



*Marshall County
Communications Center*

*2019
Annual Report*

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Mission Statement

The Marshall County Communications Center is committed to serving with integrity, compassion and care for the welfare and safety of our citizens and personnel. We support expedient, quality services through the industries best practices. Our standard is excellence and the road to success is through our teamwork. We serve as the critical link between the citizens and, visitors of Marshall County, and the public safety Agencies that serve them.

Safety is our First Priority
Integrity is our Commitment

These Values We Believe

Harmony ~ We trust, respect, and care for each other and treat everyone as a valued member of our team

Service ~ Safety is our first priority – citizens are the focus of everything we do

Integrity ~ We are committed to the highest level of professional and ethical conduct

Teamwork ~ Cohesively working together to achieve a common goal for the betterment of the individuals we serve and the future of our center

Fun ~ Every day we will give our best effort and have fun along the way

Vision Statement

To provide Service in a manner that fosters trust, respect, confidence and appreciation as a trusted and valued member of the Marshall County Communications Center

Agency Profile

The Marshall County Communications Center will be entering its second year under the Marshall County Communications Commission. The Comm Center provides dispatching and E911 services for all of Marshall County. The center is staffed with civilian personnel working together as 911 call-takers, law enforcement and Fire/EMS dispatchers, trainers, supervisors, and the director.

The Marshall County Communications Center is responsible for answering both emergency and non-emergency calls for service on a regular basis. The Comm Center monitors up to eleven (11) radio channels, and has the capability to monitor an additional fourteen (14) channels if necessary. It also is responsible for three (3) E911 phone lines and an additional ten (10) emergency and non-emergency lines. In FY19, the Marshall County Communications Center handled a total of 76,339 phone calls including emergency and non-emergency. In 2017 text-to-911 was implemented – a Next Generation 911 capability that allows citizens to text their emergency if unable to speak; a service that is not yet nationally mandated.

The Marshall County Communications Center has been recognized for professionalism, commitment to public safety, leadership, and innovation. Our performance and training is measured against the standards provided by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO). The MCCC's authorized strength is fifteen (15) full-time employees to include 12 911 Communications Specialists, one (1) 911 Lead Communications Specialist, one (1) 911 Communications Supervisor, and one (1) 911 Communications Director.

The Marshall County Communications Center operates three (3) twelve-hour shifts and one (1) four-hour shift on Fridays for a total of forty (40) hours per week. We have four (4) Communications Training Officers (CTO) recently certified in house through APCO to meet national standards.

Marshall County Communications Center Staff

Rhonda Braudis, CPE, RPL, NREMT ~ 911 Communications Director

Tiffany Eibs, CTO ~ 911 Communications Supervisor

Angela Duffy ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Haley Nichols ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Tammy Bowman ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Allie Erickson ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Caitlin Nemechek ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Shannon Wegner, CTO ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Zac Mann, CTO ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Hayley Paige, CTO ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Larry Springston ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Sharon Santiago ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Shane Andrews ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Kelsey DeSchamp ~ 911 Communication Specialist

VACANT (Background) ~ 911 Communication Specialist

Collectively, the years of dispatch service, talent, and experience at the Marshall County Communications Center equals approximately 98 years – a number clearly indicating the drive, passion, and dedication to public service projected from a team of true professionals.

Training and Quality Assurance

The Marshall County Communications Center has implemented a full standardized training program following the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) standards. Proper training is extremely important to the MCCC, as public safety agencies are held legally accountable for the actions of their personnel. Procedures included in the Communications training program provide a standardized and systematic approach to training. The training is designed specifically for the purpose of training and career development of all employees.

The Communications Training Officer (CTO) program has been completely redesigned to focus on essential elements and components of a one-on-one standardized training program, specifically through the use of Daily Observation Report's (DOR). Standardized training provides similar training to all new employees. Each employee is exposed to the same training experience, and each is provided the same opportunity for success.

The core of any training program is the trainer – the person who conducts the training and helps the student build skills, knowledge, and abilities. While the Director, Supervisor/Training Coordinator can have a positive effect on the overall program, the CTO actually delivers the training. CTO's make sure that citizens and internal customers continue to receive a high quality of service while transforming new hires into effective employees. The Marshall County Communications Center CTOs are all certified through the APCO Communications Training Officer Course as instructed by the Director/APCO Adjunct Instructor.

Abiding by IA State requirements, all 911 Communication Specialists are required to take the 40-hour Basic Communications course within the first year of employment. We are currently in discussions to teach this in house if provided the approval by the State. If/when permission is granted this will be taught in house with all employees being certified through the APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST1) Course, a 40-hour basic dispatcher course that is a level up from the State basic course and can be customized to Marshall County specifics for training purposes. The Marshall County Communication Center also requires that Supervisors, be certified through the APCO Communications Center Supervisor Course.

