

# **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATOR – DISPATCHER**

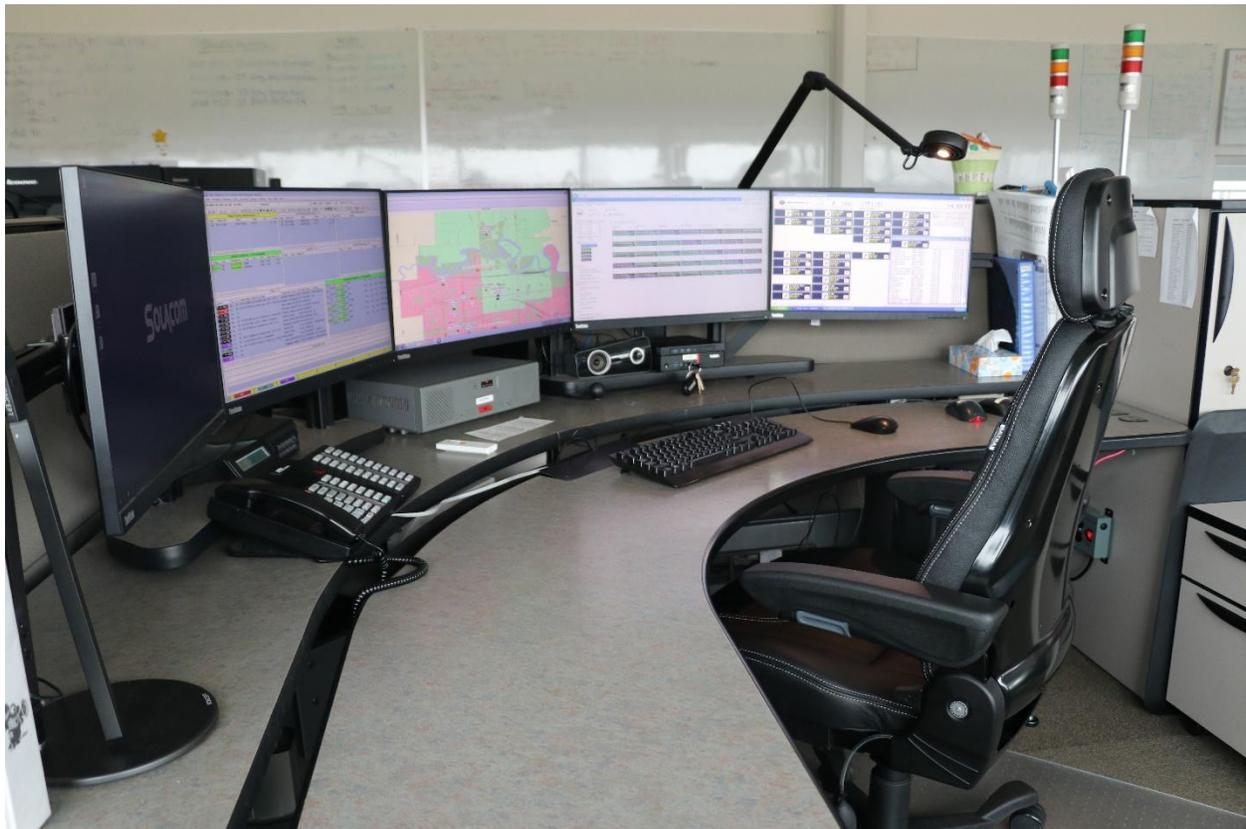
## **APPLICANT HANDBOOK**

**COMPETITION #197**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CITY OF BRANDON PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION CENTRE.....	4
COMPETITION WELCOME.....	5
COMPETITION OVERVIEW.....	6
SELECTION PROCESS.....	6
PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING.....	8
TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT OFFER.....	10
COMPETITION PROCESS SUMMARY.....	12
SELF- SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE.....	16





## Brandon Public-Safety Communication Centre

120 - 19th St. North. Brandon, MB R7B 3X6  
204-729-2406 [bpcc@brandon.ca](mailto:bpcc@brandon.ca)



Dear Applicants:

### Welcome to the City of Brandon's Public Safety Communications Department

Thank you for your interest in joining the Brandon Public-Safety Communication Centre (BPCC). We're excited that you're considering a career in public safety communications—a field that is both challenging and deeply rewarding.

