



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

911 Training, Certification, and Quality Assurance/Quality
Improvement Requirements

January 2024

PURPOSE

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) is required by the 911 Emergency Communication Services Act (35 Pa. C.S. §§ 5301—5399) to adopt minimum training, certification, quality assurance (QA) and quality improvement (QI) requirements for call-takers, dispatchers, supervisors, and 911 coordinators.

The purpose of this document is to establish minimum requirements for public safety answering point (PSAP) telecommunicator training programs and QA/QI programs, along with requirements for registration and certification. This document replaces 4 Pa. Code Chapter 120c and 4 Pa. Code Chapter 120d as the requirements for training, certification, and quality assurance for PSAPs in the Commonwealth. Funding for 911 services shall not be expended on a 911 system that does not conform to the requirements and guidance published by PEMA. *See* 35 Pa. C.S. § 5306.1 (c)(2). Compliance with these requirements and guidance will be verified through PEMA's certification review process.

The goal of these requirements is to ensure that PSAP personnel receive the same minimum training, and adhere to the same QA/QI requirements, so that a consistent level of service is maintained throughout the Commonwealth.

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DEFINITIONS

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

911 Coordinator - The 911 coordinator designated by the county as required by 35 Pa. C.S. § 5304 (a) (6).

911 System – A public safety answering point.

Act 12 of 2015 or Act 12 – The 911 Emergency Communication Services Act (35 Pa. C.S. § 5301—5399)

Agency – The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)

Board – The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) 911 Advisory Board

Call-Taker - A telecommunicator whose job duties include answering emergency and non-emergency calls for service or handling other data (including text-to-911).

Catastrophic Loss – An exceptional loss of human life and/or significant dollar amount of property damage.

Certification Plan (CP) – A tool that provides PSAPs with a standard process for correcting noncompliance with training, certification, or QA/QI requirements. Information a PSAP must provide on a CP includes actions that will be taken, and resources required to resolve the noncompliance. The PSAP must also provide the deliverable, measure, or indicator that will demonstrate the noncompliance has been resolved.

Certification/Recertification –

- **Telecommunicator** – Official recognition by the entity responsible for 911 operations within a county’s jurisdiction that a telecommunicator (i.e., call-taker and/or dispatcher) has successfully completed all required courses and performance evaluations (e.g., written examination, practical skills assessment) required by the PSAP’s telecommunicator training program.
- **PEMA** – Official recognition by the PEMA 911 Office that a PSAP’s telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs meet the minimum training and QA/QI requirements provided in this document and that a PSAP complies with requirements, policies, and procedures stated in its telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs.

Certification Review – Activity conducted by the PEMA 911 Office to verify that a PSAP’s telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs comply with the minimum training and QA/QI requirements adopted by PEMA, and that a PSAP complies with requirements, policies, and procedures stated in its telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs. The activity includes, but is not limited to, both remote and onsite review of certification records, continuing education records, course curriculum and lesson plans, examination materials, and instructor records. The review does not include a performance review or skills assessment of PSAP personnel, nor a review of other personnel, PSAP

activities and/or financial activities not associated with the established telecommunicator training or QA/QI programs.

Continuing Education Unit (CEU) – A PSAP-recognized method of quantifying participation in an organized continuing education experience.

County – The entity responsible for operating the 911 system within its jurisdiction, which is required by section 5304 of 911 Emergency Communication Services Act. A county may provision a 911 system to serve its jurisdiction through participation in a regional 911 system.

Course Title – A portion of a PSAP’s curriculum that refers to a more specific description of the Training Topic of instruction.

Curriculum – Specific learning standards to support the PSAPs training program. Curriculum shall consist of the training topic and related course titles, delivery method, learning objective, instructional hours, assessment, and optional lesson plans.

Daily Observation Report (DOR) – A method used to evaluate the performance of a telecommunicator.

Dispatcher - A telecommunicator whose job duties include, but are not limited to, dispatching emergency and non-emergency calls for service.

Emergency Call – A request for emergency assistance. An emergency call may be made as a traditional voice call, text call, video call or data-only call.

Long-Term Case Review Standard Adjustment – A long-term adjustment to the 2% case review standard for QA/QI programs. A long-term case review standard is valid for 1 year from the date of approval. An example of a situation when a long-term standard adjustment would be applicable includes but is not limited to high emergency call volume exceeds the 2% threshold greater than available QA/QI staff personnel.

