



Core Competencies and Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Communications Training Officer (CTO)

APCO American National Standard 3.101.4-2026

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FOREWORD*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

The APCO American National Standard (ANS) 3.101.4-2026 outlines core competencies and minimum training standards for Public Safety Communications Training Officers (CTOs). It promotes a consistent, structured approach to training telecommunicators, aligning with federal, state, local, tribal, and departmental regulations while advancing CTO professional development.

CTOs are essential in their ability to mentor, assess, and guide public safety telecommunicators. To be effective, they must demonstrate technical proficiency, leadership, and instructional skills while upholding ethical and operational integrity. Agencies, in turn, are responsible for providing clear expectations, ongoing training, and ensuring regulatory compliance.

The standard addresses key areas:

- **Agency Responsibilities:** Define CTO qualifications, training expectations, and performance benchmarks.
- **Organizational Integrity:** Promote ethical conduct and policy adherence.
- **Training & Professional Competence:** Ensure CTOs are skilled in facilitation, coaching, and evaluation.
- **Technology:** Require proficiency in tools, equipment, and technology.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Uphold all applicable legal, regulatory, and policy requirements, including those established by federal, state, local, tribal, and departmental authorities, as well as relevant acts, mandates, and organizational charters.

This standard provides a structured framework for CTOs, fostering consistency, accountability, and professional excellence in public safety communications training. By implementing these guidelines, agencies can enhance the effectiveness and reliability of emergency response capabilities.

**Informative material and not a part of this American National Standard (ANS)*

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

SCOPE

This standard applies to those agencies that have adopted a formal program for training telecommunicators. This standard identifies the core competencies and minimum training requirements for Public Safety Communications Training Officers (CTO). This position is typically tasked with implementing training program(s) in accordance with federal, state, local, tribal, and departmental mandates.

PURPOSE

To define the core competencies and minimum training requirements of the individual who is generally tasked with training of agency employees on the essential duties, tasks, knowledge, and skills of a Public Safety Telecommunicator. The purpose of this standard is to provide a consistent foundation for the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to fulfill this critical function. This standard recognizes the need to supplement the core competencies and training identified within this standard with agency specific information.

Chapter Two

Agency Responsibilities

SCOPE

While most of this standard addresses the training of the CTO, this chapter outlines the agency's responsibilities for providing training to both new and veteran CTOs in accordance with this standard.

2.1 General Agency Responsibilities

2.1.1 The agency shall:

- 2.1.1.1 Establish the baseline qualifications in addition to requisite cognitive, effective, and psychomotor skills needed to achieve compliance with this standard.
- 2.1.1.2 Establish no less than these minimum training requirements while complying with federal, state, local, and tribal law to include but not limited to the American Disabilities Act (ADA), Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and Equal Employment Opportunity Laws.
- 2.1.1.3 Provide the CTO with information, in verbal, written and/or electronic formats, during an initial orientation regarding issues such as disciplinary processes, grievance processes, location of first aid supplies including Automated External Defibrillator (AED) if available, time keeping procedures, work hours and location of any associated offsite facilities.
- 2.1.1.4 Provide the CTO with information regarding response agency resources, i.e., SWAT, K9, Dive, Search and Rescue, HazMat, and other specialized responses, including location of public safety service buildings, apparatus and equipment, and emergency response planning documents.
- 2.1.1.5 Provide training and performance expectations to the CTO detailing responses to catastrophic, technological, or structural failure within the communications center, emergency evacuation plans, and recovery processes to ensure the continuity of operations.
- 2.1.1.6 Provide the CTO with information regarding access to and participation in programs including, but not limited to the following:
 - 2.1.1.6.1 Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)
 - 2.1.1.6.2 Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
 - 2.1.1.6.3 Peer Support
 - 2.1.1.6.4 Health and Wellness Programs

