

**4 PA. CODE CHAPTER 120d.**  
**911 PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS**

**§ 120d.101. Purpose.**

(b) The purpose of this chapter is to implement Section 3(a)(8) of the act (35 P.S. §7011-7021) which was added by Section 3(a)(8) of the act of February 12, 1998 (P.L. 64 No. 17) to establish standards for performance review and quality assurance programs for 911 emergency communications systems operating in the Commonwealth. The quality assurance standards contained in this chapter are designed to:

- (i) Promote statewide adherence to established 911 communications center goals and procedures.
- (ii) Facilitate the learning process for 911 communications center personnel.
- (iii) Provide a framework for the continuous improvement of the overall operation of 911 communications centers in the Commonwealth.

(c) These procedures will also provide the operational standards that are needed to ensure that 911 communications centers consistently provide the best possible emergency communications service to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

**§120d.102. Definitions.**

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the content clearly indicates otherwise:

*Act* – The Public Safety Emergency Telephone Act (35 P.S. §§ 7011-7021).

*Agency* – The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency

*Call-Taking*—The act of answering 911 calls from the public and obtaining the information necessary to dispatch a public safety unit, such as fire, police, medical and rescue, to the reported location of the emergency.

*Catastrophic loss*—The loss of three or more human lives and/or property damage or loss exceeding seventy-five thousand dollars.

*911 Communications center*—A 911 Public Safety Answering Point or PSAP; also referred to as a remote dispatch point in this chapter. A communications center may be operated by a county, city, borough or township.

*Day*—Refers to an actual 24-hour day, not a “working day”.

*Dispatching*—The act of alerting and directing the response of public safety units to the desired location.

*Emergency dispatched calls*—Emergency incidents to which a 911 communications center dispatches public safety units.

*Emergency medical dispatch protocols*—A system or program that enables patients to be assessed and treated via telephone by utilizing current accepted emergency medical dispatch standards.

*Performance appraisal*—A yearly written evaluation of a telecommunicator’s job performance measured against established 911 communications center expectations and standards.

*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 this section, 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.

*Radio activity*—The act of dispatching and communicating on a public safety radio frequency.

*Standard Operating Procedures*—A set of policies and procedures developed and adopted by a 911 communications center to aid in directing the daily operations of the telecommunications staff.

*Telecommunicator*—A full-time or part-time 911 communications center call-taker or emergency dispatcher.

### **§120d.103. Scope.**

(a) The quality assurance reviews set forth in this chapter will be employed in accordance with the time frames contained in Section 120d.104. These reviews will be used to evaluate the performance of a telecommunicator’s duties. In addition to measuring individual performance, these reviews will aid in

determining whether the processes used by the telecommunicators are functionally efficient on a regular basis.

(b) The quality assurance provisions set forth in this chapter shall apply to all 911 communications centers operating in this commonwealth and to all remote dispatch points operated by a city, borough, or township of the commonwealth which are included within the 911 communications system identified in a county 911 plan. Each county, city, borough, or township that operates a 911 communications center or remote dispatch point included in a 911 county plan shall be responsible for implementing the quality assurance provisions of this chapter as they apply to their employees.

#### **§120d.104. Timeframes and procedures for quality assurance reviews.**

(a) A random sampling of 911 communications center calls will be reviewed on a recurring basis by the quality assurance reviewer to ensure compliance with the quality assurance review standards set forth in section 120d.105, as well as those outlined in the standard operating procedures of each 911 communications center or remote dispatch point. If needed, additional quality assurance reviews will be performed in order to ensure that each telecommunicator receives a minimum of one call-taking quality assurance review per month. All calls, whether voice or TDD/TTY, will be reviewed in the same manner. The quality assurance reviewer shall complete a review form for each quality assurance review. All incidents involving catastrophic loss shall be included in the quality assurance review process.

