3-07/090.25 - Routine Incoming Calls

Establishing and maintaining good public relations shall be a primary goal of all Department members handling incoming telephone calls. All personnel shall adhere to the following procedures:

- Give proper identification when answering the telephone, stating unit of assignment and name;
- Handle the call yourself, when possible, unless the caller asks to speak to a specific person;
- When necessary to refer the caller to another unit, explain the reason and provide caller with the correct number before transferring the call;
- If caller has already been transferred, offer to obtain requested information and return the call or obtain an accurate source of information for the caller;
- Return calls promptly, notifying caller of action being taken or results of your efforts to obtain correct information; and
- Use message forms when taking messages; record the following information:
    - Called person's name;
    - Caller's name and affiliation;
    - Date and time of call;
    - Message; and
    - Receiver's name.

Telephone Demeanor

The public's perception of our organization is directly impacted by our courtesy and thoroughness during daily telephone contacts. All personnel shall utilize the basics of effective telephone communications:

- Greet the caller with a professional tone;
- Listen closely;
- Be helpful;
- Empathize; and
- Avoid Department/police jargon.

By utilizing these five easy steps, the Department will present a professional image and promote better customer service.

Procedure

All personnel who answer incoming telephone calls shall greet the caller by identifying themselves and stating their unit of assignment. Below are examples of standard greetings that may be adapted for every unit on the Department:

Data Systems:

"Records Management, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, how may I help you?"

"Good afternoon, Records Management, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, can I help you?"

Homicide Bureau:

“Detective Smith, Homicide Bureau, how may I help you?”

“Homicide Bureau, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, can I help you?”

Lakewood Station:

“Deputy Smith, Lakewood Station, how may I help you?”

“Good morning, Sheriff’s Station, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, can I help you?”

Telephone Demeanor Audits

To ensure compliance with Department policy, random audits will be conducted. The result of these audits will be reported to the Office of the Undersheriff or concerned assistant sheriff on a monthly basis. A copy of these results will also be sent to each unit audited. Unit commanders are responsible for commending employees who performed in accordance with this policy. Unit commanders shall take appropriate administrative action regarding employees who demonstrated substandard performance in an area covered by the audit.