Non - Emergency Call – Any call to a PSAP that is not an emergency call as defined in this section

PEMA 911 Office – The entity responsible for adopting rules, regulations, and other actions necessary to implement and enforce the provisions of the 911 Emergency Communication Services Act.

Point of Contact (POC) – A PSAP-approved individual serving as the focal point of training and/or QA/QI information.

Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) – An agency-approved entity that receives 911 communications from a defined geographic area and processes those calls according to a specific operational policy. PSAPs in the Commonwealth are county-based. A county also may provide 911 service for its jurisdiction through participation in a regional 911 system. The term “PSAP” for purposes of this document also shall apply to the term 911 system.

Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Program – A PSAP process providing, at a minimum: a random case review to evaluate telecommunicator performance; feedback on protocol compliance, commendation, retraining and remediation as appropriate; and submission of compliance data to the PEMA 911 Office.

Quality Assurance Case Review – A review process that is used to assess the performance of the telecommunicator in receiving and handling calls for service or dispatched events in accordance with established PSAP policies and procedures.

Supervisor - A telecommunicator whose job duties include, but not limited to, directly supervising those who answer (call-taker) and/or dispatch (dispatcher) emergency and non-emergency calls for service.

Telecommunicator – An individual employed by a PSAP whose primary responsibility is to receive, process, transmit, and/or dispatch emergency and non-emergency calls for service for emergency medical, fire/rescue, law enforcement and other public safety services, via telephone, radio, and other communication devices. The term telecommunicator includes call-takers, emergency dispatchers, and supervisors.

Telecommunicator Training Program – A program that prepares individuals for the telecommunicator profession. This program must comply with all training requirements adopted by the Commonwealth and includes curriculum for classroom, on-the-job, recertification, promotional, remedial, and continuing education.

Temporary Case Review Standard Adjustment – A temporary adjustment to the 2% case review standard for QA/QI programs. A temporary case review standard is valid for 6 months from the date of approval. Examples of situations when temporary standard adjustments would be applicable include but are not limited to QA/QI software implementation or upgrade, resignation of QA/QI staff personnel with limited staff replacement, or other situations where a long-term case review standard adjustment would not be reasonable.

Trainee (Basic/Entry-Level Telecommunicator) - A minimum entry-level position that requires basic training fundamentals of a PSAP environment.

Training Record – A record for each telecommunicator employed by the PSAP that is a compilation of all documentation, including specific training and completion date.

Training Topic – A minimum requirement provided in Sections 1.04 – 1.07 of this document that must be included in a PSAP’s documented telecommunicator training curriculum based on the positions utilized in the PSAP. All course titles in a PSAP’s training program that are associated with a Training Topic must be included in the PSAP’s documented curriculum

Written Directives – A set of PSAP-specific policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and guidelines on PSAP letterhead and authorized by the PSAP management.

Article I. PSAP TRAINING PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

Section 1.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of these requirements is to ensure that personnel who receive, process and/or dispatch emergency calls for service receive the same minimum training requirements, to maintain a consistent level of service throughout the Commonwealth.

These requirements are based upon national standards developed in cooperation with the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), National 911 Program, National Association of State 911 Administrators (NASNA), National Emergency Number Association (NENA), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and industry professionals.

PSAPs shall establish training programs comprehensive of the minimum telecommunicator training requirements. These requirements are in no way intended to limit the ability of a PSAP to conduct a more in-depth training process or include additional training requirements above the minimum. The PEMA 911 Office recognizes PSAPs that choose to deliver supplemental training beyond these minimum requirements.

Section 1.02 OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

- a) Minimum requirements for a telecommunicator training program are provided in this document and will be maintained annually by the PEMA 911 Office in consultation with the 911 Advisory Board.
- b) Each PSAP shall establish and maintain a telecommunicator training program that includes the minimum requirements outlined in this document.
- c) A PSAP may include additional requirements that exceed the minimum requirements as part of its telecommunicator training program. Nothing in this document should be construed to limit or restrict any additional training that a PSAP may elect to include in its telecommunicator training program.
- d) Each PSAP shall document the curriculum and written directives of its telecommunicator training program using the format and procedures prescribed by the PEMA 911 Office.
- e) All telecommunicator training programs shall document and demonstrate instructional hours (or other measurement) for each training topic and all related course title(s) included in the PSAP's program.
- f) All telecommunicator training programs shall include requirements for continuing education and recertification.
- g) Each PSAP shall provide telecommunicator training and related materials.
- h) A PSAP's telecommunicator training program and related materials shall be evaluated and revised annually by the PSAP for relevance and quality. Program changes shall be reflected in the PSAP's documented training and certification program at the time of revision.
- i) Each PSAP shall designate a training point of contact (POC) for its telecommunicator training program.
- j) The training POC shall provide the PEMA 911 Office with documentation and information

regarding the PSAP's training process.