- 2.1.1.6.5 Safety/Risk Management Programs
- 2.1.1.6.6 Stress Management Techniques
- 2.1.1.7 Provide the CTO with access to appropriate state and federal regulations and labor practices, including, but not limited to the following:
 - 2.1.1.7.1 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - 2.1.1.7.2 Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
 - 2.1.1.7.3 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
 - 2.1.1.7.4 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability ACT (HIPAA)
 - 2.1.1.7.5 Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)
 - 2.1.1.7.6 Any applicable labor agreements
- 2.1.1.8 Define the job description and agency performance standards of the CTO.
- 2.1.1.9 Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of the position within a defined job description.
- 2.1.1.10 Provide for and support the position specific training and ongoing professional development, including benchmarks and timelines, of the CTO to meet agency performance standards and required certification and/or licenses.
- 2.1.1.11 Establish detailed and defined performance expectations as they align with the mission statement of the agency, providing and ensuring a clear understanding of those expectations.
- 2.1.1.12 Provide the CTO with an overview of its quality assurance process.
- 2.1.1.13 Have an established mechanism by which the job performance of the CTO is regularly reviewed and evaluated based upon accepted quality assurance practices and standards.
- 2.1.1.14 Ensure performance objectives are met by the CTO.
- 2.1.1.15 Regularly provide the CTO with a review of their performance as a CTO.
- 2.1.1.16 Provide a mechanism during the performance review wherein the CTO can identify goals and objectives to be accomplished in the course of employment.
- 2.1.1.17 Encourage the CTO to participate in solutions for agency needs not yet formally identified.

- 2.1.1.18 Provide applicable training and continuing education opportunities for the CTO in areas identified within the job description, performance expectations, and in the knowledge and skills identified in Chapter Four.
 - 2.1.1.19 Maintain a complete training record for the CTO according to applicable record retention guidelines.
 - 2.1.1.20 Inform the CTO of the types of actions that could be considered cause for disciplinary actions, including loss of certification, licenses, and/or employment.
 - 2.1.1.21 Document and address unacceptable performance with the CTO in a timely manner.
 - 2.1.1.22 Ensure a fair and consistent application of the disciplinary processes associated with performance.
 - 2.1.1.23 Keep all written directives up to date and shall provide the most current written directives to the CTO.
 - 2.1.1.24 Encourage and support professional development of the CTO through the identification and provision of networking opportunities within the public safety community, as well as the community within which services are provided.
 - 2.1.1.25 Make readily available documents that identify regulations, recommendations, or mandates within the public safety communications industry, i.e., National Response Framework, OSHA, APCO Standards.
- 2.1.2 The agency should, when possible:
- 2.1.2.1 Subscribe to professional publications and make those publications available to all employees.
 - 2.1.2.2 Provide for membership in professional organizations such as Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO), Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), National Emergency Number Association (NENA), National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), etc. for the CTO.

Chapter Three

Organizational Integrity

SCOPE

This chapter discusses issues related to organizational integrity. Topics include the mission and values of the profession in general and the agency specifically, as well as the scope of the CTO's acceptable level of knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional and personal traits. Lastly, it provides the customary expectations of adherence to policy-driven levels of authority, confidentiality, and liability.

3.1 The CTO and the Agency's Mission, Values, and Vision

3.1.1 The CTO shall demonstrate an understanding of, adherence to, and ability to convey the agency's mission, values, and vision statements:

- 3.1.1.1 Agency Mission—The CTO should help promote the agency's mission through verbal, actionable, and written communications and interpersonal interaction with trainees, co-workers, and administration. The mission is an underlying document upon which sound judgment and decision-making are based, and the CTO should exemplify the agency's mission at all levels.
- 3.1.1.2 Agency Values—The CTO should demonstrate standard character and professional traits that include respect, tact, patience, accountability, honesty, integrity, resilience, professionalism, creativity, and positivity. Given the agency's values and those traits applicable to the agency's value statement, the CTO should demonstrate and exemplify those values in word and deed.
- 3.1.1.3 Agency Vision—The CTO should be willing to offer input into the agency's vision when called upon to do so and utilize all skills, knowledge, and traits that they possess to help form and then carry out the vision set forth by the agency for its staff and the organizations it supports.

3.2 The CTO and Professionalism

3.2.1 Compliance with the agency-specific expectations of professional conduct, to include:

- 3.2.1.1 Professional dress and appearance.
- 3.2.1.2 Superior work ethic.
- 3.2.1.3 Proper decorum in various professional settings (training, meetings, civic involvement, and in any situation in which the agency should be properly represented).

- 3.2.1.4 Refraining from gossip.
- 3.2.1.5 Promoting a positive image of the agency and the training program.
- 3.2.1.6 Avoid unbecoming conduct inside and outside the agency and on social media.
- 3.2.1.7 Encouraging and reinforcing positive and effective interpersonal communication.
- 3.2.2 Adherence to agency standard operating procedures/guidelines, to include:
 - 3.2.2.1 Application of the agency's written directives.
 - 3.2.2.2 Acting within their approved scope of authority as a CTO.
 - 3.2.2.3 Adhering to the agency's chain of command in matters of information flow and decision-making.
 - 3.2.2.4 Adhering to all applicable local, tribal, state, or federal codes, rules, and regulations.

