

	Houston Independent School District Police Department Directives	DIRECTIVE: 460-006
		EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2, 2022
	SUBJECT: Response Management Priorities	REVISED DATE: Date February 13th, 2022

PURPOSE

This directive aims to describe the response priorities of the Houston Independent School District Police Department. This directive applies to all Houston Independent School District Police Department personnel.

DEFINITIONS

Assist Event: Any event for which emergency assistance is requested by or for any police or fire department personnel.

Call Code: A code representing the type of event, offense, or incident for which a call for service or on-view activity is being entered.

Call for Service or Event: A record of a caller's request for police service or an event on-viewed by an officer that is entered into the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

Call Taker: An employee of the Houston Independent School District Police Department Emergency Communications Center (ECC) designated to enter calls for service into the CAD system as they are received from the public or officers.

Call Type: A call code represents the type of event, offense, or incident. Also, event type.

Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD): The Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system consists of the software and hardware that facilitates the management of calls for service and unit activity, among other functions.

Mobile Computing Terminal (MCT): Consists of the software and hardware that facilitates communications of data between field personnel and stationary users or sources, including, but not limited to, the CAD system, the department's records management system, and various federal, state, and local databases approved for law enforcement use.

CALL MANAGEMENT

The dispatcher speaks with the authority of the Chief of Police. Officers respond promptly to the dispatcher and carry out their assignments courteously and promptly. Emergency Communications Center (ECC) and field supervisors may reassign calls with due consideration of all relevant information to carry out the police mission.

When calls for service are dispatched, officers will respond appropriately based upon assigned response code priorities. Based upon additional information from an officer

on the scene, or a field supervisor, the Telecommunicator may change the code or cancel the response. On all calls, where there is a high expectation for a rapid police response, Telecommunicators may raise the priority of the call. If there is some question about what kind of police response is appropriate, the following should be followed:

1. Telecommunications personnel should always use their best judgment and send a police unit when in doubt.
2. Telecommunications personnel cannot downgrade a priority classification without supervisory approval or request from the officer on scene or the primary officer.
3. The officer or officers involved in a Code One or Code Two response will weigh the risks against the danger to the public, themselves, and fellow officers continually. If the risk of danger outweighs the benefits of the response, the response shall be slowed down or terminated immediately.
4. Emergency vehicles shall be operated in accordance with Transportation Code Chapter 546.

CATEGORIES OF RESPONSE CALLS

PRIORITY "E" – HIGH PRIORITY

Priority "E" represents an assist the officer or firefighter or pursuit situations. It assumes that a potential threat to life or the potential threat of serious bodily injury to an officer or firefighter is in progress.

HISD Police Department Telecommunications personnel will initiate an emergency tone before dispatching to indicate an emergency. The tone will alert the officers to a higher state of awareness. A Priority E response will not be made for a property crime.

A standard response to priority "One" calls for service is by uniformed officers in marked vehicles using emergency lights and a siren and who remain at this response level until a supervisor, a unit, or dispatcher advises the situation is under control. When advised of such, officers who have not arrived on the scene shall reduce their response to the priority dictated by the dispatcher but shall continue to the scene unless otherwise instructed by a patrol supervisor or dispatcher.

If weather, road, and traffic conditions permit, the responding officer(s) may exceed the speed limit with caution. Officers will yield at intersections before proceeding through safely. Officers shall exercise a particularly high level of caution when responding through residential neighborhoods. In a Priority E response, the safety of both the officer and the public shall be of paramount importance.

A non-standard response to priority one calls includes officers who may be near a priority "E" call while in plain clothes and unmarked vehicles (e.g., investigators, plainclothes officers). When responding to the call, officers shall respond as quickly as they can safely do so.

Any responding unit that may be delayed for any reason (e.g., heavy rain, coming from a station, or a considerable distance from the call location, the unit shall advise the dispatcher by radio only as to the circumstances causing the delay.

PRIORITY ONE

Priority one assumes that a potential threat to life or serious bodily injury is in progress and is used for all urgent calls other than assisting the officer or firefighter or pursuit calls.

A standard response to priority one calls for service is by uniformed officers in marked vehicles using emergency lights and a siren. However, if circumstances are such that the officer believes that an optional response (priority one silent, priority two, or lower) is most appropriate, then the officer may opt to run the call in that mode, but the dispatcher must be immediately advised of the deviation from the standard response.

