

## Telephone Procedures #0010

### **PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of the Fire Camp Training Unit that personnel shall handle all telephone contacts in an efficient and professional manner. To ensure compliance with this policy, this Unit Order has been implemented. For many citizens, their only contact with law enforcement will be over the telephone. Establishing and maintaining good public relations and fostering a professional image is the responsibility of all department personnel. The manner in which a caller is handled will have a direct effect on how the individual perceives us and how we do our job.

### **Incoming Calls:**

All incoming calls shall be answered promptly and professionally. Personnel shall be courteous in their demeanor at all times. Personnel shall properly identify themselves and the unit being called. Ideally, the following three phases will be used when answering the station telephone:

1. Los Angeles County Sheriff, East Facility/Fire Camp
2. Your Rank and Name, (CA personnel shall refer to themselves as "Officer").
3. "How may I help you?"

It is well understood that under certain circumstances, personnel may not be in the position to parrot each word of the greeting in the exact order and terminology. The above-referenced greeting is to be considered a guideline for phone-answering demeanor. The most important factor to remember is that personnel interacting with the public over the phone shall always be professional and courteous. There is absolutely no excuse for being rude or abrupt when dealing with the public.

### **Outgoing Calls:**

County telephones shall be used for County business only. Absent an emergent situation and/or authorization from a supervisor holding the rank of sergeant or above, personal calls shall not be made on County phone equipment. Personnel making outgoing business calls shall use the SETS or other tie lines whenever possible. Personnel shall plan all calls before placing them in order to avoid unnecessary phone expenses. Once the individual or unit has been contacted, personnel shall properly identify themselves and state the reason for the call.

### **NOTE:**

The telephone bills are routinely audited. Any noted abuse of the County phone system may result in a requirement to reimburse the County for the expense incurred, as well as subject the caller to disciplinary action.

### **Toll and/or Long Distance Calls:**

Normally, personnel holding the rank of captain or above are authorized to make any toll or long distance call they determine to be necessary. Personnel holding the rank of lieutenant are authorized to make calls anywhere within the State of California. Deputy and sergeant personnel are authorized to make calls anywhere

within the contiguous counties of Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Kern. Other Department members are authorized to make toll calls only to other Sheriff's facilities and other government agencies within Los Angeles County.

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