At BPCC, our team of dedicated professionals serves as the first point of contact in emergency situations for communities across Manitoba. Public Safety Communicators play a vital role in assessing critical 911 calls, dispatching nearly 200 rural fire departments, and coordinating emergency responses alongside law enforcement and provincial agencies.

If you choose to apply and are selected to move forward in the competition process, you'll begin training in 911 and Fire Operation Call Taking and Dispatching. This foundational training will equip you with the skills needed to handle emergency calls and dispatch fire services effectively. Throughout the process, our experienced trainers and supervisors will support you as you build confidence and grow into the role.

We're looking for individuals who are calm under pressure, committed to public service, and eager to make a meaningful impact in their communities. If that sounds like you, we encourage you to apply and take the first step toward a fulfilling career in public safety communications.

Should you have any questions about the application process or the role itself, please don't hesitate to reach out to human resources or contact me directly.

We look forward to learning more about you—and potentially welcoming you to BPCC. Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert Stewart".

**Robert Stewart**

Director of Public Safety Communications  
204-729-2406 | [r.stewart@brandon.ca](mailto:r.stewart@brandon.ca)

## **CITY OF BRANDON PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION CENTRE**

The Brandon Public Safety Communication Centre is located at Fire Hall #1 in Brandon Manitoba. The Centre is operated by the City of Brandon, under license to the Province of Manitoba. The Centre has been providing continuous 24/7, call taking and dispatch services since 1997.

The Centre provides 911 services to over 520,000 Manitobans outside the City of Winnipeg with service contracts in almost 190 communities. These include 140 Municipalities, Towns and Cities, 28 Provincial Parks, 1 Federal Park, 9 First Nations and 11 Northern Associations of Community Councils. The Centre receives approximately 171,000 911 calls per year.

The Centre provides dispatcher services to many different service providers. Clients served include Brandon Police Service, Rural Police Agencies, First Nations communities, and over 194 Fire Departments. The Centre also coordinates calls between Provincial Ambulance, RCMP and a number of other emergency services organizations.

The Department currently has a staff complement of 40 employees which consists of 32 Call Taker/Dispatchers, 4 Supervisors, a Quality Assurance and Training Coordinator, administrative support staff, Manager of Public Safety Communications, and the Director of Public Safety Communications.

Employees are represented by the Brandon Professional Firefighter's/Paramedic Association. The Association negotiates a Collective Agreement with the City on behalf of its members. The Agreement sets out salaries, benefits, and working conditions.

## **COMPETITION WELCOME**

Check out our promotional video to hear directly from our staff about what this role is like and to get a behind-the-scenes look at Brandon's Public Safety Communication Centre: [Public-Safety Communications is Hiring - YouTube](#)

Thank you for your interest in the Public Safety Communicator position. This role is more than just a job, it's a career where your skills, dedication and professionalism make a direct impact on the safety and well-being of our community.

As the first point of contact in an emergency, you will play a vital role in saving lives and protecting property. Every call you take, every decision you make, and every instruction you give will help ensure that the right help arrives at the right time. While work can be fast paced and challenging, it is also deeply rewarding.

At the City of Brandon - Public Safety Communications, we are committed to fostering a workplace where our operators feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. As such, we are proud to offer:

- **Competitive Compensation** – Reflecting the value of your expertise and dedication.
- **Comprehensive Benefits & Pension Plans** – Investment in supporting your health, well-being, and future.
- **Extensive Training & Mentorship** – Equipping you with the tools and guidance to excel in your role.
- **Career Development Opportunities** – Encouraging growth through clear pathways and advancement potential.
- **Collaborative Work Environment** – Built on respect, teamwork, and shared success.

Joining our team means joining a network of professionals who are committed to public service and who take pride in being the calming voice during someone's most difficult moments. The City of Brandon is dedicated to investing in your success and providing you with the resources needed to thrive both on and off the job.

This handbook will guide you through the application process, training expectations, and many benefits of a career as a Public Safety Communicator. We invite you to learn more about how your skills and commitment can make a meaningful difference every day.

### **COMPETITION ADMINISTRATORS:**

**Holly Van Zeben – HR Generalist**  
**Kourtney Hall – HR Recruitment Assistant**  
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Brandon MB R7A 6A2  
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[r.stewart@brandon.ca](mailto:r.stewart@brandon.ca)

## **COMPETITION OVERVIEW**

The following pages provide detailed information to help address any questions you may have about the competition and the expectations for candidates. We encourage you to review this material thoroughly before reaching out to the City of Brandon Human Resources Department with inquiries.