Section 1.03 TRAINING LEVELS

- a) Four levels of training, along with minimum training requirements for each training level, are established for telecommunicators in Section 1.04 through Section 1.07 of this document. The four levels of training include:
 - i. Trainee (basic/entry-level telecommunicator)
 - ii. Call-Taker
 - iii. Dispatcher
 - iv. Supervisor
- b) A PSAP's telecommunicator training program shall have a documented curriculum that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements set forth by the PEMA 911 Office for trainees, call-takers, dispatchers, and supervisors based on the positions utilized in the PSAP.
- c) A PSAP may have position-specific training requirements that combine the minimum training requirements for multiple training levels based on its organizational structure. If a PSAP combines the minimum requirements for multiple training levels as part of the training for a specific position, the minimum requirements for each training level shall be satisfied before an employee is certified by the PSAP in that respective role.
- d) The minimum training requirements for trainee shall be completed before an individual handles emergency calls for service regardless of the job title used by a PSAP.
- e) Completion of the trainee curriculum shall be a prerequisite to be certified as a call-taker, dispatcher or supervisor, or equivalent job classifications.
- f) Certified call-takers, dispatchers, and supervisors shall maintain active certifications to perform their job duties.
- g) 911 Coordinators must meet the training requirements established in Section 1.08.

Section 1.04 MINIMUM CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINEE (BASIC/ENTRY-LEVEL TELECOMMUNICATOR) TRAINING

- a) All PSAP trainee (basic/entry-level telecommunicator) training programs shall include the following training topics:
 - i. An industry recognized basic public safety telecommunicator course that covers all topics included in APCO ANS 3.103.2.2015 - Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators
 - ii. Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS-100) *
 - iii. Introduction to the National Incident Management System (IS-700) *
 - iv. Local governance structure
 - v. Governmental and private resources
 - vi. PSAP and departmental written directives
 - vii. Media information/dissemination
 - viii. Pennsylvania Emergency Incident Reporting System (PEIRS)
 - ix. Jurisdiction-specific geography training

- x. Hazardous materials (HAZMAT) awareness
- xi. Security
- xii. Backup/contingency procedure training (disaster recovery/continuity of operations)
- xiii. Job-related equipment training with practical demonstration of skill
- xiv. Workstation observation by trainee
- xv. Introduction to PSAP's On-the-Job (OJT) training and Daily Observation Reports (DOR's).

Section 1.05 MINIMUM CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CALL-TAKER TRAINING

- a) Section 1.04 Requirements.
- b) All PSAP call-taker training programs shall include the following training topics:
 - i. Call receiving/processing
 - ii. Interviewing/interrogation techniques
 - iii. Controlling the call
 - iv. Managing high-risk calls
 - v. Managing specialty calls
 - vi. Call categorization/prioritization
 - vii. Event categorization
 - viii. Homeland security/terrorism/weapons of mass destruction (WMD)
 - ix. Aircraft/rail/marine incidents
 - x. Missing/exploited/trafficked persons
 - xi. Special-needs callers
 - xii. PSAP and departmental written directives
 - xiii. Job-related equipment training with practical demonstration of skill
 - xiv. Workstation observation by Call-taker trainee
 - xv. On-the-job training programs with DORs
 - xvi. Emergency medical dispatch, emergency fire dispatch, and emergency law enforcement/police dispatch protocols shall be used by all PSAPs. Structured call-taking protocol training directly related to the types of calls the PSAP is responsible for is required.
- c) Call-takers whose duty it is to process medical calls shall receive protocol training that address the following topics:
 - i. Emergency medical services (EMS) overview
 - ii. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification
 - iii. EMS call processing
 - iv. Emergency medical dispatch (EMD)
- d) Call-takers whose duty it is to process fire calls shall receive protocol training that address the following topics:
 - i. Fire service overview
 - ii. Fire service call processing
 - iii. Emergency fire dispatch (EFD)
- e) Call-takers whose duty it is to process law enforcement calls shall receive protocol training that

address the following topics:

