COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS
LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Policy No.	**4420**	Date Issued:	June 1, 1996
Section:	4400 – Telephone Procedures	Date Revised:	March 14, 2022

SUBJECT: PRIORITIZING CALLS FOR SERVICE/INCIDENT PRIORITIES

APPROVED: <signed copy on file>

Chairperson, Law Enforcement Users Subcommittee

APPROVED: <signed copy on file>

Amethyst Uchida, General Manager

1.0   **Purpose**

Dispatchers should carefully evaluate every call. A calm voice does not always indicate a non-emergency call and many persons who believe themselves familiar with police terminology may give the wrong impression of the type of service needed. Still others may be very excited and upset over a relatively minor problem. Take enough time to determine the exact nature of the call and its urgency. The purpose of this policy is to specifically identify incident priorities in the computer aided dispatch (CAD) environment.

2.0   **Incident Priorities**

Prioritizing calls for service is to sort out those calls that require an emergency response, an immediate response, a routine response, or referral to another agency or department. Because all dispatchers are required to handle multiple incoming telephone lines and pending calls for service to be radio dispatched, a clear understanding of the prioritization of calls for service is vital.

The CAD system uses a 0-9 prioritization scale; 0 being the highest priority and 9 the lowest.

First priority calls = CAD priorities of 0, 1 or 2

Second priority calls = CAD priorities of 3

Third priority calls = CAD priorities of 4, 5, or 6

Fourth priority calls=CAD priorities of 7, 8 or 9

2.1.1. **First Priority (Red)**

The highest priority calls are those in which the physical safety of a person is in jeopardy. Examples would include but are not limited to: injury traffic accidents; suicide attempts; robberies; robbery alarms; crimes involving weapons; fights; burglaries to an occupied dwelling; domestic disputes; prowlers; large scale disasters (e.g., plane down); fires; person down; violent 5150/EDP; etc.

2.1.2. **Second Priority (Blue)**

The second highest priority calls are typically in-progress calls involving criminal activity where the threat involves property and/or non-violent crimes. These calls for service do not require a full emergency response; however, they do necessitate a "high code-two" response and must be dispatched immediately. Carefully evaluate all calls of this type to ensure accurately that no person is in immediate danger. Examples would include, but are not limited to: ; welfare check that has potential for bodily injury; vehicle theft in progress.

2.1.3. **Third Priority (Yellow)**

These types of calls do not typically involve criminal activity where there is an immediate threat to persons or property. These calls for service do not require an emergency response, but do require a prompt response as soon as possible. Examples would include, but are not limited to suspicious persons or activity; trespass; loud parties; audible alarms.

2.1.4. **Fourth Priority (Green)**

These calls for service involve crimes where the time element dictates that no person or property is in jeopardy, are informational in nature, or are "public nuisance" type calls. Examples would include, but are not limited to: cold reports; barking dogs; parking violations.

3.0   While each incident type has an assigned priority, the dispatcher is responsible for ensuring each call is accurately prioritized. If circumstances exist which would lead the dispatcher to believe that an incident's priority is more urgent, the dispatcher will increase the assigned priority. Whenever there is any doubt about increasing a priority, the dispatcher should err on the side of increasing the priority. It is important to remember that priorities are relative. When evaluating the appropriateness of an incident's assigned priority, the dispatcher should look at any other calls which may be pending and prioritize in relation to those pending calls and within the guidelines of this policy.