90-003 Handling Routine Incoming Calls / Telephone Demeanor

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

HANDLING ROUTINE INCOMING CALLS / TELEPHONE DEMEANOR

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Field Operations Directive is to provide the personnel who answer routine telephone calls at stations with a standardized greeting while at the same time providing an alternative greeting option for stations that serve multiple contract cities.

OVERVIEW

The Manual of Policy and Procedures, Section 3-07/090.25, outlines the way personnel are to answer incoming telephone calls. It states that personnel shall give proper identification when answering the telephone, stating their unit of assignment and their name.

This Field Operations Directive provides direction for desk personnel and telephone operators answering incoming telephone calls, with the exception of 9-1-1 calls. This directive also stresses the importance of proper telephone demeanor and describes the Telephone Demeanor Audit program administered by Reserve Forces Bureau.

PROCEDURES

Standard Greeting for Station Operators

Station operators handle virtually all incoming calls during standard business hours, therefore, all calls received by the station operator shall be answered as follows:

Example:

"**Century Sheriff's Station Operator, how may I direct your call?**"

Standard Greeting for all Station Personnel

When station operators are not available to answer incoming calls, calls are automatically forwarded to the station desk. Station desk personnel and all other station personnel shall answer all non-9-1-1 calls in the following manner:

- State the name of the unit or station
- State your rank or title,
- Ask, “how may I help you?”

Examples:

(Deputy) “**Temple Sheriff's Station, Deputy Thomas, how may I help you?**”

(Professional Staff) “**Century Sheriff's Station, Mr./Ms./Miss Jones, how may I help you?**”

Optional Generic Greeting for all Station Personnel

Stations who serve contract cities may choose to have a more "generic" greeting. In these instances, personnel answering telephones should delete the station's name in their greeting and replace it with "Good morning", "Good afternoon", or "Good evening" (depending on the time of day).

Examples:

(Operator) “**Good afternoon, Sheriff’s station, how may I direct your call?**”

(Deputy) “**Good morning, Sheriff’s station, Deputy Thomas, how may I help you?**”

(Professional Staff) “**Good Evening, Sheriff's Station, Mr./Ms./Miss Jones, how may I help you?**”

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 pleasant tone
- Listen closely
- Be helpful
- Empathize
- Avoid Department/police jargon

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

Telephone Demeanor Audits

To ensure compliance with Department policy and this Field Operations Directive, random audits will be conducted. The result of these audits will be reported to the Office of the Undersheriff 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 FOD (a sample commendation is attached). Unit Commanders shall take appropriate administrative action regarding employees who demonstrated substandard performance in an area covered by the audit.

In an effort to improve our relationship with the people we serve, this Field Operations Directive shall be implemented immediately at all Field Operations Regions assignments.