- i. Law enforcement overview
 - ii. Law enforcement call processing
 - iii. Emergency law enforcement dispatch/police dispatch systems (PDS)
- f) PSAPs shall meet the call-taking protocol requirement either by contracting with an industry recognized call taking interrogation vendor or by PSAP-developed programs, adhering to the criteria within this document. PEMA will not have a role in certifying a PSAPs protocols.
- g) When providing structured call-taking protocol training, PSAP-developed programs shall comply with following criteria:
- h) Develop training, certification, and recertification processes for the appropriate call-taking protocol(s) with minimum requirements defined.
- i. Minimum continuing education requirements and performance appraisal with a formal assessment of knowledge and skills after a pre-defined time (e.g., every two years).
 - ii. Call-taking protocols shall contain questions and a decision support process to facilitate correct call categorization and prioritization.
 - iii. Call-taking protocols shall provide a specific, reproducible set of PSAP approved codes for classifying calls and assigning a response, with tiered response levels and response types associated with each code.
 - iv. Call-taking protocols shall contain pre-arrival instructions for callers that are designed to provide specific, safe, and appropriate actions for the layperson caller to promote the safety, welfare, and successful outcome of the call for service.
 - v. Each PSAP shall establish minimum protocol-compliance standards including each area of the protocol used (e.g., address verification, chief complaint or incident type identification, caller interrogation questions, pre-arrival instructions, call classification and coding, and overall case compliance).
 - vi. Each PSAP shall establish contingency/alternate (pre-arrival) instructions for large-scale incidents and disasters.
- i) Call-takers shall not process calls independently until they are certified as such by protocol training.

Section 1.06 MINIMUM CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR DISPATCHER TRAINING

- a) Section 1.04 Requirements.
- b) All PSAP dispatcher training programs shall include the following training topics:
 - i. Radio communication techniques
 - ii. Radio technology and equipment
 - iii. Radio discipline
 - iv. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules
 - v. Specific PSAP radio-use written directives
 - vi. Job-related equipment training with practical demonstration of skill
 - vii. Workstation observation by Dispatcher trainee
 - viii. On-the-job training programs with DORs

Section 1.07 MINIMUM CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPERVISOR TRAINING

- a) Section 1.04 Requirements.
- b) All PSAP supervisor-level training programs shall include the following training topics:
 - i. A public safety supervisor training course that covers:
 - The telecommunications supervisor role
 - Administrative functions, including complaint investigation
 - Supervision and leadership concepts and principles
 - Liability issues for supervisors
 - Communication skills
 - Self-assessment
 - Employee evaluation and motivation
 - ii. PSAP-specific supervisor training regarding written directives
 - iii. Incident Command for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (ICS-200) *
 - iv. National Response Framework, an Introduction (IS-800) *
 - v. Job-related equipment/software training with practical demonstration of skill.
 - vi. Written assessment (i.e., checklist, DOR, etc.) documenting the completion of training.

Note: * any iteration will be accepted

Section 1.08 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR 911 COORDINATORS

- a) 911 coordinators shall meet the following training requirements:
 - i. Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS-100) *
 - ii. Incident Command for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (ICS-200) *
 - iii. An Introduction to the National Incident Management System (IS-700) *
 - iv. National Response Framework, an Introduction (IS-800) *
 - v. Attend at least one 911 Advisory Board meeting annually or PEMA hosted 911 in-service training
 - vi. Attend one industry conference or workshop biennially

Note: * any iteration will be accepted

Section 1.09 CERTIFICATION

- a) To be certified as a telecommunicator (call-taker, dispatcher, or supervisor or equivalent job classification) by a PSAP, candidates shall meet the following criteria:
 - i. Be at least 18 years of age
 - ii. Possess a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED)
 - iii. Be free of a criminal history that would prohibit them from successfully fulfilling all duties of the position as defined by the employer
 - iv. Meet any additional employer-specific qualifications to be hired as a telecommunicator (e.g., pre-employment testing)
 - v. Complete trainee (basic/entry-level) telecommunicator training