3.3 The CTO's Role in the Agency's CTO/Training Program

- 3.3.1 The CTO shall demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the agency's prescribed training program by:
 - 3.3.1.1 Proficiently performing the duties and essential functions of the position.
 - 3.3.1.2 Consistently delivering the program as prescribed.
 - 3.3.1.3 Consistently providing accurate and timely documentation and reporting on recruit/trainee status.
 - 3.3.1.4 Providing all required, periodic evaluations of the CTO/Training Program for review by the CTO/Training Coordinator or Supervisor.
 - 3.3.1.5 Actively participating in the continuous improvement and revision efforts of the program.
 - 3.3.1.6 Consistently providing timely, accurate, and beneficial feedback to recruits/trainees.
 - 3.3.1.7 Providing and explaining to the recruit/trainee all Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG), Standard Evaluation Guidelines (SEG), and other pertinent information that will be used in their training.
 - 3.3.1.8 Maintaining and providing Daily Observation Reports and any other required, formal or informal documentation that supports the recommendation to release the recruit/trainee to independent work or separation from employment.

3.4 The CTO and Liability Issues

3.4.1 The CTO shall be able to demonstrate comprehensive position specific knowledge of supervisory liability issues related to overall agency operations. This should include, but is not limited to the following:

- 3.4.1.1 Negligence: “Failure to use such care as a reasonably prudent and careful person would use under similar circumstances; it is the doing of some act which a person of ordinary prudence would not have done or the failure to do something a person of ordinary prudence would have done under similar circumstances.”
- 3.4.1.2 Negligent assignment: Assigning someone to a task or job for which they are not skilled or trained. For example, assigning someone to the position of CTO who has not been properly trained or allowing an employee to perform a function for which they are not qualified.
- 3.4.1.3 Negligent entrustment: Failure to control dangerous equipment or devices entrusted to an employee or allowing an employee to use a piece of equipment for which they have not been trained. This includes allowing a trainee to work on the radio or Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system unsupervised without proper training.
- 3.4.1.4 Negligent retention: Failure to terminate an employee who is clearly unsuitable for the job.
- 3.4.1.5 Negligent supervision: Failure to coordinate, control, or direct trainee conduct that may cause injury. This can include failure to use reasonable care in addressing and documenting misconduct.
- 3.4.1.6 Negligent training: Failure to adequately train or training that is grossly negligent, thus creating a risk that the trainee will not act with due regard in the future.
- 3.4.1.7 Vicarious liability: A legal doctrine that refers to the imposition of liability on one person for the actionable conduct of another person based solely on a relationship between the two people.

3.5 The CTO and Responsibility to the Agency

3.5.1 The CTO shall set standards of performance, for themselves and those they train by:

- 3.5.1.1 Aligning performance with the organization’s mission.
- 3.5.1.2 Completing all required documentation (Daily Observation Report (DOR), Tracking Sheets, Task Lists, Memos, Performance Improvement Plans (PIP).
- 3.5.1.3 Actively identifying and providing solutions for agency needs, formally and informally.
- 3.5.1.4 Keeping track of performance records.

- 3.5.1.5 Participating in the development and implementation of performance improvement plans.
- 3.5.1.6 Providing the basis for making human resources decisions.
- 3.5.1.7 Fostering and creating effective working relationships with all personnel within the organization and with individuals and organizations external to the organization.
- 3.5.1.8 Encouraging and supporting the highest quality of workplace team interaction and behavior.
- 3.5.1.9 Demonstrating and applying diversity awareness with an active commitment to ensuring equality, per the agency's written directives.

Chapter Four

General Knowledge and Skills

SCOPE

This chapter gives an overview of the general knowledge and skills common among high performing incumbent CTOs.

4.1 Requisite Standards

- 4.1.1 The CTO shall have a working knowledge of minimum training requirements for Public Safety Telecommunicators.¹
- 4.1.2 The CTO should be cognizant of other relevant standards, i.e., APCO Standards²⁻³, NFPA standards⁴, CALEA standards⁵ and NENA⁶ standards.

