



COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Policy No. 4210	Date Issued: June 1, 1996
Section: 4200 – Officer Safety	Date Revised: February 14, 2022
SUBJECT: COVER UNITS	
APPROVED: <signed copy on file>	_____
	Chairperson, Law Enforcement Users Subcommittee
APPROVED: <signed copy on file>	_____
	Amethyst Uchida, General Manager

1.0 Purpose

To provide guidelines to dispatchers assigning cover units on initial dispatch of calls and also at the request of units in the field.

2.0 Initial Dispatch

Dispatchers will designate cover units during the initial dispatch of all high priority/officer at risk details. An assigned cover unit should be the closest, available unit. Units' availability can be affected by their patrol assignment, particularly if it is a special assignment (for example, plain clothes, foot or bike patrol). Dispatchers will notify the appropriate patrol supervisor of all high priority/officer at risk details.

If a priority call requires two units and only one unit is available, dispatchers will:

- ◆ Assign the detail to the primary unit and the nearest unit not committed to a priority detail.

If a second, cover unit is unavailable, dispatchers will:

- ◆ Notify the patrol supervisor immediately.
- ◆ If the patrol supervisor is unavailable, dispatchers will request a cover unit from the closest, neighboring jurisdiction

3.0 Field Requested

Officers requesting cover should specify the appropriate response code.

If a nonspecific request for cover is received, dispatchers will attempt one contact with the requesting unit to obtain the response code. If the requesting unit does not respond, dispatchers will:

- ◆ Assign the nearest unit not committed to a priority detail.
- ◆ After cover unit acknowledges, provide additional information regarding circumstances and status of the requesting unit.
- ◆ Notify the patrol supervisor of the cover request and the cover unit's response code (if known).

4.0 Outside Agency Requests

Dispatchers may also request cover from another agency, not limited to JPA agencies. This may be in addition to dispatching cover unit(s) from the local agency. Outside agencies will be requested to respond code 2 unless the requesting unit specified code 3 cover. Other local agency officers may upgrade an outside agency response to code 3. Notify the patrol supervisor of all outside agency responses.

When requesting a non-priority cover unit from outside agencies, dispatchers will:

- ◆ Attempt to notify the patrol supervisor prior to requesting the cover unit.
- ◆ If the patrol supervisor is not available, request the cover unit and notify the patrol supervisor as soon as possible.

When responding to a request for non-priority cover from an outside agency, dispatchers will:

- ◆ Attempt to notify the patrol supervisor prior to dispatching the cover unit.
- ◆ If the patrol supervisor is not available, dispatch the cover unit and notify the patrol supervisor as soon as possible.
- ◆ Dispatch the closest, available unit to outside agency requests for cover.

When requesting or responding to a code 3 cover unit from outside agencies, dispatchers will:

- ◆ Immediately request or dispatch the code 3 cover unit.
- ◆ Notify the patrol supervisor of the request or dispatch as soon as possible.