



Job Specification

Position Title: AMBULANCE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Job Code: OPSEU - Ambulance Communications Officer 1, 16710
Job ID: 35968

Purpose of Position:

To receive 9-1-1, emergency and non emergency requests for ambulance services, determine the required level of response, and provide seamless ambulance dispatching services using the resources provided by ambulance service operators. To provide timely and accurate telecommunications services to callers, ambulance service providers, and other emergency health services system stakeholders. Where required, provide call taking and dispatching telecommunication services for fire services and other public safety services.

Duties/Responsibilities:

Central Ambulance Communications Centres (CACC) are mission critical, technologically complex workplaces providing the initial access point to Ontario's emergency health services system for victims of illness or injury. Working in one of the ministry operated CACC's, responsible for the provision of ambulance communication services, the position:

1. Performs call-taking duties by: answering assessing and directing a response to all calls for ambulance service whether received by telephone or other wireline and wireless technologies (e.g. facsimile, teletype, cellular / satellite phone, computer-aided dispatch, radio or voice over internet, using the approved call screening instrument and protocols to establish interactive call taking actions with the caller, eliciting essential information to prioritize, pre-alert and activate the required level of ambulance and emergency services response, identify possible scene hazards; and respond to issues and concerns of callers and stakeholders.
2. Provides callers with pre-arrival instructions included as part of the approved call screening instrument and protocols including first aid, telephone-assisted cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and preventative choking instructions to perform on the victim while awaiting the arrival of paramedics or tiered emergency responders.
3. Performs dispatching duties by: determining: call location, required levels of response, competing demands for service and availability of resources; selecting, notifying and directing the ambulances and emergency response units in a manner that minimizes response times while making efficient use of resources. Where required the position may also provide call taking and dispatching telecommunication services for fire services and other public safety services. Checks availability and monitors progress of vehicles by reviewing the status of each ambulance in the area of the dispatch catchment through oral and/or visual protocols.
4. Notifies other public safety agencies, public utilities /municipal/provincial agencies, neighboring CACC/Communication Services and health care facilities for assistance as requested by the responding/attending ambulance crew and notification protocols.
5. In the absence of physician or midwife direction selects and directs patient transport to closest appropriate health care facility in accordance with the needs of the patient and in accordance with local transportation agreements.
6. Operates, maintains and troubleshoots a variety of computer-based telecommunications and computer-aided dispatch (CAD) technologies used to maintain communications links, and provide assistance to ambulance crews.
7. Documents all elements of call activities in accordance with Ministry policy and prepares a variety of reports electronically and/or paper-based, any of which may be used in legal proceedings.
8. Works closely with co-workers, management, neighboring CACCs/Communications Services, land and air ambulance service providers and allied agencies to ensure appropriate operational and technical linkages and considerations with regard to requests for emergency services. Activates tiered response agencies in accordance with local criteria.

9. As directed by the Manager/Supervisor assists/participates in the training of staff (e.g. new employees and CACC staff returning from extended absences) to ensure operational standards, best practices etc. are adhered to.
10. Performs basic equipment checks and trouble-shooting to ensure operational readiness; maintains familiarization with equipment operation, catchment area geography/resources, and communication/ambulance service related legislation, policy, procedures and practices.
11. Participates in a team environment to resolve work related issues and refers contentious issues (e.g. public/stakeholder complaints, inquiries, and equipment failures) to the Manager/Supervisor.
12. Position requires the ability to work shifts of varying lengths in accordance with a compressed work week agreement in an inherently stressful 24/7 environment.
13. Performs additional duties as assigned by management.

Knowledge:

Job requires knowledge of Ambulance and Central Ambulance Communications Centre operations, policies, practices and processes, coupled with knowledge of relevant sections of the Ambulance Act and other pertinent Acts (e.g. Coroners Act, Health Insurance Act, Regulated Health Professions Act, Fire Services Act, Mental Health Act, Highway Traffic Act) and knowledge of service operations of allied agencies (e.g. fire and police services) in order to provide timely and accurate call-taking and dispatching services with regard to 911 emergency and low priority requests for ambulances and other emergency services (e.g. fire, police). Job requires knowledge of medical terminology and pathophysiology in order to understand medical diagnosis, condition of patients, assess, prioritize and triage the urgency of requests for service and to communicate same with paramedics, physicians and other health care professionals and select appropriate health care facility destination. Job requires knowledge of spatial concepts in order to elicit and understand directions and geographic information necessary to ensure appropriate resources (e.g. paramedics, firefighters, police officers etc.) arrive at incident location without delay. Job requires maintaining familiarization with CACC catchment area geography, communities, roadways, health care facilities, land and air ambulance resources, allied agency resources, local / municipal / provincial / federal resources through continued review and use of CACC information aids. Job requires up-to-date knowledge of standard first-aid and targeted-responder CPR standards and techniques to provide life-saving pre-arrival instructions including first-aid, telephone-assisted CPR and choking intervention instruction to callers. Job requires knowledge of, and proficiency with customized computer-based telecommunications, information applications such as computer-aided dispatch (CAD) (Ambulance Response Information System - ARIS and ARIS II), trunked radio networks (GMCP, FleetNET), paging systems, automated telephone and audio recording systems, geographical information systems such as automatic vehicle locating (AVL) and geographic positioning system (GPS) in order to rapidly and accurately record, prioritize and locate callers, select, notify and monitor responding resources, update information, assist callers, responders and allied agencies. Job requires successful completion of all ministry mandated training and annual continuing education.

Staffing and Licensing Requirements:

Mandatory Staffing Requisites for Position: as noted under the Ambulance Act of Ontario incumbents will be free of any criminal conviction considered relevant to the position of Communications Officer; ability to successfully complete pre-employment standardized testing; obtain a Ambulance Communication Officer Certificate and successfully complete/sign off at the local training ; within thirty days of employment acquire a valid Standard First-Aid and Targeted-Responder CPR and obtain a Restricted-Radio Operators Certificate through the ACO program provided by the ministry.

Skills:

Job requires critical thinking, analytical, evaluative and problem-solving skills to: quickly, competently and consistently assess "real-time" circumstances of critical incidents or emergency situations and determine and deploy appropriate assistance to caller; determine the best approach to elicit information from disoriented or distraught callers; anticipate problems, based on the nature of the call, and keep responding paramedics and allied agencies informed (e.g. possible violent patient, rescue operation, road closures, chemical spill) and determine alternative solutions that will ensure the timely delivery of effective patient care. Job requires reasoning and logic skills when obtaining multiple reports from the public and allied agencies by telephone, computers and/or radio to decide whether the reports involve the same or different incidents and, if unsure, confirming with caller or other operators. Job requires judgment, analytical, priority-setting and multi-tasking skills to prioritize multiple and concurrent calls for services from the public, allied agencies based on preliminary information from a caller, assigning priority by assessing information factors against established call screening protocols (e.g. DPCI, IIDPCI), and responding the closest available and most appropriate ambulance. Job requires strong oral communication and effective listening skills to function effectively in a non-visual environment to receive, discuss and understand detailed information from callers, to determine the nature of an incident and to assign a priority, and to notify the hospital of detailed medical information of patient as advised by paramedics, establishing a radio-telephone patch when necessary. Job requires judgement and

decision-making skills to provide pertinent information to paramedics, such as potential hazards. Job requires written communication skills to update information, prepare incident, complaint and equipment failure reports, and to respond to requests for information. Job requires interpersonal skills including tact, diplomacy and discretion to treat callers respectfully, patiently and in a calming manner; and co-ordinate life-saving work in an environment inherently filled with stresses and unintentional abuses of callers facing life-threatening emergencies, competing demands for service, limited resources and making decisions involving ambulance issues with common and cross-jurisdictional impacts. Job requires maintaining strictest confidentiality of all information that came into the custody and control of the Communications Officer in the provision of their duties and responsibilities. Job requires teamwork skills to work collegially and cooperatively with others in a fast-paced, "real-time", critical incident environment; deliver local training. Job requires keyboarding skills

Freedom of Action:

Position reports directly to the CACC/Operations Manager (depending on location – see attached) and receives supervision or technical guidance from the Ambulance Communications Officer-Supervisor. Job requires working within established EHS Branch and CACC objectives, policies, protocols and procedures and relevant legislation to provide timely and accurate emergency and low priority ambulance dispatch services to the public and ministry stakeholders. Job exercises initiative and judgement in: determining and prioritizing situations based on information obtained, and determining and deploying the best method for emergency response i.e. land, air, tiered response or other allied agencies; ensuring continuity of ambulance service to all communities within the jurisdiction of the CACC is maintained at all times. Job requires inputting accurate information into multiple computer systems used for ambulance dispatching.