4.2 General Knowledge of the Public Safety Communications Training Officer

- 4.2.1 The following general areas of knowledge have been identified for the CTO. The agency shall require the CTO to have knowledge in the following areas:
 - 4.2.1.1 Agency Organizational Structure and Chain of Command.
 - 4.2.1.2 ADA specific agency requirements for equal access and internal hiring and accommodation practices.
 - 4.2.1.3 Adult learning principles, styles, and generational differences.
 - 4.2.1.4 Agency operations, policies, and procedures.
 - 4.2.1.5 Agency written directives and policies.
 - 4.2.1.6 Agency training standards and requirements.
 - 4.2.1.7 Applicable local, state, federal and/or tribal standards, statutes, and any applicable certification requirements.

¹ APCO ANS 3.103.1-2015 Minimum Training Requirements for Public Safety Telecommunicator

² APCO ANS 1.117.1-2019: Public Safety Communications Center Key Performance Indicators

³ APCO ANS 1.118.1-2020 Key Performance Indicators for Public Safety Communications Personnel

⁴ NFPA 1225 Standard for Emergency Services Communications 2022

⁵ CALEA Standards for Public Safety Communications Agencies Manuals 2020

⁶ NENA Standards for 9-1-1 Professional Education

- 4.2.1.8 Components of the agency's CTO program and training curriculum.
- 4.2.1.9 Employee performance management process and tools.
- 4.2.1.10 Equipment, technology systems, and their operation.
- 4.2.1.11 Intersectionality.
- 4.2.1.12 Instruction techniques.
- 4.2.1.13 Jurisdiction and geography.
- 4.2.1.14 Legal concepts, risk assessment, and liability.
- 4.2.1.15 All agency-required protocols, user agency defined, i.e., software, skill sets, and physical guide cards.
- 4.2.1.16 Record retention procedures.
- 4.2.1.17 Relevant public safety, occupational knowledge, and homeland security initiatives.
- 4.2.1.18 Resources, internal and external.
- 4.2.1.19 Supervision and leadership concepts and principles.
- 4.2.1.20 Telecommunicator job duties, requirements, and expectations.
- 4.2.1.21 Workplace culture and values.

4.3 General Skills of the CTO

4.3.1 The following general areas of knowledge have been identified for the CTO. The agency shall require the CTO to demonstrate, at a minimum, proficient skills in:

- 4.3.1.1 Communication:
 - 4.3.1.1.1 Active Listening
 - 4.3.1.1.2 Calm radio demeanor
 - 4.3.1.1.3 Conflict resolution
 - 4.3.1.1.4 Evaluation and feedback
 - 4.3.1.1.5 Interpersonal communications
 - 4.3.1.1.6 Language skills

- 4.3.1.1.7 Written and verbal communication
- 4.3.1.2 Critical thinking:
 - 4.3.1.2.1 Analytical and critical reasoning
 - 4.3.1.2.2 Critically reflect on their own teaching
 - 4.3.1.2.3 Decision making
 - 4.3.1.2.4 Problem solving
- 4.3.1.3 Functional skills:
 - 4.3.1.3.1 Confidentiality
 - 4.3.1.3.2 Elicit participation in learning
 - 4.3.1.3.3 Lifelong learner
 - 4.3.1.3.4 Motivation
 - 4.3.1.3.5 Multi-tasking
 - 4.3.1.3.6 Observation
 - 4.3.1.3.7 Organization
 - 4.3.1.3.8 Stress management and ability to function under stress
 - 4.3.1.3.9 Telecommunicator
 - 4.3.1.3.10 Time management
- 4.3.1.4 Leadership:
 - 4.3.1.4.1 Building strong teams
 - 4.3.1.4.2 Coaching
 - 4.3.1.4.3 Counseling (per agency policy)
 - 4.3.1.4.4 Facilitating
 - 4.3.1.4.5 Mentoring
 - 4.3.1.4.6 Planning
 - 4.3.1.4.7 Prioritization

4.3.1.4.8 Research

4.3.1.4.9 Supervising

4.3.1.4.10 Supporting Diversity and Inclusion

4.3.1.4.11 Team Strength

4.3.1.5 Collaboration with:

4.3.1.5.1 The public

4.3.1.5.2 Members of our center

4.3.1.5.3 Public safety agencies

4.3.1.5.4 Support services

Chapter Five

Tools, Equipment, and Technology

SCOPE

This chapter addresses the need for all CTOs to demonstrate proficiency in all tools, equipment, and technology (legacy and emerging) they may be expected to operate within the public safety communications center and/or training facilities.

