, computer programs, and data which results in violence against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents (hacking).

    o **Eco-terrorism:** The use or threat of the use of violence of a criminal nature against people or property by an environmental-oriented group for environmental-political reasons.

    o **Narcoterrorism:** A subset of terrorism in which terrorist groups participate directly in the cultivation, manufacture, transportation, or distribution of controlled substances and the monies derived from these activities.

    o **Nationalist Terrorism:** Terrorism used to seek self-determination which may range from gaining greater autonomy to establishing a completely independent sovereign state.

    o **Nuclear Terrorism:** Using nuclear materials as a terrorist tactic with the intent to cause massive devastation; attacking nuclear facilities, purchasing, or building nuclear weapons, and dispersing radioactive materials.

    o **State Terrorism:** States that use force or the threat of force without declaring war to terrorize citizens and achieve a political goal.

- Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, wildfires, tornadoes, and severe storms pose significant challenges.

- Public health emergencies, like pandemics and disease outbreaks, require a coordinated response to protect communities.

- Technological disasters, such as nuclear incidents or large-scale industrial accidents, require specialized expertise for effective management.

- Transportation accidents, ranging from plane crashes to train derailments, necessitate swift response and coordination with multiple agencies.

- Mass gatherings, like concerts or sporting events, may present security concerns.

- Environmental incidents, such as hazardous material spills or pollution events, require immediate attention.

In addressing these diverse threats and disasters, the ECC plays a pivotal role in coordinating emergency responses, disseminating critical information, and ensuring effective communication among various agencies and emergency responders. Training, preparedness, and the ability to adapt to evolving situations are essential for ECC to fulfill their crucial role in safeguarding public safety.

11.03 Explain the Roles and Responsibilities of the Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT)

Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) are groups of trained PSTs sent to disaster zones to bolster overwhelmed ECCs. They handle surging call volumes, dispatch resources, and keep emergency response flowing by maintaining crucial communication in crisis situations.

Essential Skills

- **Positive Interpersonal Communication and Leadership Skills:** This includes active listening, clear and concise communication, and the ability to build rapport with diverse individuals.

- **Flexibility and Energy:** PSTs must be adaptable to changing situations and able to work long hours under pressure.

- **Multitasking and Problem-Solving Skills:** PSTs must be able to handle multiple tasks simultaneously and find creative solutions to unexpected challenges.

- **Assertiveness:** PSTs need to be able to confidently communicate their needs and priorities while maintaining a positive demeanor.

- **Teamwork:** Collaboration is crucial within TERT teams and with other agencies.

- **Above-Average Performance:** PSTs should have a consistent history of strong performance in their current role.

Technical Skills

- **Knowledge of Public Safety Emergency Response Operations and Equipment:** This includes familiarity with dispatch protocols, incident command systems, and relevant technology.

- **Adaptability:** PSTs must be able to adjust to new policies, procedures, equipment, and work environments.

- **Resilience:** PSTs should be able to handle challenging conditions, including lack of sleep, limited resources, and harsh environments.

Additional Skills

- **Cultural Diversity:** TERT teams operate in diverse settings, so cultural sensitivity and understanding are essential.

- **Documentation Skills:** Accurate and detailed record-keeping is crucial for effective response and recovery.

These are just some of the key qualifications for TERT team members. Specific requirements may vary depending on the program and the member's role.

11.04 Identify the Different Types of Public Notification Resources Utilized by Local, State, and Federal Agencies

With a diverse landscape of notification resources at local, state, and federal levels, navigating the system can be challenging.

<u>Local Level</u>

- **EAS:** National system that broadcast warnings and vital information through television, radio, and cable providers, reaching a wide audience instantly. PSTs can initiate EAS activations in their area for immediate threats like sever weather or HazMat incidents.

- **WEA:** Text messages and audible alerts sent to mobile phones within designated areas for imminent threats like severe weather, active assailant incidents, or AMBER Alerts. PSTs can trigger WEAs through authorized channels.

- **Outdoor Warning Sirens:** These sirens serve as a last resort for immediate threats in specific areas. PSTs may activate sirens in coordination with other response protocols.

- **Social Media:** Local government and emergency agencies often utilize social media platforms to share updates, instructions, and resources during emergencies. PSTs can monitor and contribute to these channels.

- **Reverse 911:** This system allows targeted calls to be made to specific geographic areas, alerting residents of dangers or instructions. PSTs may be involved in initiating or assisting with reverse 911 calls.

<u>State Level</u>

- **State Emergency Alert System (SEAS):** This system operates similarly to the EAS but at the state level, providing broader reach for emergencies impacting multiple regions. PSTs may collaborate with state agencies to activate SEAS.

- **State Agency Websites and Social Media:** State agencies like departments of transportation, public health, and environmental protection often share information and updates through their websites and social media platforms. PSTs can stay informed and relay relevant information to the public.