Any responding unit that may be delayed for any reason (e.g., coming from the station, heavy rain, or at a considerable distance from the call location) shall advise the dispatcher by radio only as to the circumstances causing the delay.

The dispatcher retains the discretion to request officers to send a message via the mobile computing terminal (MCT) when responding to preserve the radio air for emergency traffic.

Examples of Priority One Calls:

- a) Multiple trip alarms zone trips
- b) Adults dispute on campus (no weapon)
- c) Students fighting before and after school
- d) Students fighting on a bus
- e) Bus accident (with injuries)
- f) Bomb threat
- g) Threats on school personnel (no weapons)
- h) 911 hang-up
- i) Non-life-threatening calls in progress.

PRIORITY TWO

Priority two calls for service represent in progress property crimes and a potential threat to human welfare and assume that if not in progress, the event recently occurred or response to the scene is urgent.

Standard response to priority two calls for service is without emergency equipment. However, if the situation warrants the use of emergency equipment, the officer has the option to use that mode, but that decision must be immediately communicated verbally to the dispatcher.

Any responding unit that may be delayed for any reason (e.g., coming from the station, heavy rain, or at a considerable distance from the call location) shall advise the dispatcher by radio about the circumstances causing the delay dispatcher can adjust on responding units.

PRIORITY THREE

Priority three calls are incidents in which no known emergency exists, there is a delay in reporting serious criminal incidents, and/or there is a delayed report of criminal incidents that are non-violent, such as property crimes, various 9-1-1 and specific alarm calls. However, such calls should be handled expeditiously because of the potential for the situation to escalate or the potential for criminal activity to occur.

No emergency lights or sirens shall be used unless the officer has additional information justifying the use of emergency equipment. Officers responding to priority three calls for service shall obey all traffic laws.

Examples of Priority Three Calls:

- a) Bus accidents (no injuries)
- b) Report call
- c) Student misbehaving on campus (no weapon)
- d) Single trip alarms

OFFICERS RESPONSIBILITIES

When responding to priority "E," one or two calls for service using emergency equipment, officers must drive with due regard for their safety, fellow officers, and citizens. Units will travel directly to the scene and will not stop any traffic violators or other persons for minor offenses.

Field personnel shall notify their dispatcher via the radio when en route to and arriving on priority "E," one, or two calls for service, unless otherwise directed. Responding officers must advise the dispatcher by radio of any delays in their response and all status updates such as en route, arrived, under control, or clear. Field personnel are responsible for updating their unit status in a timely and proper fashion. Deviations from established procedures shall not be condoned.

A priority three calls for service requires a directed response, which means the officer must proceed to the call without unnecessary delay. However, if while responding, the officer on-views a situation more serious than the call assignment, then:

- a) The officer must immediately inform the dispatcher of his location and activity.
- b) Once the immediate situation has been handled, the officer must proceed directly to the originally assigned priority three, four, or five calls unless the dispatcher has reassigned the call. c) If the on-viewed situation is one in which the officer cannot proceed to the assigned call on time, the officer must inform his supervisor of the situation causing the extended delay.

Officers who volunteer to handle calls for service from their MCTs must take the highest priority calls first (e.g., priority three versus priority four or five). Unless their proximity to a call is so close, they take the lower priority call first.

While field personnel are on duty, they shall be directly available via radio and MCT or at least by radio if not in their vehicle. If not available, they must obtain authorization from a supervisor and relay the authorizing supervisor's name or unit number to the appropriate dispatcher.

SUPERVISORS' RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS:

Occasionally circumstances require the presence of a supervisor at the scene of an incident to assume command with authority to deal with the situation or to provide supervisory assistance to those officers who have been assigned to the incident.

Incidents requiring the presence of a supervisor include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Police vehicle involved in a crash
- b) Explosives, bombs, and bomb threats
- c) Special events
- d) Hostage situations, an unusual occurrence
- e) Emergency driving pursuits/non-pursuits
- f) Civil disturbances, crowd control
- g) Major crime scenes
- h) Deceased persons
- i) Natural disasters, fires, hazardous materials, or other incidents that may threaten public safety
- j) Response to Resistance
- k) Suspicious mail/packages
- l) Use of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
- m) Incidents involving mass arrest (four or more offenders)
- n) Seriously Ill / injured prisoner
- o) Escaped Prisoner
- p) Newsworthy/significant event
- q) At the officer's request

Approved By


Pedro Lopez Jr., Chief of Police