**The competition process from application to initial employment offer can take up to 6 months.**

1. Selection Process
2. Pre-employment Screening Stage
3. Training & Employment Offer

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

### **A. SCREENING**

Applicant resume and cover letter will be screened based on whether they meet the mandatory education and experience listed in the Public Safety Communicator Job Description.

### **B. TESTING**

#### **Typing Test**

The initial test is a typing speed test. The mandatory minimum for successful completion of this stage is 40 wpm net. The testing can be completed at home or you have the option of coming to City Hall (Human Resources Department – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor) to complete this test. The test takes approximately 10 minutes (with practice test) to complete.

#### **ECOMM Test**

The second step is the ECOMM National testing which consists of three (3) parts and is hosted by the City of Brandon in a classroom setting. During ECOMM testing there are 3 main sections:

- ECOMM National CallTaker Video Test
- ECOMM National Recording Pertinent Information Test
- ECOMM National Dispatcher Test

The ECOMM video-based tests portray situations that could be faced in the Public Safety Communicator position. Candidates are required to analyze situations and make quick judgments about how to respond.

To complete the ECOMM testing, you will have to attend City Hall or the Fire Hall for 3 hours of testing. Dates and locations will be confirmed for those moving forward in the competition.

## **C. INTERVIEW**

The City of Brandon asks candidates to use the STAR method to answer behavioral based interview questions.

### **What is the STAR method?**

The STAR method is used to answer behavioral interview questions by describing real past experiences.

### **STAR stands for:**

Situation – What was the context?

Task – What was your responsibility?

Action – What steps did you take?

Result – What was the outcome or what did you learn?

### **What Types of Questions to Expect:**

You'll be asked to describe how you handled situations involving:

- Conflict
- Deadlines
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Mistakes or challenges
- Other questions related to the position and its competencies

### **How to Prepare:**

- Think of specific examples from past jobs, school, or volunteer work.
- Practice telling your stories using the STAR format.
- Focus on your role, what you did, and what happened as a result.
- Be honest and reflective—lessons learned are just as important as success.

### **Example Question:**

“Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult coworker.”

Your STAR answer might look like:

S: I worked on a team project with someone who often missed deadlines.

T: I needed to ensure the project stayed on track.

A: I spoke with them privately, clarified expectations, and offered help.

R: They improved their communication, and we completed the project on time.

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING**

Candidates who are successful through the interview stage will be subject to a thorough background investigation and will be required to pass a Criminal Record Check, to the Brandon Police Services' satisfaction, prior to being considered further for employment. Additionally, candidates will be subject to psychological testing and a polygraph.

**Prospective candidates should thoroughly consider their past history and current life circumstances before making a formal application for this position.**

Candidates successful in the pre-employment screening stage will be ranked and offered a training position in the Public Safety Communications Department.

### **A. INITIAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

- Completed online profile/application in the City of Brandon Job Bank
- Resume & Cover Letter indicating how the applicant meets the mandatory qualifications, submitted to the job posting online.

### **B. SUBSEQUENT DOCUMENTATION**

Candidates who are successful in the testing phase will be required to provide:

- Hearing test results (documentation must be current - dated within one year of the submission deadline date).
- Vision test results (documentation must be current – dated within one year of the submission deadline date).
- Background investigation documentation includes birth certificate, education diplomas and certification, social insurance number, driver's license, marriage license, and medical insurance card.
  - **Please be aware that the background investigation is in-depth and will assess your suitability for the role and required security clearances. You will be required to share intimate details of your personal life. The background investigation includes substance use disclosure, providing access to social media accounts, interviews with a Background Investigator, a polygraph, fingerprinting, Criminal Record Check, Vulnerable Sector Check, and Child & Adult Abuse Registry Checks.**
- Psychological Assessment Questionnaire

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to the costs involved with certifications listed, it is not necessary for candidates to obtain these certifications prior to successfully completing the interview stage.

Any fees associated with obtaining the required documentation (such as vision test, hearing test) are the responsibility of the candidate. It is possible there may be other costs that we are not aware of at this point.