<u>Federal Level</u>

- **FEMA Website and Social Media:** FEMA provides national updates and resources during large-scale disasters through its website and social media channels. PSTs can access this information and share it with their communities.

- **National Weather Service (NWS):** The NWS website and social media provide detailed weather forecasts, warnings, and watches. PSTs can stay informed about weather-related threats and share information with the public.

11.05 Identify Examples of Incidents that are Reported to the County and State Watch Office or Warning Point

The **County and State Watch Office (WO)** acts as a central hub for information, coordinating resources and alerting agencies during critical events. As a PST, knowing which incidents require escalation to this level is crucial for maximizing response effectiveness.

<u>Natural Disasters and Severe Weather</u>

- **Major Storms:** Hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, and other large-scale weather events with significant potential for widespread damage or impact on multiple jurisdictions.

- **Flooding:** Severe flooding events affecting multiple areas or critical infrastructure like dams or levees.

- **Wildfires:** Large-scale wildfires threatening communities or requiring coordinated resource mobilization across agencies.

- **Earthquakes:** Major earthquakes or potential precursors like tremors requiring widespread public alerts and coordinated response planning.

<u>Public Safety and Security Threats</u>

- **Suspicious Activity or Potential Threats:** Reports of suspicious packages, unattended devices, or activities near critical infrastructure that could involve terrorism or sabotage.

- **Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents:** Suspected or confirmed releases of hazardous materials with potential for widespread impact.

- **Active Assailant or MCIs:** Unfolding events requiring immediate and coordinated deployment of emergency responders.

- **Large-scale Power Outages or Infrastructure Failures:** Major infrastructure failures like widespread power outages affecting critical services or large populations.

<u>Other Critical Events</u>

- **Transportation Accidents:** Major accidents involving planes, trains, commercial motor vehicles, or hazardous materials with regional or national impact.

- **Civil Unrest or Large-Scale Protests:** Large-scale demonstrations or civil unrest with potential for public safety risk or widespread disruption.

- **Public Health Emergencies:** Outbreaks of infectious diseases or significant public health threats requiring coordinated surveillance and response.

- **Cybersecurity Incidents:** Cyberattacks on critical infrastructure or widespread computer network disruptions affecting multiple jurisdictions.

End of Section 11 Worksheet

1. Match the agency type:

Environmental Protection Agency		**A**. Local Agency
Fire Department		**B**. Federal Agency
FEMA		**C**. State Agency

2. PSTs are the first point of contact during emergencies.
   a) True
   b) False

3. Match the threat or disaster type:

Hazardous Material Spill		**A**. Public Health Emergency
Plane Crash		**B**. Environmental Incident
Pandemic		**C**. Transportation Accident
Hurricane		**D**. Terrorist Threat
Chemical Attack		**E**. Natural Disaster

4. A group of trained PSTs sent to disaster zones to bolster overwhelmed ECCs, who handle surging call volumes, dispatch resources, and keep emergency response flowing by maintaining crucial communication in crisis situations are known as:
   a) Telecommunication Emergency Response Taskforce
   b) Telecommunication Emergency Disaster Taskforce
   c) Telecommunication Emergency Team
   d) Telecommunication Emergency Incident Team

5. List three (3) types of notification systems used to keep the public informed during emergencies.

_____

_____

_____

6. The system that allows targeted calls to be made to specific geographic areas, alerting residents of dangers or instructions is known as _____.

7. The _____ system operates similarly to the EAS but at the state level, providing broader reach for emergencies impacting multiple regions.

8. The _____ acts as a central hub for information, coordinating resources and alerting agencies during critical events.

9. _____ or _____ with potential for public safety risk or widespread disruption.

Section 12 Objectives

12.0   Comprehend health and wellness of the PST. The student will be able to:

12.01   Understand the importance of health, wellness, and resiliency of the PST.

12.02   Identify and define stressors unique to PSTs.

12.03   Identify signs and symptoms of stress and compassion fatigue.

12.04   Identify best practices for stress management and health/wellness.

12.05   Understand the various resources available to the PST to maintain health and wellness.

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12.01 Understand the Importance of Health, Wellness, and Resiliency of the PST

The critical role of PSTs comes with immense pressure. High-stress situations, life-or-death decisions, and emotionally charged calls are all part of the job. In this demanding environment, prioritizing the mental and physical well-being of PSTs is not just a privilege, it is a necessity. It is about protecting our 911 first responders and ensuring they continue to serve our communities effectively.

<u>The Impact of Chronic Stress</u>

Constant stress can take a toll on anyone, but for PSTs, the stakes can be even higher. Burnout, job performance decline, and decreased job satisfaction are all potential consequences of neglecting their own well-being. Recognizing the signs of chronic stress, such as fatigue, cynicism, and changes in sleep patterns, is crucial for early intervention.

<u>Building a Support System</u>

Supporting the mental health of PSTs requires a multi-pronged approach:

- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Providing access to confidential counseling and mental health resources empowers individuals to seek help without stigma.