5.1 Tools, Equipment and Technology

5.1.1 The CTO shall demonstrate the ability to:

- 5.1.1.1 Utilize tools, equipment, technology including, but not limited to, those used by the Public Safety Telecommunicator, in accordance with agency expectations.
- 5.1.1.2 Access administrator functions for all tools, equipment and technology as designated by the agency.
- 5.1.1.3 Successfully explain the functions and operations of the tools, equipment, and technology.
- 5.1.1.4 Gather feedback from users and competently express that feedback to the appropriate parties.
- 5.1.1.5 Monitor the use of all tools, equipment, and technology, in accordance with all manufacturer and agency guidelines.
- 5.1.1.6 Adequately troubleshoot technical issues and relay them to the proper technician or vendor.
- 5.1.1.7 Demonstrate and explain all relevant equipment to their trainees and any other relevant parties.

5.2 Emerging Technology

5.2.1 The CTO should:

- 5.2.1.1 Stay apprised of advancements of Next Generation 911 (NG911), including but not limited to text-to-911 calls, multimedia messages, and Artificial Intelligence platforms.
- 5.2.1.2 Attempt to demonstrate operational benefits or deficiencies of new technology.
- 5.2.1.3 Seek new tools and technology to facilitate better operation of their agency goals.

- 5.2.1.4 Identify the most common indicators of image-related trauma(s).
 - 5.2.1.5 Know and be able to provide appropriate resources to those they train and supervise.
 - 5.2.1.6 Use any purchased platforms to a proficient level.
- 5.2.2 The CTO shall:
- 5.2.2.1 Actively seek to understand how these emerging technologies can impact their agency.
 - 5.2.2.2 Understand that image-related incidents may increase the trainee's exposure to additional information that historically has been linked to mental or emotional trauma.

Chapter Six

Professional Competence

SCOPE

This chapter identifies those components within public safety communications that are critical for enhancing the professional competence of all CTOs, both new and veteran employees. Some of these components have been identified as being necessary for developing, maintaining, and enhancing the knowledge and skills of the CTO. While the agency has some responsibility for supporting and facilitating the development of the CTO's professional competence, this chapter places primary accountability for developing professional competence upon the CTO.

6.1 Training Requirements

6.1.1 The CTO shall complete and maintain mandated training and certifications.

6.2 Career Development

6.2.1 The CTO shall:

6.2.1.1 Take responsibility for their own personal career development by actively seeking opportunities to enhance their job knowledge and skills.

6.2.1.2 Participate in continuing education.

6.2.2 The CTO should:

6.2.2.1 Identify professional goals that can be supported by the agency.

6.2.2.2 Take advantage of opportunities to network both within the public safety community and within the community in which they serve.

6.2.2.3 Review professional publications and resources to enhance professional competence and remain current on trends within the profession.

6.3 Compliance

6.3.1 The CTO shall comply with department, local, state, federal, and/or tribal regulations.

6.4 Performance Standards

6.4.1 The CTO shall:

6.4.1.1 Demonstrate the ability to meet and/or exceed performance standards set by the agency.

- 6.4.1.2 Actively seek and be receptive to feedback and review of the performance, including, but not limited to, issues identified during the agency's established quality assurance and quality improvement processes.
 - 6.4.1.3 Demonstrate the ability to participate as an active member of the team.
 - 6.4.1.4 Encourage effective communication and reinforce positive interpersonal skills.
 - 6.4.1.5 Demonstrate the ability to communicate with superiors, peers, and subordinates in a positive and constructive manner.
- 6.4.2 The CTO should demonstrate competency of the skills detailed in Chapter Four, Section 4.3, General Skills of the CTO.

6.5 Operate Within Written Directives

- 6.5.1 The CTO shall:
- 6.5.1.1 Demonstrate the ability to operate within all written directives and plans regarding operations established by and for the agency.
 - 6.5.1.2 Demonstrate proficiency in agency operations which may include but are not limited to call taking, dispatching, jurisdictional and geographical boundaries, and other related job duties.
 - 6.5.1.3 Remain current and informed of all agencies' written directives including relevant public safety and homeland security initiatives.
 - 6.5.1.4 Demonstrate the appropriate application of the agency's written directives.
 - 6.5.1.5 Recommend updates to the agency's written directives when appropriate.

Chapter Seven

CTO Training Requirements

SCOPE

This chapter addresses the duties for CTOs. Training shall ensure the CTO can demonstrate the level of proficiency established by the agency for these duties.