**We include this so you are fully aware there are costs associated with pursuing this application. Your ability to commit to the process in terms of travel time and costs should also be considered before making a formal application.**

## **C. VISION REQUIREMENTS**

The minimum vision standard in this competition is as follows:

- Acuity Best Corrected (either lenses or spectacles)
  - Distance: No worse than 20/30 both eyes open and examined together
  - Near: No worse than 20/30 equivalent both eyes open and examined together
- Binocular Vision
  - No diplopia
- Colour Vision
  - Normal: using Ishihara colour plates (or comparable test)
- Peripheral Vision
  - 130 degrees both eyes viewing

## **D. HEARING REQUIREMENTS**

The minimum hearing standard in this competition is as follows:

- Hearing loss no greater than 30dB averaged at 500Hz, 1000Hz, 2000Hz, and 3000Hz.

## **TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT OFFER**

### **A. TRAINING/INITIAL TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT**

Successful candidates will be offered employment on a temporary basis while they complete the required training to become Public Safety Communicators. During this period, employees are considered temporary and are not eligible for benefits. However, they will accrue sick time, which cannot be accessed until after three months of employment. Vacation pay is provided on each pay period in lieu of vacation time off.

Public Safety Communicators will undergo approximately 11 weeks of paid training, which includes both classroom instruction and on-the-job training. The classroom portion follows a schedule of five days per week, eight hours per day. Once classroom training is complete, candidates will transition to on-shift training, which follows a rotation of four days on and four days off, with each shift lasting ten hours.

The training program is designed to prepare candidates for the demands of the role and includes a variety of components such as mock scenarios, memory and multi-tasking exercises, mapping, oral and written communication practice, and computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data entry. This list is not exhaustive, and additional training tasks may be assigned as necessary. The training wage is \$30.48 per hour.

### **B. PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT OFFER**

Upon successful completion of the training program and authorization to work independently within the Communication Centre, employees will be offered permanent employment. At this stage, they become eligible for a comprehensive compensation and benefits package. This includes participation in the City of Brandon's Pension Plan, Group Life Insurance, Disability Income Protection, Dental Coverage, and the Employee Assistance Program. Permanent employees also receive paid overtime, accrue sick leave, and are entitled to vacation benefits. In addition, optional benefits are available and fully employee-funded, including Voluntary Accident Insurance, Family Life Insurance, Optional Life Insurance, Ambulance/Hospital Semi-Private Plan, Extended Health Coverage, and a Travel Health Plan.

The 2026 hourly rate for Step 1 Public Safety Communicators is \$30.48. Progression to higher pay steps is based on annual performance reviews and satisfactory job performance, in accordance with the collective agreement.

The Public Safety Communication Centre operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To support continuous operations, staff work 12-hour shifts on a rotating schedule of four days on followed by four days off. Shifts include days, nights, and weekends. Overtime may be required to cover absences due to vacation, illness, or other staffing needs. Punctuality is essential to ensure proper shift handover, maintain minimum staffing levels, and receive critical updates from the outgoing team.

### **C. SUPERVISION**

Public Safety Communicators report to the Shift Supervisor. Operational policies, procedures and the working agreement must be followed at all times.

### **D. SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The position of Public Safety Communicator falls under the working agreement negotiated between the City of Brandon and the Brandon Professional Firefighter/Paramedic Association (Public Safety Communications Operator-Dispatch Division). Salary and benefits are established through this bargaining process.

## COMPETITION PROCESS SUMMARY

STAGE	DETAILS
<b>ESTIMATED TIMELINE</b>	Up to 6 months from application to employment offer.
<b>APPLICATION &amp; SCREENING</b>	Submit resume and cover letter via City of Brandon Job Bank. Ensure application meets mandatory qualifications.
<b>TESTING</b>	Typing Test: Minimum 40 wpm net. ECOMM National Testing (3 parts): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CallTaker Video Test</li> <li>• Recording Pertinent Info Test</li> <li>• Dispatcher Test</li> </ul>
<b>INTERVIEW</b>	Behavioral interview using STAR method.
<b>PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING</b>	Extensive background investigation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal Record Check</li> <li>• Polygraph</li> <li>• Psychological Testing</li> <li>• Substance Use Disclosure</li> <li>• Fingerprinting</li> <li>• Social Media Review</li> <li>• Child &amp; Adult Abuse Registry Checks</li> <li>• Vulnerable Sector Check</li> <li>• Document Verification (ID, diplomas, etc.)</li> </ul> Vision & Hearing Tests required.
<b>TRAINING &amp; EMPLOYMENT</b>	Temporary Employment during training (classroom and on shift) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom: 5 days/week, 8 hrs/day</li> <li>• On-shift: 4 days on, 4 days off, 10-hr shifts</li> </ul> Training Wage: \$30.48/hour
<b>PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	Offered upon successful training completion. Full benefits, pension, and salary progression (starting at \$30.48/hour). Rotating 12-hour shifts, including nights and weekends.

