



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedures Manual

REFERENCE:

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to provide guidance to Portage Police Department employees for radio traffic and telephone conduct.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. PROCEDURE

I. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Portage Police Department that all employees conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner when communicating with each other, other agencies or businesses, and the general public when using the radio system or telephone system.

II. PROCEDURE

- A. The communications process for the Portage Police Department is provided by the Columbia County Dispatch Center (CCDC). The CCDC provides 24-hour service including; toll-free access for emergency calls, continuous dispatch services to-and-from field officers as well as all personnel on duty, CAD services, resource availability, immediate playback capability, criminal justice information systems, inter-jurisdictional communications, misdirected emergency calls, private security alarms, and first aid instruction.
- B. Radio Traffic Conduct. Radio traffic shall:

1. Be Brief on conversation.
2. Engage in radio conversation that pertains only to official business.
3. Maintain radio system discipline.
4. Commentary:

Radio traffic shall be responsible, efficient and courteous. Department members engaged in radio traffic should exercise extreme courtesy and extend maximum consideration, understanding and cooperation to both the public and the members of the CCDC and the department.

C. Radio Etiquette.

1. All officers of this department shall become acquainted with correct radio operation and procedures.
2. All officers, when using the radio, shall speak in a loud and clear voice so the operator and other units can understand the officer the first time without repeating the message again.

All radio conversations shall be limited to law enforcement business only. At no time shall an officer use insulting language or conduct business via the radio. Further, officers shall not make derogatory remarks about complaints, citizens or fellow employees. At no time shall an officer use discourteous, obscene or disrespectful language during the transmission of a radio message.

3. Officers should realize that their radios are constantly being monitored by citizens of the community and shall be guided accordingly in their conversations.
4. Officers shall keep their radios turned on and tuned to the Columbia Main channel unless instructed otherwise or if on a special assignment. Before an officer leaves their vehicle, they shall give their location where they will be at either by radio or MDC. Officers will be in radio contact with the CCDC at all times while on duty.
5. Whenever an assignment is completed, officers shall advise the CCDC by radio or MDC.

D. Telephone Procedures.

1. The telephone system within the department is to be used primarily for business calls.
2. Local calls of a personal nature are not forbidden, however they should be limited in numbers and duration.

4. Answering of Telephone Calls.

- a) Be polite, patient and understanding.
- b) If the caller is to be transferred, ask for their name "May I please ask who is calling". Ask for a number in case the call is lost. Then announce the call to the person it is directed to and then transfer it.
- c) If the person requested is not available for calls, advise the caller and ask if they would like to be transferred to voice mail.

5. Recorded Lines.

- a) The department does not have any recorded lines. If recording is necessary officers can use their body cameras or Dictaphones.

7. Communications and the Open Records Law.

- a) The Wisconsin Open Records Law essentially states that any record generated by government must be preserved and be available for public inspection upon appropriate request. All communications from department laptops, telephones, as well as radio voice communications fall within the category of "records" for the purposes of this law. These "records" are available for public inspection upon request. Said records will only be made available and/or released by the department's records custodian.

Keith J. Klafke
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 04/07/2025