- **Peer Support Groups:** Refers to initiatives where trained colleagues, members of self-help organizations and others meet, in person or online, as equals to give each other connection and support on a reciprocal basis.

- **Crisis Teams:** Provided through trained and carefully selected peer supporters and licensed mental health professionals who specialize in trauma or crisis.

- **Stress Management Training:** Equipping PSTs with techniques like mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and **Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** allows them to manage stress more effectively.

- **Coping Mechanism Strategies:** Sharing resources and practicing healthy coping mechanisms within a supportive peer group can build resilience and encourage open communication about challenges.

<u>Physical and Emotional Balance</u>

Addressing the physical aspects of well-being is equally important:

- **Adequate Rest Breaks:** Ensuring proper scheduling and breaks throughout the day prevents fatigue and allows for emotional and mental recharging.

- **Healthy Habits:** Encouraging healthy eating, regular exercise, and sleep hygiene practices promote overall health and contribute to emotional well-being.

<u>Cultivating Resilience</u>

Resilience, the ability to bounce back from challenges, is a key attribute for all PSTs. Fostering a positive work culture that acknowledges their contributions and celebrates successes plays a significant role in building resilience. Implementing peer support programs, encouraging open communication, and creating a sense of belonging within the team can significantly enhance resilience and strengthen the entire unit.

The Bigger Picture

Investing in the health, wellness, and resilience of PSTs goes beyond individual well-being. It directly impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response systems. By ensuring our 911 first responders are well-equipped to handle the demands of their job, we ensure the safety and well-being of the communities they serve.

Making the health, wellness, and resilience of PSTs a priority is not just the right thing to do, it is an investment in the safety and security of our communities. By providing the necessary support systems, resources, and training, we can empower them to reach their full potential and continue serving our communities with dedication and strength.

12.02 Identify and Define Stressors Unique to PSTs

The dedication and bravery of PSTs are the cornerstone of our emergency response system. But their dedication comes at a cost. Unlike many occupations, PSTs navigate a world of constant high stakes, emotional intensity, and limited control.

<u>Understanding the Pressures</u>

- **Constant Exposure to Trauma:** PSTs serve as the frontline listeners to human suffering, handling calls detailing accidents, violence, and life-or-death situations. Witnessing these events daily, without seeing the resolutions, can lead to a sense of powerlessness and amplify stress.

- **Decision-making under Pressure:** With limited information and tight timeframes, PSTs must make critical decisions, provide life-saving instructions, and coordinate emergency responses – all without the benefit of visual cues. The responsibility of allocating resources adds another layer of pressure.

- **Emotional Toll of Empathy:** The constant immersion in human suffering and the lack of closure inherent in their work can lead to emotional fatigue and compassion fatigue. PSTs can absorb the emotional weight of these calls, impacting their mental and emotional health.

- **Impact of Shift Work:** Irregular hours and night shifts disrupt sleep patterns and overall health, making PSTs particularly vulnerable to sleep deprivation and its consequences.

- **Work-Life Balance Challenges:** The 24/7 nature of emergency dispatch often means working holidays, weekends, and nights, disintegrating traditional work-life balance, and potentially leading to social isolation.

- **Maintaining Professional Detachment:** Navigating high-stakes situations while maintaining professionalism during intense and emotional calls presents a unique challenge. Balancing empathy with the necessary detachment to perform effectively can be emotionally taxing.

<u>Building Resilience</u>

Addressing these unique stressors requires a comprehensive approach:

- **Mental Health Resources**: Providing access to confidential counseling, trauma-informed therapy, and Employee Assistance Programs is crucial for emotional well-being.

- **Stress Management Training:** Equipping PSTs with techniques like mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and CBT empowers them to manage stress effectively.

- **Peer Support Programs:** Fostering a supportive network of colleagues through peer support programs allows PSTs to share experiences, offer advice, and build a sense of camaraderie.

- **Organizational Strategies:** Implementing shift rotation plans, optimizing scheduling, and offering flexible work arrangements can help mitigate the impact of shift work on PSTs' health.

- **Promoting Work-Life Balance:** Encouraging healthy boundaries, providing opportunities for breaks and relaxation, and offering resources for childcare and eldercare can help PSTs maintain a healthy work-life balance.

- **Training in Emotional Detachment:** Equipping PSTs with techniques for emotional separation and self-care strategies specific to their job can help them navigate the emotional aspects of their work more effectively.

Recognizing the unique stressors 911 first responders face and providing comprehensive support systems is not just a matter of well-being, it is a matter of ensuring they can continue serving our communities with dedication and strength. By acknowledging the challenges, creating a supportive environment, and equipping them with the tools they need, we can empower them to navigate the emotional tide and continue their vital work with resilience and well-being.

