

### Communications

The Communications Division handles a high volume of both non-emergency and emergency phone calls 24 hours a day. Any 911 call placed from a landline phone, or from a cell phone within the city limits, is directed to the Communications Center located within the Covina Police Department, including those calls requesting service from the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Police/Fire dispatchers are responsible for keeping track of all activity, officer initiated and radio call, and continuous monitoring of the activity to ensure the safety of officers in the field. Dispatchers also prioritize all incoming calls for service, and dispatch them in order of priority.

Calls for service are prioritized into five categories and dispatched in order of priority. Examples of a priority one call are crimes in progress or just occurred, that require immediate police response. Lower priority calls include report calls, such as thefts, vandalism, and burglaries that are discovered after the crime was completed and suspects are no longer present.

Dispatch is never staffed with less than two dispatchers and rarely staffed with more than two. Dispatchers work as a team, with one primarily responsible for taking calls, while the other is primarily responsible for communicating with officers in the field. There is however quite a bit of overlap of responsibilities, particularly as activity increases, and all dispatchers are trained to perform all dispatch functions.

Dispatchers must multi-task well to be effective. Often they are simultaneously communicating with officers in the field, talking to citizens on the phone, and typing information into the Computer Aided Dispatch System. Should the need arise for you to call into the Covina Police Department, you should understand there is a considerable amount of critical information dispatchers attempt to obtain from callers as quickly as possible, so they can simultaneously relay this information to responding officers. Doing so creates the best chance for us to respond in the manner safest for the community, the officers involved, and creates the best possible chance of apprehending criminal suspects.