- b) Each PSAP will certify its call-takers, dispatchers, and supervisors, or equivalent, who successfully complete training for a position, based on the job titles and requirements identified in its telecommunicator training program.
 - i. Once the PSAP's training and certification program is certified by the PEMA 911 Office, a telecommunicator who is employed on, or before the program certification date, whether the individual is working full-time or part-time as a permanent or temporary employee, shall comply with the training and certification requirements provided in the PSAP's certified program within one calendar year of the program being certified by PEMA 911 Office.
 - ii. A telecommunicator who is employed after the program certification date, whether the individual is working full-time or part-time as a permanent or temporary employee, shall comply with all training and certification requirements provided in the PSAP's certified program.
- c) Certification is valid for two years after the date of issuance.
- d) The PEMA 911 Office shall rely on the certification of each telecommunicator, as provided to it by the individual PSAP, to be accurate.
- e) Each PSAP shall notify the PEMA 911 Office using the prescribed methodology, within 30 days of certification issuance to its telecommunicators.
- f) The PEMA 911 Office will be responsible for certifying each PSAP's telecommunicator training program for compliance with the minimum training requirements adopted by PEMA, and that a PSAP complies with the curriculum, requirements, policies, and procedures stated in its telecommunicator training program.

Section 1.10 RECERTIFICATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- a) Call-takers, dispatchers, and supervisors, or equivalent shall maintain valid certifications.
- b) The PSAP shall have, as part of its training program, a defined recertification process for each position it certifies.
- c) The recertification process shall include a requirement for each defined job position (call-taker, dispatcher, and supervisor) to complete, at a minimum, a combined total of 24 continuing education unit (CEU) requirements every two years.
- d) The CEU requirements should be organized around the duties and tasks the telecommunicator is performing. The CEUs should be focused on enabling the telecommunicator to:
 - i. Develop a better understanding of telecommunications and the telecommunicator's roles and responsibilities
 - ii. Enhance job skills
 - iii. Keep up to date on emerging issues
 - iv. Provide opportunities for discussion, skill practice, and critique of skill performance
- e) The PSAP shall document all CEU topic and hours for each telecommunicator to show compliance with these requirements.
- f) The Training POC shall notify the PEMA 911 Office, using the prescribed methodology, within 30 days of all recertifications.

Section 1.11 RECIPROCIITY

- a) For telecommunicators certified under another Pennsylvania PSAP's telecommunicator training program:
 - i. Acceptance of previous certification is at the discretion of the receiving PSAP.
 - ii. All lateral transfers shall meet the training and certification requirements of the receiving PSAP.

Section 1.12 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- a) This section applies whenever a labor union agreement or a local employment condition requires a PSAP to use job titles other than trainee, call-taker, dispatcher, or supervisor to describe PSAP personnel. Under these circumstances, the PSAP and the PEMA 911 Office shall jointly compare the functions, duties, and responsibilities of each PSAP job position with the functions, duties and responsibilities of a trainee, call-taker, dispatcher, or supervisor to determine which regulatory position (trainee, call-taker, dispatcher, or supervisor) most closely relates to the PSAP job position.
- b) After the joint determination has been made, either the trainee, call-taker, dispatcher or supervisor training and certification requirements of this document shall be applied to those individual PSAP job positions. If a PSAP and the PEMA 911 Office fail to agree on the appropriate training and certification requirements for a PSAP job position, the PEMA 911 Office shall, at its own discretion, decide the matter.

Article II. CHAPTER 2 PSAP QA/QI PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

Section 2.01 PURPOSE

A QA/QI program is vital to a PSAP's ability to ensure that incidents are processed in a consistent, effective, and efficient manner. QA/QI programs allow the PSAP to critique itself, and to ensure that it is meeting the public's expectations of high-quality call-processing and customer-service skills.

A QA/QI program should serve as an opportunity to correct deficiencies and reward accomplishments by an individual, team and/or PSAP. Not only does an effective QA/QI program provide a mechanism for the review of incidents, but it also serves to provide continual feedback to the telecommunicator and the PSAP for improvement.

These requirements align with *APCO/NENA ANS 1.107.1.2015, Standard for the Establishment of a Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Program for Public Safety Answering Points*. These requirements are in no way intended to limit the ability of a PSAP to conduct a more in-depth QA/QI process.

Section 2.02 OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

- a) Minimum requirements for a QA/QI program are provided in this document and will be reviewed annually by the PEMA 911 Office in consultation with the 911 Advisory Board.
- b) Each PSAP in the Commonwealth shall establish and maintain a QA/QI program that includes the minimum requirements outlined in this document.
- c) A PSAP may include additional requirements that exceed the minimum requirements as part of its QA/QI program. Nothing in this document should be construed to limit or restrict any additional QA/QI requirements that a PSAP may elect to include in its QA/QI program. A PSAP may include additional requirements that exceed the minimum requirements as part of its QA/QI program.
- d) Each PSAP in the Commonwealth is responsible for providing QA/QI program training and any associated instructional materials and resources.
- e) A PSAP's QA/QI program and related materials shall be evaluated and revised annually by the PSAP for relevance and quality. Program changes shall be reflected in the PSAPs documented QA/QI program at the time of revision.
- f) Each PSAP will designate a QA/QI point of contact (POC) for its QA/QI program.
- g) The QA/QI POC will be expected to provide the PEMA 911 Office with documentation and information regarding the PSAP's QA/QI process.