<b>CITY OF BRANDON JOB DESCRIPTION</b>			
<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	Public Safety Communicator – Dispatcher		
<b>DIVISION:</b>	Fire & Emergency Services Division		
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Public Safety Communications		
<b>SECTION:</b>	***	<b>AFFILIATION:</b>	Fire
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Manager, Public Safety Communications	<b>STATUS:</b>	Permanent

### **PURPOSE OF POSITION**

The primary responsibility of a Public Safety Communicator is to receive emergency and non-emergency calls from the public for Police, Fire, and Ambulance services. Through effective information gathering, they assess the nature of each call, determine whether a response is required, and contact the appropriate responding agency when necessary. In addition, they are responsible for maintaining accurate logs, completing necessary paperwork, and entering data into computer systems for all calls and responding units.

The Brandon Public Safety Communication Centre provides services to all participating communities across the Province of Manitoba, excluding the City of Winnipeg. The Centre operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To ensure continuous coverage, Public Safety Communicators work rotating shifts.

### **TYPICAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Receive and process emergency and non-emergency calls from the public for Police, Fire, and Ambulance services.
- Assess the nature of incoming calls through effective information gathering and determine the appropriate response.
- Dispatch emergency services by contacting the relevant agency and providing accurate and timely information.
- Maintain detailed records including logs, reports, and computer data entries for all calls and responding units.
- Operate communication equipment including radios, telephones, and computer-aided dispatch systems.
- Work collaboratively with other dispatchers, call-takers, and emergency personnel to ensure coordinated response efforts.
- Follow established protocols and procedures to ensure consistency and accuracy in emergency response.
- Participate in mandatory training and maintain certifications required for dispatch operations.
- Work rotating shifts including days, nights, weekends, and holidays to ensure 24/7 coverage of the Brandon Public Safety Communication Centre.
- Support quality assurance efforts and may assist in training new staff or cross-training existing personnel.
- Respond to extraordinary circumstances and may be required to work beyond scheduled shifts to maintain minimum staffing levels.
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism in handling sensitive information and emergency situations.

**NOTE:** This description is not intended to limit the assignment of work or be construed as a complete list of the many duties to be performed by the incumbent.

## **POSITION QUALIFICATIONS**

### **KNOWLEDGE**

- Practical knowledge of exceptional customer service practices.
- Knowledge of protocol and policies used to monitor emergency situations effectively.
- Working knowledge of the geography of the Province and the City.

### **SKILLS**

- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to articulate concepts, verbally and in writing, in clear, concise, and accurate language.
- Strong interpersonal skills while working in a shared consultative manner, able to build relationships with a wide variety of individuals and organizations.
- Answer public, customer and employee inquiries and dispatch calls for assistance in a professional and courteous manner.
- Willingness to adapt to new technological changes and improvements while participating in continuous training, and self-development programs.
- Self-motivated and quality driven to perform independently.
- Proficient use and knowledge of computer equipment, operating systems, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Outlook.

### **ABILITIES**

- Ability to speak fluent English.
- Ability to perform clerical and administrative work for the Centre.
- Ability to exercise discretion and good judgment regarding sensitive and confidential issues.
- Ability to apply experience, judgment and knowledge of concepts, practices and procedure to independently accomplish duties.
- Ability to resolve issues in a timely manner.
- Ability to appropriately handle stressful situations.
- Ability to manage multiple unrelated calls and make independent decisions (daily).
- Ability to detach personal emotions and remain objective on both non-emergent and emergent calls.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Demonstrated ability to maintain a high level of consistency while multi-tasking over extended periods of time.
- Ability to maintain a positive attitude, contributing to a positive work atmosphere.