12.03 Identify Signs and Symptoms of Stress and Compassion Fatigue

PSTs are exposed to trauma, high-pressure decision making, and emotionally charged calls which can lead to stress and compassion fatigue. Recognizing the signs and providing timely support is vital for their well-being and continued effectiveness.

Identifying the Signs and Symptoms of Stress

Stress, a natural response to demanding situations, manifests in both physical and emotional ways:

- Physical Symptoms

- Emotional Changes

- Cognitive Impairments

- Behavioral Changes

## Identifying the Signs and Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

Beyond stress, PSTs are vulnerable to compassion fatigue, a depletion of empathy and emotional resources. Look for these signs:

- **Emotional Exhaustion:** Feeling emotionally drained and depleted, with little energy left to care.

- **Reduced Empathy:** Difficulty connecting emotionally with callers, leading to emotional numbness.

- **Apathy:** Indifference towards the well-being of others and decreased motivation for the job.

- **Desensitization:** Viewing callers as objects rather than individuals, resulting in a sense of detachment.

- **Decreased Job Satisfaction:** Loss of interest in the job, increased cynicism, and a negative outlook.

Building a Support System

Unrecognized and unaddressed, stress and compassion fatigue can lead to burnout, diminished job performance, and emotional challenges. However, there is hope:

- **Supportive Work Environment:** Fostering a culture of understanding, open communication, and peer support allows PSTs to feel heard and supported.

- **Mental Health Resources:** Providing access to confidential counseling, Employee Assistance Programs, and trauma-informed therapy is crucial for emotional well-being.

- **Stress Management Training:** Equipping PSTs with stress management techniques like mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and CBT empowers them to manage stress effectively.
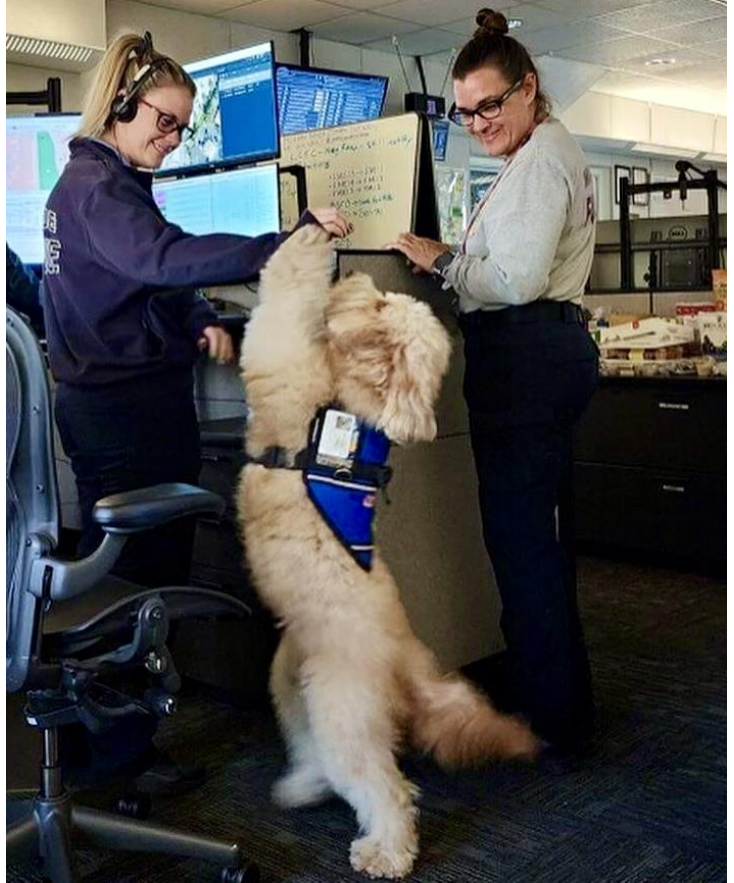
- **Peer Support Programs:** Establishing peer support networks allows PSTs to share experiences, offer advice, and build a sense of camaraderie and understanding.

Prioritizing Well-Being

Investing in the mental well-being of PSTs is not just a compassionate gesture; it is an investment in our safety and security. By recognizing the signs of stress and compassion fatigue, promoting a supportive environment, and offering access to effective resources, we can ensure that PSTs can continue serving our communities with dedication, resilience, and well-being.

As 911 first responders, PSTs deserve to be heard, supported, and equipped to thrive in the face of adversity. It is important to ensure they have the tools they need to stay strong, healthy, and resilient.

12.04 Identify Best Practices for Stress Management and Health/Wellness

PSTs' roles come at a cost, as they navigate constant stress, emotional demands, and high-pressure situations. To safeguard their well-being and ensure continued effectiveness, a proactive approach to stress management is crucial.

Empowering with Knowledge

- **Comprehensive Training Programs:** Equip PSTs with the tools they need to navigate stress. Incorporate training in coping strategies like mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and emotional intelligence. Build awareness of mental health resources and encourage proactive utilization.

