

**NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES**



QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES

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The following are guidelines set forth to assure the quality performance and service of the employees of the **Northampton County Emergency Management Services**. The guidelines herein will be followed according to the standards outlined by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Acts and local Standard Operating Procedures which govern the operation of the 911 Center.

The purpose of a Quality Assurance program is to promote statewide adherence to established 911 communication center goals and procedures, facilitate the learning process for 911 personnel, and provide an outline for continuous improvement of the overall 911 operation. (4 PA. Code Chapter 120d.) This program will help define any trends, positive or negative, in performance and assist in identifying any need for commendation, additional training or modification of policies or procedures to improve the operation of the **Northampton County Emergency Management Services**.

Definitions relative to Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance Action: An action taken by a quality assurance reviewer or 911 center supervisor after the occurrence of a quality assurance review of a telecommunicator in order to correct or improve job performance deficiencies identified by the quality assurance review. The quality assurance action may require the telecommunicator to take additional training courses or instruction, be subject to a second quality assurance review process outside of the normal timeframes identified in 4 PA. Code Chapter 120d, or be subject to disciplinary or other personnel actions deemed appropriate by the 911 communications center supervisor or reviewer.

Quality Assurance Review: A quality assurance process that is used to assess the job performance of a telecommunicator.

Catastrophic Loss: An incident wherein there is a loss of three or more human lives and/or property damage or loss exceeding seventy-five thousand dollars.

(4 PA. Code Chapter 120d)

Timeframes and Procedures for Quality Assurance reviews

A random sampling of 911 communications center calls will be reviewed on a recurring basis. Each telecommunicator will be subject to a minimum of one call-taking quality assurance review per month. Each review will be completed in the same manner. A review form for each quality assurance review will be completed.

A quality assurance review will be completed for all incidents involving a catastrophic loss. It shall be the Shift Supervisor's responsibility to notify the Deputy Director for Quality Assurance of any and all incidents involving catastrophic loss in writing so a quality assurance review can be completed.

A minimum of 2% of the total 911 calls per week shall be subject for completion of a quality assurance review. A minimum of ten quality assurance reviews will be completed per week where there are less than 72 emergency calls received per day on average.

A minimum of twice yearly, the quality assurance reviewer will review a segment of each telecommunicator's radio activity in order to determine adherence to PEMA and FCC standards and regulations, as well as the 911 Center's **Standard Operating Procedures**. This review will contain a minimum of three transmissions on an emergency dispatched call. A quality assurance review form will be completed for each segment reviewed.

Dates selected for a random quality assurance review should not exceed five days after the incident. Telecommunicators shall receive the results of the review not more than five days after the review. Incidents which are subject to review after a complaint is received will not be included as random quality assurance reviews.

All quality assurance reviews completed for each telecommunicator will be kept on file for one year. These reviews will be used to support the development and assessment of goals and expectations on the telecommunicator's yearly performance evaluation.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW STANDARDS

CALL-TAKING/TELEPHONE PERFORMANCE

Telephone audits will consist of the following:

- ✓ Answers the telephone quickly and correctly (within 10 seconds, 90% of the time)
- ✓ Asks and verifies the location of the incident
- ✓ Obtains the callback telephone number
- ✓ Determines the problem/complaint and selects/assigns the appropriate nature/response
- ✓ Accomplishes the above tasks quickly and effectively (within 60 seconds, 90% of the time)
- ✓ Obtains all pertinent information and makes updates accordingly, and keeps caller on the line when indicated
- ✓ Controls the conversation, explains actions, employs calming techniques
- ✓ Exhibits a professional demeanor and is courteous and tactful
- ✓ Demonstrates proper documentation of information in CAD or manual cards
- ✓ Completes **Emergency Medical Dispatch** on required incidents
- ✓ Abides by the 911 Center Standard Operating Procedure for Call-taking

DISPATCHING/RADIO PERFORMANCE

Dispatching and Radio performance reviews will consist of the following:

- ✓ Dispatches the appropriate police, fire, EMS, or Emergency Management unit(s) within the prescribed time frame (Priority 1 calls within 60 seconds; Priority 2 calls within 90 seconds; Priority 3 calls within 120 seconds, 90% of the time)
- ✓ Provides all pertinent information to responding units and relays updates accordingly
- ✓ Answers radio transmissions promptly
- ✓ Speaks clearly and concisely
- ✓ Listens attentively and understands each message
- ✓ Exhibits echoing technique and announces times with transmissions when appropriate
- ✓ Exhibits a timely response to requests from field units
- ✓ Maintains a professional demeanor
- ✓ Abides by applicable FCC rules and regulations and the appropriate 911 Center Standard Operating Procedures

The continual quality assurance reviews will result in standardized operations and provide continual improving performance and service to the citizens, visitors, and agencies of the County of Northampton. These random reviews will also result in the assurance that telecommunicators are exemplifying qualities emphasized in their training including, empathy, cooperation, and compassion to those we serve. Telecommunicators exhibiting behavior which blatantly defeats the mission of this agency will be subject to disciplinary action.

Statistical data relating to the random reviews will be maintained in order to track trends and highlight areas which are handled consistently well, or that may require additional training or review of policies and procedures in order to improve the quality of service provided, with consideration to PEMA requirements.

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