

**Please read the Supplemental Job Information below to help determine if this is the career for you. If you still have an interest in pursuing a career as an Emergency Communications Officer (dispatcher) and feel you have the right qualities, please fill out an application today.**

## **Idaho Falls Police Department 911 Communications Center**

### **Supplemental Job Description**

There are many satisfying and rewarding aspects of the Emergency Communication Officer career. There is no question that they make significant contributions to the safety and welfare of their fellow citizens and responders. However, it is important for all applicants to carefully consider **both** the positive and potentially challenging aspects of this career before applying for the position. It is a highly rewarding career for a person who aspires to help make a difference in the community.

Listed below are factors to consider if you are wanting to apply to be an Emergency Communications Officer.

Our goal is not to deter you from your interest in this career however it is important for you to know that the training period is very stressful and lengthy, it requires strength and determination. The percentage of people that make it through the training program is lower than the people that do not make it. Please take this in to consideration as being hired for this job is going to be life-changing in some form.

Read through this list to help you determine if this is a career that you are interested in pursuing.

#### **Important qualities required:**

- Ability to multitask
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent hearing
- Decision-making skills
- Empathy – strong desire to help others
- Listening skills
- Organizational skills
- Typing skills
- Good knowledge of the English language
- Stress tolerance
- Self-control
- Dependability
- Integrity
- Adaptability. Must be able to work varied hours, often on short notice.

**Positive aspects of the job:**

- Only a high school diploma or GED required.
- Good benefits.
- Competitive wages.
- Secure future.
- Work in a tight-knit community in a team environment with close working relationships.
- Very rewarding work.
- Satisfaction in knowing you made a difference.
- Work with heroes every day.

**Fixed facts of the job (some would consider these the challenges of the job):**

- Training is lengthy and intensive – usually a minimum of 14 weeks.
- You must have regular and predictable attendance.
- Required to work different shifts in a 24x7, 365 day work environment.
- Often unable to choose your work hours and work days.
- Often have no choice which days of the week you work.
- Likelihood of working many holidays – possibly delaying family events.
- Schedule may conflict with family functions and events.
- Must be able to obtain child care whenever needed, at all hours and sometimes with short notice.
- Required to work scheduled and unscheduled overtime.
- Must have reliable transportation at all times.
- Must have working phone available for contact at any time.
- Required to follow law enforcement and dispatch center policies.
- Must be able to remain at a console work station for extended time periods.
- Breaks are not guaranteed.
- Work within a chain of command.
- All work is recorded/taped.
- Work in high stress environment.
- Must maintain emotions during chaotic incidents.
- Ability to learn multiple agency response area and local geography.
- Must be able to maintain strict confidentiality of all work incidents.
- Ability to utilize multiple computer screens and keyboards while operating phone lines, and radio (multitasking).
- High level of concentration and room awareness required.

Dispatching is often compared to being an Air Traffic Controller – very stressful. Part of our training is to learn to cope with that stress and take care of ourselves.

Some types of calls we deal with (and are trained to handle):

- Routine calls of crimes not occurring at the time of the call.
- Call of crimes occurring during the time of the call.
- Calls from people who are intoxicated, hysterical, irrational, confused, demanding, or screaming at you. Also, people feeling suicidal, having a minor or serious medical issue, victims of violent crimes, reporting a lost child, or a lost animal, sudden, and immediate and/or sometimes violent loss of a loved one.

- Multiple agency response calls to back country areas when sometimes the caller is unable to tell you their location – we locate them and get appropriate help to them

There is no way to cover everything a telecommunicator does every day – every day is something new and usually exciting.

If this sounds like a challenging career that you are interested in, please submit an application for this position or if you have already applied, please call our dispatch center to do a sit-in.

## Telecommunications Specialist pre-questionnaire

1. Are you still interested in the Telecommunications Specialist position?	
2. If you live out of the area, what would your time frame for returning to Idaho Falls be?	
3. Are you currently employed now?	
4. What do you know about dispatching? Law enforcement in general? Fire/EMS knowledge?	
5. Are you familiar with working shift work?	
6. We normally work 3 12's and a 4-6 hr day along with scheduled and unscheduled overtime – how would that fit in to your life schedule?	
7. Are you familiar with working night shifts?	
8. Do you have any lifestyle issues that would interfere with working shifts?	
9. Do you have any standing commitments that we would need to work your schedule around?	
10. Would you be available for an interview on May 25 <sup>th</sup> ?	