(b) A minimum of ten call-taking quality assurance reviews shall be performed each week in 911 communications centers and remote dispatch points that dispatch, on average, 72 or less emergency dispatch calls per day. Those 911 communications centers and remote dispatch points that average more than 72 emergency dispatch calls per day shall perform a weekly quality assurance review of two percent of the total 911 calls that they process per week. The weekly quality assurance review process may assume a monthly review process to accommodate those 911 centers that may have personnel and/or scheduling constraints. However, a monthly quality assurance review process may not last for a period of time greater than 90 days without the written permission of the agency. In addition, the minimum number of quality assurance reviews required by this subsection shall remain unchanged during such a monthly review process.

(c) Twice a year, the quality assurance reviewer will review a segment of each telecommunicator's radio activity in order to determine adherence to the 911 communications center's or remote dispatch point's dispatch standards. At a minimum, each segment of the telecommunicator's radio activity that is monitored shall contain three emergency dispatched calls. The quality assurance reviewer will complete a quality assurance review form for each segment reviewed. The review form will be supplied by the agency.

(d) The quality assurance reviewer (or reviewers) will be designated by the director of each 911 communications center or remote dispatch point. The reviewer(s) shall be at a supervisory level with a minimum of three years experience in the field of emergency telecommunications. Internal standards shall be established to ensure that the quality assurance review process is executed with consistency and objectivity.

(e) In order to provide optimum feedback, the date selected for a quality assurance review will not exceed five days prior to the review. Telecommunicators shall receive the results of their quality assurance review within five days of the review. Copies of each quality assurance review will be retained on file at the 911 communications center for one year. Actual transcripts or recordings of phone calls made to and from a 911 communications center or remote dispatch point are not public records pursuant to the Right To Know Act (65 P.S. § 66.1 – 66.4) and shall not be included in the text of any quality assurance review.

(f) The quality assurance reviews will be used to support the development and assessment of goals and expectations on the telecommunicator's yearly performance appraisal. The quality assurance reviews will also be used to identify areas of the telecommunicator's job performance which may require additional or supplemental training, and aid in determining whether any processes of the 911 communications center or remote dispatch point require modification or change.

(g) All telecommunicators, whether they are part-time or full-time employees of the 911 communications center or remote dispatch point, shall be subject to this quality assurance review process.

(h) Any quality assurance actions that are initiated in response to the results of a quality assurance review will be documented and placed in the 911 communications center's or remote dispatch point's records.

#### **§120d.105. Quality assurance review standards.**

(a) Call-Taking (Telephone Performance): The following telecommunicator performance standards will be checked by the quality assurance reviewer during each quality assurance review:

- (2) Answers the telephone quickly and correctly (within 10 seconds of the call, 90% of the time)
- (3) Asks and verifies the location of the incident or emergency.
- (4) Obtains the callback phone number from the person making the call.
- (5) Determines the nature of the incident or emergency and selects and assigns the appropriate response to the incident.
- (6) Accomplishes the above tasks quickly and effectively (within 60 seconds of the receipt of the phone call, 90% of the time)
- (7) Obtains all pertinent information and makes updates accordingly and keeps the caller on the line until all required information is obtained.
- (8) Controls the conversation with the caller, explains all possible emergency actions and employs calming techniques when required.

- (9) Exhibits a calm and professional demeanor at all times and acts in a courteous and tactful manner.
- (10) Demonstrates proper documentation of all information received on call-taker screens and/or cards.

(b) Dispatching (Radio Performance): The following telecommunicator radio performance standards will be checked by the quality assurance reviewer during each quality assurance review:

- (1) Dispatches the appropriate police, fire, or EMS units within the prescribed time frame established by the 911 emergency communication center's or remote dispatch point's standard operating procedures.
- (2) Provides all pertinent information to the responding police, fire, and/or EMS units and relays updated information about the incident or emergency to the responding units.
- (3) Answers all radio transmissions promptly.
- (4) Speaks clearly and concisely to the responding units.
- (5) Listens attentively and understands each message that is received from the responding units.
- (6) Exhibits a timely response to requests from field units.
- (7) Maintains a calm and professional demeanor at all times.

(c) Emergency Medical Dispatch. Emergency medical dispatch protocols will be utilized by all 911 emergency communications centers and remote dispatch points. Due to the existence of various emergency medical dispatch programs, each 911 emergency communications center and remote dispatch point must use the quality assurance process associated with the program that it is licensed to use.