- **Peer Support Networks:** Foster a sense of community and understanding through peer support programs. These confidential spaces allow PSTs to share experiences, offer advice, and find solace in knowing they are not alone.

Prioritizing Breaks

- **Regular Relief:** Do not let stress simmer; encourage and facilitate regular breaks throughout shifts. Even short breaks can significantly boost mental well-being and enhance focus, leading to improved job performance.

Strengthening Access

- **Open Doors to Mental Health:** Remove the stigma and ensure easy access to counseling services, EAPs, and mental health professionals. Make accessing support seamless and confidential, encouraging early intervention for those facing emotional challenges.

Balancing Life's Demands

- **Work-Life Harmony:** Recognize the unique challenges of shift work in emergency dispatch. Implement scheduling practices that promote a healthy work-life balance, allowing PSTs to prioritize personal time and recharge outside of work.

Investing in Physical Wellness

- **Holistic Approach:** Encourage physical well-being by integrating initiatives like exercise programs, nutrition education, and wellness checks. A healthy body contributes to a resilient mind, ready to face the demands of the job.

Calming the Storm

- **Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** Equip PSTs with practical tools for managing stress in real-time. Train them in mindfulness, deep breathing exercises, and other relaxation techniques to navigate challenging moments with greater composure.

By implementing these best practices, public safety organizations can create a supportive environment that prioritizes the mental and physical well-being of their PSTs. This investment in their resilience translates to enhanced job satisfaction, improved performance, and a stronger emergency response system for our communities.

12.05 Understand the Various Resources Available to the PST to Maintain Health and Wellness

PSTs are the calm voices guiding us through chaos. But their dedication comes at a cost. Constant stress, high-pressure decision making, and emotionally charged calls can take a toll. Recognizing this, leading organizations offer a diverse range of resources to ensure their well-being and continued effectiveness.

<u>A Safety Net of Support</u>

- **EAPs:** These confidential havens offer counseling and support for issues like stress, anxiety, depression, and family matters. EAPs empower PSTs to address personal and work-related challenges without stigma, ensuring a balanced emotional life.

- **Peer Support Programs:** Finding strength in shared experiences, peer support programs connect PSTs with colleagues who understand their unique challenges. This supportive network allows them to share coping strategies, vent frustrations, and find solace in knowing they are not alone.

- **Mental Health Services:** From individual counseling to group therapy sessions, access to mental health professionals is crucial. Addressing stress, trauma, and emotional fatigue through these services allows PSTs to heal and build resilience for the long haul.

<u>Investing in 911 First Responders</u>

- **Training Programs:** Equipping PSTs with the skills to navigate high-pressure situations is key. Training in stress management, mindfulness, and self-care techniques empowers them to manage stress effectively and protect their mental well-being.

- **Health and Wellness Initiatives:** From fitness classes to nutrition education, these programs promote physical health as a foundation for emotional well-being. Regular check-ups and preventive care through occupational health services further ensure PSTs are physically fit to take on their demanding roles.

<u>Work-Life Harmony</u>

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Recognizing the unique challenges of shift work, flexible schedules and sufficient rest periods play a crucial role in preventing burnout and promoting a healthy work-life balance. This allows PSTs to de-stress, recharge, and spend time with loved ones, returning to work refreshed and resilient.

Public safety organizations that commit to the well-being of their PSTs are not just investing in individuals, they are investing in the safety and security of our communities. By providing a combination of these resources and fostering a supportive environment, we empower our PSTs to navigate their challenging jobs with strength, resilience, and renewed well-being. Let us ensure they have the tools they need to thrive, for their strength reflects ours, and their well-being is integral to the well-being of us all.

End of Section 12 Worksheet

1. What are the signs of chronic stress?

_____

_____

_____

2. Supporting a PST's mental health requires a multi-pronged approach including:

_____

_____

_____

3. What are some pressures PSTs face?

_____

_____

_____

4. Opportunities to build resiliency for the PST includes:

_____

_____

_____

5. What are signs of compassion fatigue?

_____

_____

_____

6. Investing in the mental well-being of a PST is not just a compassionate gesture; it is an investment in our own _____ and _____.

7. What is an EAP?

---

8. Investing in the PST's resilience translates to:

Glossary / Acronyms:

Abdominal Thrust (formerly known as the "Heimlich Maneuver"): An emergency technique that utilizes upward thrusts just below the rib cage, to force air from the lungs and up through the trachea to dislodge a foreign body from a choking person's airway.

Abduction: Wrongfully taking or carrying away of one person by another by force, fraud, or persuasion.

Acknowledged / Received: Acknowledging that units have received the incident.

Advanced Life Support (ALS): Emergency medical care provided by paramedics that involve invasive procedures.

Aerial Firefighting: Helicopters or planes used to drop water or fire retardant in large quantities.

Aerials: An engine with aerial capabilities.

Air Truck: A truck which provides additional air supplies to the firefighters on scene.