Training is a constant mission in the Marshall County Communications Center. Not only are 911 personnel required to take their initial certification classes, they must also participate in Continuing Dispatch Education (CDE) training sessions for annual training minimums. These training sessions may be in the form of quizzes, dispatch related articles, protocol-driven exercises, in-service classes, or anything else deemed an appropriate learning related activity.

Organizational Integrity

The Marshall County Communications Center has adopted the Telecommunicator Code of Ethics published by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials – International (APCO). Members of the Marshall County Communications Center are required to abide by the Code of Ethics, especially when situations arise which are not directly addressed by other policies. The Code of Ethics is located within their personnel files. All personnel are required to read, acknowledge receipt of, and abide by the Code of Ethics.

Personnel Actions

	2019
Verbal Warning / Training	Continuous Training
Counseling	3
Written Reprimand	0
Suspension	0
Termination	1
Total	4 + Continuous Training

The data included in the above chart only contains information from July 22, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

Call Center Statistics

	2019
911	14,408
Administrative	57,519
Crime Stopper	446
Ring Down	3,966
Total	76,339

National standards 3.1 as published in the NENA Call Answering Standard/Model Recommendation 56-005.1 (revised 2017). Ninety percent (90%) of all 9-1-1 calls arriving at the Public Safety answering Point (PSAP) shall be answered within ten (10) seconds during the busy hour (the hour each day with the greatest call volume, as defined in the NENA Master Glossary). Ninety-five (95%) of all 9-1-1 calls should be answered within twenty (20) seconds. The Marshall County Communications Center greatly exceeds this standard with an average ring time of three (3) seconds (see appendix).

Call for Service Statistics

Fire Related Incidents	2019
Marshalltown Fire Department	2,828
Albion Volunteer Fire Department	54
Clemons Volunteer Fire Department	46
Ferguson Volunteer Fire Department	8
Gilman Volunteer Fire Department	44
Green Mountain Volunteer Fire Department	41
Haverhill Volunteer Fire Department	31
Laurel Volunteer Fire Department	25
Legrand Volunteer Fire Department	47
Liscomb Volunteer Fire Department	28
Melbourne Fire Department	42
Rhodes Volunteer Fire Department	42
State Center Volunteer Fire Department	87
.... TOTAL	3,323

Medical Related Incidents	2019
Unity Point Hospital	5,877
Albion First Responder	113
Gilman First Responder	97
Green Mountain First Responder	76
Haverhill First Responder	97
Laurel First Responder	94
Legrand First Responder	145
Liscomb First Responder	108
Melbourne First Responder	108
Rhodes First Responder	104
State Center First Responder	183
.... TOTAL	7,002

Law Enforcement Related Incidents	2019
Marshalltown Police Department	30,246
Marshall County Sheriff's Office	22,177
Melbourne/Rhodes Department	80
State Center Police Department	669
Outside County / Drug Task Force	10
.... TOTAL	53,182

Call Handling Procedures

The Marshall County Communications Center continues working on policies, procedures, and guidelines for handling all types of calls for service. Communications personnel receiving phone calls judge the characteristics of the call to determine whether it is an emergency or non-emergency. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is programmed to assign a given priority to each type of incident based on the call type chosen; however, the dispatchers have the option to notify field personnel and assign additional responders to higher priority calls when appropriate. Procedures will be in place to process priority and special response calls and provide instructions when needed for Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD).

Relevant information for each request for service is obtained and recorded to include control number, date and time of request, complainant information, incident type and location, units dispatched, time, arrival and return of service for each unit, as well as record of the final disposition or status of the incident. Misdirected calls are appropriately handled and rerouted, including correcting database errors.

Marshall County Communications Center personnel have received specialized training in Autism, Crisis Negotiation, Public Safety Telecommunications (PST1), Communications Training Officer (CTO), Communications Center Supervisor (CCS), Active Shooter, Resiliency, as well as attending the Iowa State APCO/NENA Conference, Zuercher Conference, and a hazardous weather workshop over the past five (5) month period. These courses and like efforts contribute to trailblazing efforts with the objective and priority of

providing Marshall County's emergency responders with a standard of care that corresponds with the mission, vision and values of its core.

Processing emergency/non-emergency calls can be inherently taxing, as callers are often dealing with traumatic events. Telecommunicators are trained to ask key questions, pertinent to each unique scenario, and obtain the nature and extent of the incident. Once this is ascertained they then determine what resources are needed to respond and dispatch the appropriate units. Due to the demands of this job and the need to get the right resources to the correct location the training program has been revamped; there is a thorough eighteen (18) week, training program as well as continued training requirements for all personnel in the center. Training includes weekly and monthly required trainings in police/fire related topics, as well as online training and in person seminars and scenario training.