Section 2.03 QA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- a) A PSAP QA program shall consist of the following elements:
 - i. Case review criteria that identifies the types of incidents to review and what criteria to evaluate
- b) Evaluation Guidelines
 - i. The PSAP shall document the process used to measure the quality and performance of the

- service provided based on defined scoring criteria.
 - ii. The PSAP shall establish written directives that clearly define the methods used to measure the quality of performance.
 - iii. The PSAP shall establish and adopt performance scoring measurement criteria to ensure consistency in case evaluations.
- c) Record-Keeping Criteria
- i. The PSAP shall ensure records are kept for individuals and the PSAP.
 - ii. The PSAP shall establish a record-keeping system.
 - iii. The PSAP shall establish a mechanism for disseminating QA scores to the appropriate personnel on a regular basis.
- d) Reporting and Feedback
- i. The PSAP shall ensure QA review results are disseminated to appropriate personnel in accordance with the PSAP's written directives and evaluation guidelines.
 - ii. The PSAP shall ensure that QA review results are given to the telecommunicator within 30 calendar days of the occurrence of the event.
- e) Written Directives
- i. The PSAP shall establish how its QA program will be conducted and administered.
- f) A PSAP QA program shall include criteria for the following types of reviews:
- i. Randomly selected events
 - ii. Catastrophic events. Each PSAP shall define the term "catastrophic event" in its QA/QI program and identify "catastrophic" incident types that will generate an automatic QA review
 - iii. Any other event as defined by the PSAP in its QA program
- g) The PSAP shall ensure a sufficient number of case reviews for each employee each month.
- i. The number of case reviews needed to effectively execute a QA program will vary according to PSAP workload.
 - ii. PSAPs must have written directives and guidelines that define the number of reviews an employee will have each month. Compliance with these written directives and guidelines will be verified during PEMA's certification review of a PSAP's QA/QI program.
- h) PSAPs shall, in the normal course of business, review at least 2 percent of all emergency calls for service which is the case review standard for PSAP QA/QI programs in Pennsylvania.
- i. Each PSAP shall define how it calculates the 2 percent threshold in its program.
 - ii. Each PSAP shall define what constitutes an emergency call that is used to calculate the 2 percent threshold

Section 2.04 QA/QI CASE REVIEW STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS

- a) Where the 2 percent factor would not apply or be overly burdensome due to low or excessively high call volumes, PSAPs shall work with the PEMA 911 Office to set case review minimums based on realistic call volumes and workloads.
- b) A PSAP may request a temporary or long-term case review standard adjustment
 - i. **Temporary case review adjustment guidelines:**
 - 1. Temporary case review adjustments will be valid for 6 months from date of approval.
 - 2. PSAPs must renew a temporary adjustment every 6 months with PEMA.