7.1 Effective Training

7.1.1 The CTO shall:

- 7.1.1.1 Supervise the trainee effectively.
- 7.1.1.2 Inform the trainee of policy expectations.
- 7.1.1.3 Document policy violations.
- 7.1.1.4 Enforce written directives.
- 7.1.1.5 Encourage trainees to use effective stress management skills.
- 7.1.1.6 Monitor trainee progress and complete progress reports.
- 7.1.1.7 Bring into compliance all training and materials to coincide with local, state, federal, and tribal laws, and regulations regarding telecommunicators.
- 7.1.1.8 Identify, and report outdated policies that do not meet the mission, vision, and goals of the training program.

7.2 Training Documentation

7.2.1 The CTO shall:

- 7.2.1.1 Process and maintain training documentation.
 - 7.2.1.1.1 Standard Evaluation Guidelines
 - 7.2.1.1.2 Daily Observation Reports
 - 7.2.1.1.3 Trainee Task Checklist
 - 7.2.1.1.4 DOR Tracking Sheet
- 7.2.1.2 Remain objective when completing training documentation.

- 7.2.1.3 Ensure that all feedback is documented.
- 7.2.1.4 Identify training needs of the new employee.
 - 7.2.1.4.1 Individualized coaching to improve behavior or performance of a new employee.
 - 7.2.1.4.2 Recommend the need for a Performance Improvement Plan or other agency remedial action plan to improve behavior or performance of the new employee or veteran employee.

7.3 Individual Instruction

7.3.1 The CTO shall:

- 7.3.1.1 Provide individualized instruction to the trainee.
- 7.3.1.2 Provide multiple teaching methods and instructional techniques to meet the specific needs of the trainee (learning style preferences, multiple intelligences, generational learning factors, classroom/lecture, etc.).
- 7.3.1.3 Provide instruction on equipment and technology.
- 7.3.1.4 Establish an individualized training plan to meet specific goals and objectives in accordance with the benchmarks established by the agency.
- 7.3.1.5 Ensure that any supplemental training elements, such as ride-alongs, tours, or outside training are completed in accordance with the agency training program.
- 7.3.1.6 Maintain and provide learning materials (training manuals, equipment manuals, agency written directives, handouts, worksheets, etc.).
- 7.3.1.7 Be knowledgeable of all training reference material and curriculum (SOPs, maps, National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Manuals, training manuals, etc.).
- 7.3.1.8 Recommend modifications to training materials.
- 7.3.1.9 Administer written tests and skills assessments to document the new hire's understanding of the training material content and application.

7.4 Interaction with Others

7.4.1 The CTO shall:

- 7.4.1.1 Maintain professional and effective interactions through refraining from gossip, promoting a positive mindset, avoiding unbecoming conduct, and remaining adaptable to change.

7.4.1.2 Give constructive feedback.

7.4.1.3 Communicate and counsel objectively regarding conduct and performance.

7.5 Administrative Functions

7.5.1 The CTO shall:

7.5.1.1 Perform administrative functions as assigned.

7.5.1.2 Perform the duties of a telecommunicator and supervisor as required by the agency.

7.5.1.3 Represent the agency at meetings with the public, representatives of other agencies, departments, committees, and commissions.

7.5.1.4 Participate in the agency's Quality Assurance (QA)/ Quality Improvement (QI) Process.

7.5.1.5 Participate in their agency recruitment, retention, and staffing needs.

7.5.1.6 Participate in creating solutions for agency needs not yet formally identified.

7.5.1.7 Participate in the departmental needs assessments and the work groups for the improvements identified.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AED	Automated External Defibrillator
ANS	American National Standards
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
APCO	Association of Public Safety Communications Officials
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CALEA	Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies
CISM	Critical Incident Stress Management
CTO	Public Safety Communications Training Officer
DOR	Daily Observation Report
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act
FMLA	Family Medical Leave Act
HIPPA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
NCIC	National Crime Information Center
NENA	National Emergency Number Association
NFPA	National Fire Protection Agency
NG911	Next Generation 9-1-1
NIMS/ICS	National Incident Management System/Incident Command System
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point
QA	Quality Assurance
QI	Quality Improvement
SDC	Standards Development Committee
SEG	Standard Evaluation Guidelines

SOG	Standard Operating Guidelines
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TTY/TTD	Teletypewriters/Telecommunications Device for the Deaf

GLOSSARY

Most terms used throughout this document are defined as they appear in the text. Additional definitions are provided below.