Communications Center Accomplishments - 2019

Commission Directives ~ Personnel files as well as annual reviews were completed for each employee as well as new hires entering the Marshall County Communications Center. All positions with the exception of one have been filled, with the final position entering background. Eligibility lists have been established and prepared for the next opening.

New Hire Testing ~ Marshall County Communications Center has switched from the Zone test which was determined invalid and unreliable at its core. The new testing system in place is the ErgoMetrics ECOMM National Computer-Based Simulation Testing. Ergometrics & Applied Personnel Research, Inc. is a human resource management firm specializing in personnel selection. Established in 1981, Ergometrics has designed the most comprehensive, award-winning video testing and job simulation testing programs in the nation. They have provided personnel testing services for thousands of agencies throughout the United States and Canada. Ergometric's video simulations have been administered to over two million candidates. Tests and administration systems have been developed with the client's needs in mind and have the highest standards for consistently delivering excellent customer service.

Titles / Position Change ~ Titles for all Marshall County Communications Center employees have been changed. Within the titles the word "Operator" was listed. Within the 911 industry a push is made to move away from this as nationally 911 professionals are working towards recategorizing this profession away from "clerical" to "emergency services" where it should be placed. Previous titles included – Communications Manager, Lead Operator, Communications Operator. With this a change but prior to the title change it was voted to add a second Lead Operator position to be filled in at the appropriate time. With the new title changes this changed previous titles to the now current titles of Communications Director, 911 Communications Supervisor, 911 Lead Communications Specialist, and 911 Communications Specialist. With title and position changes the second supervisor position will move into the Lead for a progressive leadership ladder once all hires are completed and trained.

Uniforms ~ Uniforms are being implemented within the communications unit to coincide with the professional image of the Marshall County Communications Center. A representative of Galls came to the center and sized all currently employees. Each employee will be issued 3 shirts, 3 pants, 1 pair of shoes, Jacket Winter/Summer, and a Belt. Replacements will be reviewed on an as needed basis.

Communications Center Goals - 2020

Emergency Medical Dispatching ~ A specialized team has been assembled and began the monumental task of guidecard review for implementation scheduled for first quarter 2020. This team consists of our Medical Director D. Blaine Westemeyer, Paramedic Tanner Wolken, 911 Communications Director Rhonda Braudis, Communications Center Supervisor Tiffany Eibs, and 911 Communications Specialist Hayley Paige. First review of guidecards were completed at the end of 4th Quarter 2019 with second review planned for completion at the end of January 2020 to begin extensive training on CPR, and guidecard utilization as well as certification through the Association of Public Communications Officials (APCO) for all employees.

Carbyne Beacon c-Lite Program ~ Scheduled for implementation in 2nd quarter of 2020. This program connects people to essential public services. The c-Lite system is uniquely poised to enhance critical response to emergency events and empower the way the public communicates with emergency services in crisis situations, as well as essential city services in non-emergency situations. The system provides precise and persistent GPS location of the cell phone to include Z-Axis, live cell phone video stream from scene of an event, two-way instant messaging/chatting, secondary/backup connection to a 911 callers cell phone. The features of c-Lite provide a historical record of all video, chats and location information captured during a session.

911 Education Program ~ In October, 2019 a state grant was sought after and obtained for 911 public education funds. Approval was granted for a total of \$12,000. Educational items are in the finalization of being purchased and formal education will begin in the schools as well as community functions throughout the year.

Policy and Procedure ~ This has been a top priority not only for the Commission but the 911 Communications Director as well. This is an ongoing project with an expected completion date to be end of second quarter to include new software and systems scheduled for installation.

Summary

It is the vision of the Marshall County Communications Center to achieve the highest degree of public confidence. Our personnel are recognized for their professionalism, integrity, exemplary customer service, commitment to public safety, leadership and innovation. Marshall County Communications Center personnel are committed to saving lives, protecting property, assisting the public in their time of need, and ensuring the safety of our first responders through prompt, accurate, impartial, and professional call taking, dispatch and support services.

As 911 communications professionals, we strive to earn the public's trust and are challenged daily to maintain that trust. Every telephone call, every radio transmission and every service we provide demands our utmost attention and effective response. We effectively manage our resources, with fiscal prudence, in order to ensure an effective public safety response and a financially secure and well-maintained 911 Communications Center and communications infrastructure.

As trailblazers in the field of emergency communications, we embrace a future course of change, improvement, and challenge focused on accomplishing our strategic goals, including keeping pace with advances in technology that improve interoperability and accessibility to our services; efforts to control escalating operating costs; replacement of aging or inadequate communications infrastructure; and the all-important sharing of resources.

The Marshall County Communications personnel continue to form integral partnerships with our customers, all levels of city and county government, neighboring jurisdictions, State and Federal agencies, and our collaborative partners, and will work together in accomplishing the strategic goals of Marshall County as a whole.