Aircraft Rescue Firefighting Vehicle (ARFF): A specialty vehicle used exclusively for aircraft firefighting.

Airway Obstruction: A partial or full blocking of the airway. An airway may be obstructed by the tongue, foreign bodies, swelling, trauma, and some infections.

Alarm Levels: A response matrix which determines the number and type of units that will respond.

All Clear: There are no additional occupants or victims.

Alpha: Front side of a structure as established by incident command.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Ensures equal access to 911 services for everyone.

Arson: The act of maliciously setting fires or causing an explosion.

Assault: The threat of bodily harm by a person with the apparent, present ability to carry out the threat.

Attempt to Locate (ATL): Initiation of efforts to find and identify a person or object.

Audible Alarm: A visual cue or tone to direct attention to the source.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED): A portable device which can analyze the heart rhythm and deliver an electrical shock (when necessary) to restore the heart to a normal rhythm.

Automatic Aid: A pre-determined agreement between multiple agencies to provide mutual assistance for fires and other large-scale emergencies.

Automatic Call Distribution (ACD): Distributes incoming calls among available PSTs, ensuring efficient workload management and minimizing caller wait times.

Automatic Location Identification (ALI): The automatic identification and transmission of the caller's approximate location to the ECC.

Automatic Number Identification (ANI): The automatic identification and transmission of the phone number associated with an incoming call to the ECC. This includes both landline and mobile numbers.

AVL: Automatic Vehicle Locator

Basic Life Support: Emergency medical care provided by **Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs)** and paramedics that involve non-invasive procedures. EMTs must complete classroom and practical education in trauma care, cardiac and stroke care. They are trained in CPR, advanced first aid, oxygen therapy, AED usage, childbirth, and assisting with basic medication administration.

Battery: The intentional touching or striking of another person in a harmful or offensive manner, without that person's consent.

Be on the Look Out (BOLO): Establish, maintain, and/or broadcast a description of persons or property of interest.

Blood Pressure (BP): Pressure of circulating blood against the walls of the blood vessels.

Bravo: Left side of a structure as established by incident command.

Brush Truck: Four-wheel drive vehicle that is capable of responding to off-road incidents.

Bunker Gear: The protective clothing worn by firefighters for interior structural firefighting.

Burglary: Unlawfully entering a dwelling, structure, or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense inside.

CA: Communications Assistant

Cardiac Arrest: The abrupt loss of effective heart function.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR): A technique which utilizes rescue breathing and chest compressions when a patient has suffered from cardiac arrest.

CBRN: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear

CBT: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA): An interruption or severe reduction of oxygen-rich blood supply to a part of the brain. The interruption may be caused by a clot, plaque fragments, or a ruptured or leaking vessel. A CVA is commonly referred to as a stroke.

Charlie: Rear side of a structure as established by incident command.

Civil Law: Disputes between individuals or organizations where one party seeks compensation for the damages or injuries caused by the other.

CIU: Crisis Intervention Unit

CJIS: Criminal Justice Information System; A division of the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)** that provides information about people's criminal history, stolen property, criminal organizations/activities, and other law enforcement related data to qualified entities.

Clear / Available: Units have completed the assignment and are available for the next incident.

Compassion: Involves displaying empathy, offering reassurance, and showing genuine concern.

Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD): A centralized platform to manage and track emergency calls, allocate resources, and disseminate critical information.

Criminal Law: Offenses against society, where the government prosecutes individuals who violate established laws. The willful, negligent, or reckless violation of criminal law or statute which can result in sanctions in the form of imprisonment.

CWPP: Community Wildlife Protection Plan

Cyber Stalking: To communicate words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communications, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Cybersecurity: The state of being protected against the criminal or unauthorized use of electronic data, or the measures to achieve this.

Cyberterrorism: Any premeditated, politically motivated attack against information, computer systems, computer programs, and data which results in violence against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents (hacking).

CYMBALS: Color; Year, Make/Model, Body; Additional Descriptors; License/Tag; State

Delta: right side of a structure as established by incident command

Diabetic: A person whose body is unable to regulate blood sugar. Some symptoms may mimic those of intoxication.

Disturbance: A verbal argument which has not yet resulted in physical contact.

DNR: Do Not Resuscitate

DOA: Dead on arrival

DOT: Department of Transportation

Driving Under the Influence (DUI): Operating a vehicle while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

E911: Enhanced 911

EAP: Employee Assistance Program

EAS: Emergency Alert System

ECC: Emergency Communications Center

ECC: Emergency Communications Center

Eco-terrorism: The use or threat of the use of violence of a criminal nature against people or property by an environmental-oriented group for environmental-political reasons.

EMA: Emergency Management Agency

EMD: Emergency Medical Dispatch

Emergency / Priority Traffic: An urgent message which takes precedence over routine radio traffic.

Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS): Trailers equipped with various communication technologies like radio, FIN, VoIP, satellite, and cellular, providing versatile communication options in the field.

Emergency Response: Includes utilizing lights and sirens.

Emergency: Serious, unexpected events with potential for injury, loss of life, or property damage.

EMS: Emergency Medical Services

EMT: Emergency Medical Technician

Engine: Basic fire apparatus that has a self-contained pump used for pumping water through hoses to extinguish the fire.

EOC: Emergency Operations Center

ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival

Ethics: The principles of conduct that govern a person's actions and behavior.

ETOH: Intoxication from ethyl alcohol.

Exposures: Property or structures in close enough proximity that can be damaged by smoke, heat, or flames.

Extrication: An incident in which a trapped victim must be removed from a vehicle or other type of machinery.

Fact: A statement that can be objectively verified or proven to be true. It is based on observable, concrete evidence and is not subject to interpretation.

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigations

FCC: Federal Communications Commission

FDLE: Florida Department of Law Enforcement

FDOH: Florida Department of Health

Felony: A serious crime punishable by death or imprisonment in a state penitentiary or in correctional facilities for at least one day over a year.

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

FERP: Facility Emergency Response Plan

Field Information Report (FIR): A short narrative completed by field units after contact with citizens.

Fight: A physical altercation.

Fire Alarms: Audible and visual notifications tell occupants that emergency conditions exist.

Fire Boat: A boat used for fighting fires on waterways or for providing water rescues.

Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC): The state's central repository for criminal records, histories, and hot files.

Florida Interoperability Network (FIN): This internet-based system bridges the gap between agencies with incompatible radio systems, enabling real-time communication during critical situations.

Foam Truck: Trucks which carry large amounts of foam to fight fires accelerated by airplane fuel.

Forest Fire / Wildfire: A non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland.

Fraud: Wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in personal or financial gain.

Gone on Arrival (GOA): No longer on scene when responder arrived.

GPS: Global Positioning System

GSW: Gunshot Wound

Hazardous Materials: Substances that can be solids, liquids, or gases. These substances can cause harm to people, the environment, and property if not handled properly.

HazMat: Hazardous Materials

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA): A federal law that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding confidential and **Protected Health Information (PHI).**

Hypertension: High blood pressure

Hyperthermia: A state of abnormally high internal body temperature.

Hypotension: Low blood pressure

Hypothermia: A state of abnormally low internal body temperature

IC: Incident Commander

Incident Command (IC) Time/Benchmark: The incident time will be initiated by the PST and the incident commander will respond with a status update. Status updates are provided every ten to twenty minutes, or as defined by the agency.

Incident Command System (ICS): An organizational structure for managing incidents of all sizes and complexities. It establishes clear roles and responsibilities for personnel involved in the response, ensuring coordinated and effective action.

Incident Commander (IC): The position of authority on a scene. The IC is responsible for all decision-making. It is the only position which must always be staffed.

Inference: A conclusion or interpretation drawn from available evidence or facts. It involves making deductions or educated guesses based on the information at hand.

Internal Affairs (IA): A division of a law enforcement agency that investigates citizen complaints of police misconduct and handles internal disciplinary matters.

Intravenous (IV): An apparatus used to administer a fluid into a vein.

IP: Internet Protocol

K9: Canine Units

Laceration: A cut or tear of the skin or flesh.

Ladders: Fire engines with built in ladders that allow personnel to climb to reach higher levels.

Landing Zone (LZ): A secured area for landing emergency aircraft.

LC: Logistics Chief

Level of Consciousness (LOC): The measure of a person's responsiveness to stimuli.

Mayday: Internationally recognized distress signal.

Medevac: Medical Evacuation

Misdemeanor: A criminal offense that is punishable by a term of imprisonment in a county correctional facility for up to a year.

Missing Person: Not necessarily believed to be in physical danger at the time of their disappearance.

MLTS: Multi-Line Telephone Services

MNS: Mass Notification Systems

Multi Casualty Incident (MCI): An incident where the number and severity of casualties exceeds the capability of the responder's initial resources.

Mutual Aid Radio Cache (MARC): A set of portable towers and repeaters that can be deployed to disaster zones or other locations with limited communication, ensuring responders stay connected.

Mutual Aid: Facilitating the sharing of resources between different jurisdictions.

NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness

Narcoterrorism: A subset of terrorism in which terrorist groups participate directly in the cultivation, manufacture, transportation, or distribution of controlled substances and the monies derived from these activities.

National Crime Information Center (NCIC): The national hub for criminal justice information, encompassing all fifty states, U.S. territories, and Canada.

Nationalist Terrorism: Terrorism used to seek self-determination which may range from gaining greater autonomy to establishing a completely independent sovereign state.

NextGen: Also known as NG911, the "Next Generation" of 911, which includes receiving texts, videos, and images.

NIMS: National Incident Management System

NLETS: International Justice and Public Safety Network

Non-Emergency Response: Involves not utilizing lights and sirens.