Agency: The hiring authority or also referred to as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). The Agency or body that defines the roles, responsibilities, written directives, and performance standards that direct the activity of the CTO. In multi-discipline centers, the Agency governs the operation providing call taking/dispatch and related services to customer agencies; in single discipline centers, a single Agency may direct these services for one or more departments within a service area. Both have the duty to define training appropriateness, content, format, and continuing education requirements.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A Federal law that requires all Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) to provide direct and equal access to emergency telephone services to individuals with disabilities who use TTY/TDDs and other communication devices or services.

American National Standards (ANS): A voluntary consensus standard that is developed in accordance with the [ANSI Essential Requirements: Due process requirements for American National Standards](#) and subject to ANSI's neutral oversight and approval. These requirements are designed to ensure that development of American National Standards is a fair and responsive process that is open to all directly and materially interested parties.⁷

American National Standards Institute (ANSI): A private, non-profit organization that administers and coordinates the U.S. voluntary standards and conformity assessment system.⁸

Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO): Serves our members in emergency communications by providing complete expertise, professional development, technical assistance, advocacy and outreach.⁹

Automated External Defibrillator (AED): A portable device that can be used to treat a person whose heart has suddenly stopped working.¹⁰

Calls for Service or Request for Service: A call that results in the provision of a public safety service or response.

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA): An accreditation program that provides public safety agencies with an opportunity to voluntarily meet an established set of professional standards.¹¹

Communications Training Officer (CTO): An experienced public safety dispatcher who trains and evaluates new employees in an emergency call center.

⁷ [ANSI Essential Requirements for developing American National Standards \(ANS\)](#) (www.ansi.org)

⁸ [ANSI Essential Requirements for developing American National Standards \(ANS\)](#) (www.ansi.org)

⁹ [APCO International - Leaders in Public Safety Communications](#) (www.apcointl.org)

¹⁰ [AEDs \(Automated External Defibrillators\) | AED.US](#)

¹¹ *CALEA Standards for Public Safety Communications Agencies Manuals 2020*

Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD): A technology system used by emergency services and other organizations to help dispatchers manage and send resources to incidents more efficiently.

Core Competencies: The unique traits, requisite knowledge, comprehension, and application of skills, and situational analysis leading to the appropriate response to the caller, co-worker, other public safety stakeholders¹², or event(s) consistent with general practices and locally defined parameters.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM): A comprehensive system of education, prevention, and intervention for those who have experienced a traumatic event.

Daily Observation Report (DOR): A document used to record daily activities, performance, or safety observations in a structured format.

Demographics: Characteristics and cultural composition of the service area.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): A confidential and voluntary, employer-sponsored benefit that offers professional support to employees and their families for personal and work-related issues.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)¹³: A federal law, which sets out various labor regulations regarding interstate commerce employment, including minimum wages, requirements for overtime pay and limitations on child labor.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA): A U.S. federal law that allows eligible employees to take up to 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year for specific family and medical reasons.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA): A federal law enacted in 1996 that protects the privacy and security of patient health information.

Knowledge: Fundamental understanding one must have to perform a specific task.

Liability: The condition of being actually or potentially subject to an obligation; condition of being responsible for a possible, or actual loss, penalty, evil expense or burden; condition which creates a duty to perform an act immediately or in the future.¹⁴

National Crime Information Center (NCIC): A computerized index of criminal justice information (i.e.- criminal record history information, fugitives, stolen properties, missing persons). It is available to Federal, state, and local law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies and is operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.¹⁵

National Emergency Number Association (NENA): Non-profit professional organization solely focused on 9-1-1 operations, technology, education, and policy issues.¹⁶

National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA): Publishes [codes and standards](#), spanning every area of fire, life, and electrical safety and offers training and certification.¹⁷

¹² May include, but is not limited to: law enforcement officers, fire fighters, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and emergency management personnel.

¹³ <http://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa>

¹⁴ Black's Law Dictionary Sixth Edition

¹⁵ <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ncic>

¹⁶ www.nena.org

¹⁷ www.nfpa.org

National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS): An organized method to define roles, responsibilities, and standard operating procedures used to unify multiple disciplines in order to manage emergency operations under one functional organization.¹⁸

Negligence: “Failure to use such care as a reasonably prudent and careful person would use under similar circumstances; it is the doing of some act which a person of ordinary prudence *would not have* done or the failure to do something a person of ordinary prudence *would have* done under similar circumstances.”¹⁹

Negligent Assignment: Assigning someone to a task or job for which they are not skilled or trained. For example, assigning someone to the position of CTO who has not been properly trained or allowing an employee to perform a function for which they are not qualified.