3. If during a PEMA Review, it is identified that the condition exists after three consecutive temporary adjustment periods, the PSAP must follow the Certification Plan process and submit a Plan for how the condition will be resolved.
- ii. **Long-term case review adjustment guidelines:**
 1. Long-term case review adjustments will be valid for 1 year from date of approval.
 2. PEMA may automatically renew long-term adjustments if conditions at the PSAP have not changed from the current year.
 3. If during a PEMA Review, it is identified that the condition exists after two consecutive long-term adjustment periods, the PSAP must follow the Certification Plan process and submit a Plan for how the condition will be resolved.
- c) Compliance with the requirements in Section 2.03 h) is required for a PSAP to submit case review standard adjustment request.
 - d) A PSAP shall submit a case review standard adjustment request to PEMA by December 31st for the next calendar year.”
 - i. PEMA will consider ad hoc requests if circumstances in the PSAP dictate the need to request a case review standard adjustment during the year.
 - e) PSAPs requesting an adjustment must provide the following information relevant to the request:
 - i. Type of adjustment requested (temporary or long-term)
 - ii. Explanation of why a variance from the 2% standard is being requested
 - iii. The specific numeric percentage for which an exception is requested
 - iv. Explanation of how the adjusted case review standard was determined
 - v. A list of specific disciplines (Police, Fire, Medical) related to the adjusted case review request.
 - vi. Calculation of case reviews at the adjusted standard
 - vii. PSAP attestation that the adjusted case review standard requested is the maximum standard the PSAP can achieve based on their call volumes and workload.
 - viii. The PSAP’s plan and written directives to maintain compliance with the requirements in Section 2.03 g) to ensure a “sufficient number of case reviews for an employee per month under the adjusted standard.
 - f) PEMA’s responsibilities for reviewing a QA/QI case review standard adjustment request include:
 - i. Verifying the PSAP’s QA/QI program maintains compliance with the minimum requirements outlined in this document
 - ii. Verifying the PSAP has defined what constitutes a sufficient number of case reviews for each employee each month under the adjusted standard
 - iii. Verifying the PSAP has written directives and guidelines that define the number of reviews an employee will have each month.
 - iv. PEMA will review the adjustment request and respond to the PSAP as to whether the adjustment is accepted, or not accepted, within 30 calendar days.
 - v. If the adjustment request is not accepted, the PSAP must provide information to meet the requirements in Section 2.04(e) within 15 calendar days.

Section 2.05 QI PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- a) A PSAP QI program shall include the following elements:
 - i. Identification of performance gaps.
 - ii. Evaluation of strengths and weaknesses.
 - iii. Commendations for superior performance.
 - iv. Remediation referral for disciplinary action pursuant to the PSAP's written directives.
 - v. Actions plans to address individual as well as PSAP performance issues in response to QA findings.

Article III. CHAPTER 3 TRAINING AND QA/QI ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Section 3.01 PROGRAM DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- a) A PSAP must document and keep current its telecommunicator training, certification, and QA/QI programs, curriculum, and written directives using the format and procedures prescribed by the PEMA 911 Office.
 - i. All telecommunicator training programs shall document and demonstrate instructional hours (or other measurement) for each training topic and all related course title(s) included in the PSAP's program
- b) A PSAP shall maintain an accurate telecommunicator roster using the format and procedures prescribed by the PEMA 911 Office.
 - i. The PSAP shall register a new telecommunicator with the PEMA 911 Office, using the appropriate established method, within 30 days after they have completed the training requirements provided in the PSAP's telecommunicator training program for a trainee or equivalent job classification.
 - ii. The PSAP shall notify the PEMA 911 Office of telecommunicators who leave their roles, using the appropriate established method, within 30 days of their separation date.

Section 3.02 FUNDING

- a) The primary funding source for the telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs is statewide formula-based funding, and any other PSAP local funding sources (e.g., county budgets).
- b) The PEMA 911 Office may use statewide interconnectivity grant funds, in consultation with the 911 Advisory Board, to support telecommunicator training and QA/QI-related initiatives that align with established priorities.

Section 3.03 COMPLIANCE

- a) Compliance with the registration, training, certification, and QA/QI requirements shall be the responsibility of the PSAP.
- b) The PEMA 911 Office shall perform a certification review of a PSAP's telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs on a biennial cycle.
- c) Certification reviews are to be completed in accordance with the procedures adopted by the PEMA 911 Office in consultation with the 911 Advisory Board. A certification review will consist of:
 - i. Verifying the PSAP's programs satisfy the minimum requirements
 - ii. Reviewing a sample of a PSAP's telecommunicator training, certification, and QA/QI records to verify compliance with the minimum requirements and the PSAP's documented curriculum, policies, procedures, written directives, etc.
 - iii. Verifying a PSAP completed an annual review of their programs and materials
 - iv. Verifying compliance with telecommunicator registration and certification reporting requirements
- d) The PEMA 911 Office shall have access to all records that are necessary to verify compliance with the registration, training, certification, and QA/QI minimum requirements in this document.
- e) Certification reviews may be completed onsite, remotely, or through a combination of the two

methods.

- f) Telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs shall be deemed as certified by the PEMA 911 Office if a PSAP's telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs are shown to be following the minimum training and QA/QI requirements adopted by PEMA, and that a PSAP demonstrates compliance with requirements, policies, and procedures stated in its telecommunicator training and QA/QI programs as part of a certification review.
- g) If a PSAP demonstrates full compliance at the conclusion of a certification review, PEMA will issue a program certification to the PSAP.