Non-Emergency: An unexpected situation that does not require immediate response.

Nuclear Terrorism: Using nuclear materials as a terrorist tactic with the intent to cause massive devastation; attacking nuclear facilities, purchasing, or building nuclear weapons, and dispersing radioactive materials.

NWS: National Weather Service

OC: Operations Chief

On Scene / Arrival: Units have arrived on the scene of an incident.

Overdose (OD): An excessive and/or dangerous dose of a drug, whether intentional or accidental.

PC: Planning Chief

Performance Standards: A set of expectations or guidelines that define the level of performance required for a specific job or task.

Personal Alert Safety System (PASS): An audible alarm which notifies other firefighters when a team member becomes motionless.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR): Roll call of all units assigned to an incident, usually done with incident command.

PHI: Protected Health Information

Platforms: Specialized rescue and access tools reaching various heights and angles.

Primary Search: A rapid search to locate victims before or during the fire suppression operation.

Professionalism: The outward appearance, behavior, and attitudes that reflect a commitment to excellence and a dedication to serving others.

Project 25 (P25): Radio protocols with built-in mutual aid features and a dedicated 700 MHz frequency designed to enable cross-agency communication regardless of the internal radio frequencies used.

PSAP: Public Safety Answering Point

PST: Public Safety Telecommunicator

Public Information Officer (PIO): Responsible for managing public communication and media relations during critical incidents and large-scale events.

Quality Assurance (QA): A method which provides PSTs and supervisors with the opportunity to regularly monitor work performance and take corrective action in the form of training.

Quints: Versatile all-in-one firefighting and rescue units.

Radio Silence: Maintain silence during dangerous incidents (bomb threats, active assailants, etc.) to conceal responder location.

Real Time Text (RTT): A technology that allows text to be sent immediately as it is created through wireless handsets that use IP-based technology on networks that support RTT.

Rescue: A unit used to respond and/or transport for medical emergencies.

Resisting Arrest: Knowingly and willfully resisting, obstructing, or opposing a law enforcement officer engaged in the execution of legal process, or lawful execution of a legal duty.

Respiratory Arrest: Cessation of breathing due to a failure of the lungs to effectively function.

Restraining Order: An injunction or protective order issued by the court which requires one person to stop harming another.

Robbery: An intentional and unlawful taking of property from a person through the use of force, violence, assault, or threat.

Scene Safety: Assessing the environment for any potential hazards (weapons, number of people involved, environmental concerns, downed power lines, spilled chemicals, unstable structures, violent patients, etc.)

Scene Size-Up: Initial observations and evaluations from the first responding units.

SEAS: State Emergency Alert System

Secondary Search: A slow thorough search to ensure no occupants were overlooked during the prior search.

Seizure: A sudden surge of electrical activity in the brain that typically affects how a person acts or feels for a short time. Symptoms may range from dramatic shaking to barely noticeable.

Self-contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA): A device which allows firefighters to breathe fresh oxygen while in a hazardous environment. Radio transmissions can be muffled and difficult to understand when the SCBA is used.

Sexual Battery: Any non-consensual touching of the intimate parts of another. This could include union with the sexual organ of another; or oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by someone or some object.

Silent Alarm: May be used to conceal a call for help from a suspect.

Situational Awareness: Being aware of one's surroundings, potential exposures, scene safety, and the wellbeing of the team.

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT): A group of responders trained to deal with unusually dangerous or violent situations and having special, or superior, weapons more powerful than standard issue.

SRO: School Resource Officer

Staging: A location away from the scene where units wait for their assigned position.

Stalking: A person who maliciously and repeatedly follows, harasses, or cyber stalks another person.

State Terrorism: States that use force or the threat of force without declaring war to terrorize citizens and achieve a political goal.

Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS): A high-coverage radio system accessible to participating agencies, offering reliable communication across vast areas.

Syncope: Fainting

Tanker: A mobile water source.

TCC: Telematic Call Center

TDD: Telecommunications Device for the Deaf

Telecommunicator CPR (T-CPR): The delivery of high-quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction by trained 911 PSTs for acute events requiring CPR. Could also be referred to as Dispatch Directed CPR.

Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT): Groups of trained PSTs sent to disaster zones to bolster overwhelmed ECCs.

Terrorism: The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons.

Theft: The unauthorized removal or concealment of property.

Towers: High-reach platforms for specialized scenarios requiring extended reach and capabilities.

Trespass: Willfully remaining on a property without authorization.

TRS: Telecommunication Relay Service

TTY: Teletypewriter

Under Control: A status called by incident command when the situation is no longer escalating.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP): Allows call over the internet.

Warrant: A written order issued by authority of the state and commanding the seizure of the person named.

WEA: Wireless Emergency Alerts

WO: Watch Office

Writ of Bodily Attachment: A warrant issued as a result of civil contempt.

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