Negligent Entrustment: Failure to control dangerous equipment or devices entrusted to an employee or allowing an employee to use a piece of equipment for which they have not been trained. Includes allowing a trainee to work the radio or CAD system unsupervised without proper training.

Negligent Retention: Failure to terminate an employee who is clearly unsuitable for the job.

Negligent Supervision: Failure to coordinate, control, or direct trainee conduct that may cause injury. This can include failure to use reasonable care in addressing and documenting misconduct.

Negligent Training: Failure to adequately train or training that is grossly negligent thus creating a risk that the trainee will not act with due regard in the future.

Next Generation 911 (NG911): A digital, internet protocol (IP)-based system that will replace the analog 911 infrastructure that’s been in place for decades.²⁰

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA): A U.S. Department of Labor agency that ensures safe and healthy working conditions for all employees. It does this by setting and enforcing safety standards, providing training and education, and offering assistance to both employers and workers to reduce workplace hazards.²¹

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): A formal document used by employers to address an employee's performance deficiencies by outlining specific areas for improvement, setting clear expectations, and defining a timeframe for improvement.

Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP): A facility equipped and staffed to receive emergency and non-emergency calls requesting public safety services via telephone and other communication devices. Emergency calls are first answered, assessed, classified, and prioritized. The FCC further defines a primary PSAP as a facility to which 9-1-1 calls are routed directly from the 9-1-1 Control Office. A secondary PSAP is defined as a facility to which 9-1-1 calls are transferred from a primary PSAP.

Public Safety Communications Center: A public safety entity, which may include a PSAP or be referred to as an Emergency Communications Center or Communications Center, where emergency calls for service or 9-1-1 phone calls culminate, and/or where calls for service are dispatched to public safety service providers.

¹⁸ <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/IncidentCommandSystem.shtm#item1>

¹⁹ Black's Law Dictionary, 1133 (9th ed. 2009)

²⁰ <https://www.911.gov/issues/ng911/>

²¹ www.osha.gov

Public Safety Communications Supervisor: The individual employed by a Public Safety Communications Center to provide leadership and guidance to employees in order to achieve the Agency’s mission, values, and vision.

Public Safety Telecommunicator (Telecommunicator): The individual employed by a public safety Agency as the first of the first responders whose primary responsibility is to receive, process, transmit, and/or dispatch emergency and non-emergency calls for law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and other public safety services via telephone, radio, and other communication devices.

Public Safety Communications Training Coordinator: One who administers the training function through the needs analysis, research, planning, curriculum design, implementation, records management, and evaluation processes to enhance emergency communications.

Public Safety Communications Training Officer (CTO): A telecommunicator who consistently demonstrates superior skills, knowledge, and professionalism on the job. One who is responsible for implementing training program(s) in accordance with local, state, federal, tribal, and departmental mandates.

Quality Assurance (QA): All actions taken to ensure that standards and procedures are adhered to and that delivered products or services meet performance requirements.

Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Improvement (QI) Program: An ongoing program providing at a minimum, the random case review evaluating call receiving and emergency dispatch performance, feedback of protocol compliance, commendation, retraining and remediation as appropriate, and submission of compliance data to the Agency.

Quality Assurance Process: A formal assessment process by which actual performance, behavior, and outcomes are compared against established standards to ensure compliance, consistency, and accuracy in the delivery of quality service.

Quality Improvement Process: Actions taken to improve or correct areas of concern.

Shall: Within the context of this standard, “shall” indicates a mandatory requirement.

Should: Within the context of this standard, “should” indicates a recommendation.

Standards Development Committee (SDC): A group of experts who create and maintain technical standards for a specific industry or field.

Standard Evaluation Guidelines (SEG): Provide a framework for judging the quality of an evaluation or program, typically focusing on criteria like relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. These guidelines also emphasize principles of independence, transparency, ethics, and utility to ensure the evaluation is objective and credible.

Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)/ Standard Operating Procedures (SOP): Detailed, step-by-step written instructions that describe how to perform a routine task or process consistently and efficiently.

Teletypewriters/Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TTY/TDD): A keyboard and screen-based device that allows people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired to communicate over a telephone line.

Trainee: A public safety communications employee (new or veteran) being trained in any of the programs under the direction of the CTO.

Vicarious Liability: A legal doctrine referring to the imposition of liability on one person for the actionable conduct of another based solely on a relationship between the two persons.²² For example, the liability of an employer for the acts of an employee.

Written Directives: A set of Agency specific policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and guidelines.

²² Black's Law Dictionary Sixth Edition

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