Section 3.04 CERTIFICATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

- a) As a result of a certification review, if aspects of a PSAP's training and/or QA/QI programs do not meet the minimum requirements and procedures in its telecommunicator training and/or its QA/QI program, corrective action shall be taken by the PSAP to establish compliance which may include but is not limited to:
 - i. Modify existing telecommunicator training and/or QA/QI programs
 - ii. Establishing new curricula
 - iii. Establishing new written directives
- b) PEMA will issue a report to the PSAP and elected officials detailing areas of compliance and noncompliance in the training and/or QA/QI program. PEMA will create a Certification Plan (CP) for the PSAP to comply with in Section 3.04c).
- c) For areas that do not meet the minimum requirements, the PSAP is required to submit a CP to address the areas of noncompliance using the format and procedures prescribed by the PEMA 911 Office within 30 calendar days of receiving the certification review report.
- d) PEMA will review the CP and respond to the PSAP as to whether the CP is accepted or not accepted within 30 calendar days.
- e) If a CP is not accepted, the PSAP would have 15 calendar days to submit an updated plan.
- f) A PSAP shall provide PEMA a quarterly progress report on CP completion using the format and procedures prescribed by the PEMA 911 Office
- g) The PEMA 911 Office will report categories of PSAP noncompliance and agency accepted corrective action recommendations to the Board on a quarterly basis and seek advisory recommendations from the Board to improve the categories of noncompliance, and corrective action procedures
- h) For PSAPs that fail to follow CP procedures, implement a CP as accepted, or continue to be non-compliant, the PSAP may be subject to the noncompliance requirements in Section 3.05.
- i) Upon successful completion of a CP, PEMA will certify the program as compliant with the minimum requirements.

Section 3.05 NONCOMPLIANCE

- a) PEMA's focus is to assist PSAP's with establishing and maintaining compliance with the adopted requirements. For PSAPs that fail to follow CP procedures, submit a CP when required, implement

a CP as approved, or continue to be non-compliant with the minimum requirements, the following progressive framework will be followed to compel a PSAP to take action to establish compliance with the adopted requirements.

- i. Step 1: PSAP and elected officials are sent a 2nd notification of noncompliance. A written explanation for continued noncompliance will be required along with actions to be taken by the PSAP to complete the CP.
- ii. Step 2: For continued noncompliance or failure to complete step 1, the PSAP would be ineligible to apply for statewide interconnectivity funding grants.
- iii. Step 3: For continued noncompliance after step 2, the PSAP would be ineligible to apply for statewide interconnectivity funds or receive statewide interconnectivity payments from current grants.
- iv. Step 4: For continued noncompliance after step 3, the PSAP would not receive disbursements from the 911 Fund in accordance with § 5306.1. (c) (2).

The PEMA 911 Office maintains the right to exclude one or more progressive steps of the established certification plan procedures and requirements when deemed appropriate, based on the severity and frequency of noncompliance demonstrated by the PSAP.

Section 3.06 VENDOR AND THIRD-PARTY CONSIDERATIONS

- a) The use of a vendor or third party (such as another PSAP) by a PSAP for telecommunicator training and/or QA/QI programs is acceptable.
- b) All vendor or third-party programs or operations must adhere to all minimum requirements as set forth in these guidelines.

Section 3.07 RETENTION OF RECORDS

- a) A PSAP shall maintain a record of the training certification document, and related supporting documents for each employee, agent or representative who is certified or trained by the PSAP as a telecommunicator, trainee, call-taker, dispatcher, supervisor, or 911 coordinator. The records shall be retained for at least three years starting at the time the certification document or the supporting documents were signed and dated by the proper signatory to the document(s).
- b) A PSAP shall maintain written QA/QI audits (reviews) for all calls that are reviewed by the PSAP. The records for each employee shall be retained for three years starting at the time of the call.

Section 3.08 RIGHT TO ENTER AND INSPECT

- a) The PEMA 911 Office has the right to enter any PSAP in this Commonwealth during regular business hours, or at other times when the PEMA 911 Office deems necessary, to conduct the following activities:
 - i. Overall inspections at least biennially, and at other times upon the Agency's discretion.
 - ii. Inspect the employment and training records that pertain to the certification of all PSAP personnel.
 - iii. Inspect the county plans, the telecommunicator training program, EMD, EFD and EPD protocols, QA/QI program and other documents related to the operation of the PSAP.

- iv. Observe the dispatch of emergency services by the PSAP.
- v. Inspect PSAP equipment, and ensure compliance with requirements, as established by the Agency.