### **MANDATORY EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Must be 18 years of age or older and have completed Grade 12 or equivalent.
- Keyboarding speed of 40 w.p.m.
- Ability to pass a police security clearance including full background investigation (including substance use disclosure) and related checks (including Criminal Record Check, Child & Adult Abuse Registry Check, Vulnerable Sector Check).
- Ability to meet vision and hearing standards set by the Department.

### **PREFERRED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Knowledge of emergency and medical terminology to be effective in communicating with various agencies.
- Experience and knowledge of emergency services processes.
- Prior experience providing high level customer service.

**NOTE:** The qualifications are not intended to limit the opportunities for interested candidates but provide the candidates with an understanding of the level of expertise required in this position.

### **WORK CONDITIONS**

#### **PHYSICAL CONDITIONS & ABILITIES**

The duties of the Public Safety Communicator are carried out primarily in an office environment.

- Sits at a desk using keyboard and office equipment (daily).

#### **PSYCHOLOGICAL/STRESS CONDITIONS**

The Public Safety Communicator's workload and environment may affect an employee's emotional stress level.

- Interruptions and calls from multiple areas (daily).
- Converse with upset, distraught, and/or confused customers (daily).
- Ability to work all shifts 24/7, days, weekends, and holidays.
- Ability to work without scheduled breaks when workload dictates.
- Short periods of intense concentration while assisting customers (frequently).
- Brief periods of time in which an extremely short amount of time is available to complete a project or task (frequently).
- Extended periods of time in which information sought by the public must be kept confidential (frequently).

**NOTE:** The conditions described are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

## **SELF- SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATOR**

The following requirements need to be understood by all applicants for this position. Please carefully consider your answer to each question. The Self-Screening Questionnaire is for your use in determining whether you are making the correct decision in applying for a position as a Public Safety Communicator. You are not required to return the completed Questionnaire with your application.

1. Are you willing and able to work a large percentage of weekends and holidays? (including those that fall on actual or recognized religious holidays)

Yes  No

2. Are you willing and able to work any shift assigned? (i.e., day, evening or night shift)

Yes  No

3. Are you willing to accept last-minute changes in your work schedule that might require you to cancel personal plans?

Yes  No

4. Are you willing and able to work emergency call-in overtime?

Yes  No

5. Are you willing to be subjected to occasional abusive and profane language over the phone by callers?

Yes  No

6. Are you willing to take directions and corrections from a supervisor in front of your peers?

Yes  No

7. There may be times when you are required to forego breaks due to understaffing or shift activity. Are you willing to give up breaks, when necessary?

Yes  No

8. Are you willing and able to remain at the same workstation (seated or standing) for extended periods at a time?

Yes  No

9. Are you willing to read and study several hundred pages of manuals, complete assignments and take written tests during your training period?

Yes  No

10. Are you able to understand and accept that when you process a call incorrectly it could contribute to someone's property being lost or damaged, or someone being seriously injured or dying?

Yes  No

11. Are you willing to accept close supervision and daily critique of your work performance during the on-the-job training period?

Yes  No

12. Are you willing and able to deal calmly and respectfully with angry people when the problem is not your fault?

Yes  No

13. Are you willing and able to handle workloads that may change dramatically during the course of the shift (e.g., periods of high activity, followed by periods of low activity)?

Yes  No

14. If you smoke, are you willing to go without a cigarette for an entire shift if necessary, or smoke only during unscheduled breaks or lunch periods?

Yes  No

15. Are you willing to work under electronic surveillance of all telephone and radio messages?

Yes  No

16. Are you willing to accept that you typically will not know the outcome of an incident?

Yes  No

18. Are you willing to work overtime, before or after a shift, sometimes with little or no notice?

Yes  No

19. Are you willing to have regular and predictable attendance?

Yes  No

20. Are you willing to arrive at work 10 minutes prior to your shift (to receive updates from the shift leaving)?

Yes  No

21. Are you willing to work in a unionized work environment?

Yes  No

22. Can you work effectively in a team environment?

Yes  No

23. Can you exercise sound judgment in stressful high pressure emergency situations?

Yes  No

24. Are you willing to have your personal, social, and family time disrupted because of the demands of your work schedule?

Yes  No

**THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS YOURS TO KEEP.  
IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS,  
PLEASE RECONSIDER APPLYING FOR THIS POSITION.**