



## COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

*Communications Specialists, commonly referred to as 9-1-1 dispatchers or police dispatchers, are essentially the first responders in an emergency situation. The position of Communications Specialist is a challenging and rewarding position requiring an individual with a unique attitude and aptitude for the profession. The position offers the employee an opportunity to contribute to the public safety and welfare of the community. It is not uncommon for an applicant to focus solely on the positive potential contributions that can be made while in this position. It is extremely important that the applicant is aware of all aspects of the position. Some aspects of this position may not be necessarily desirable and/or may not suit the applicant's lifestyle. Please review the following job description and working environment description carefully prior to testing for this position.*

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The application and hiring process to fill the position is a competitive process. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis until all vacant positions are filled. We may also establish a list of eligible candidates to fill any upcoming vacancies. All applications received will be evaluated. Once the application has been screened for minimum qualifications, the applicant will be contacted via email and/or telephone and scheduled for a computerized skill assessment test. Applicants will be given a ranking within the list of applicants. Applicants passing the skills assessment will be contacted and scheduled for an oral board interview.

**Applicants must meet minimum requirements (see attached Job Description) and receive an invitation/appointment to take the computerized skills test.**

#### Selection Process:

- 1.) Completed application (include signed job description acknowledgement)
- 2.) Screening for minimum qualifications
- 3.) Computerized skills assessment examination
- 4.) Communications Center Operations Observation (approximately 2 hours)
- 5.) Oral board
- 6.) Thorough background investigation (to include AZ POST PH Form)
- 7.) Polygraph/Voice Stress Analysis examination
- 8.) Psychological examination
- 9.) Medical/physical examination to include pre-employment drug testing

Applications are available at the City of Cottonwood, Human Resource Department, 816 N. Main St., Cottonwood, AZ 86326 or on line at [www.cottonwoodaz.gov](http://www.cottonwoodaz.gov).

Applications should be delivered to City of Cottonwood, Human Resources, 816 N. Main St., Cottonwood, AZ 86326. (928) 340-2713.

#### Computerized Skills Assessment Test

Applicants meeting minimum requirements will be invited to take a computerized skills assessment test. Applicants will be required to show photo ID upon arrival for testing. The skills assessment evaluates the applicant's data entry abilities by assessing keyboarding speed and accuracy; ability to correctly apply information to appropriate fields; ability to multi-task; ability to prioritize emergency and non-emergency calls for service; follow complex written or audible directions, and answer questions that demonstrates the applicant's ability to learn and apply information, reading comprehension, ability to use situational judgment, and reasoning ability.

#### Communications Center Operations Observation

Applicants successfully passing the computerized skills assessment test will be scheduled for a 2 hours communications center operations observation. Applicants will be required to show photo ID upon arrival for communications center observation. All visitors entering the communications center are required to submit to a wants/warrants check.

#### Oral Board

Following the communications center operations observation, the applicant will be scheduled for an oral board interview. The applicant will be interviewed by a panel of department employees and answer questions related to work ethic, character, and integrity.

#### Background, Polygraph and Psychological Exam

Cottonwood Police Department holds its employees to the highest standards. Communications Specialist applicants are required to submit to a background and polygraph test consistent with the standards established for sworn officers by the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board. Applicants must answer questions truthfully regarding drug use, criminal history, and driving history. Applicants are encouraged to review the background application online at <http://www.azpost.state.az.us/>. Applicants are also required to complete a Psychological examination to assist in determining eligibility.



Job Description  
Job Code: 157  
Range: 15  
\$16.27/hr - \$23.98/hr

## COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

**DESCRIPTION:** Under close to general supervision, provides a link between citizens in need of assistance with police, fire and EMS services; prioritizes calls; coordinates and logs the activities associated with providing such service; dispatches appropriate emergency personnel; accesses and provides information transfer to and from field units where telephone or an ACJIS terminal is required; provides emergency communications in the form of 9-1-1 services to the City of Cottonwood and surrounding communities; enters and maintains warrants; and performs related duties as assigned.

**CLASSIFICATION:** This is a non-exempt, full-time, classified position with full benefits.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:** Essential functions, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may include the following tasks, knowledge, skills and other characteristics. This list is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY, and is **not** a comprehensive listing of all functions and tasks performed by incumbents of this classification.

### TASKS:

Complete and maintain the required police, fire, and EMS certifications; perform records inquiries (e.g. registration, driver's license, drivers history, wanted persons, stolen property, etc.); provide criminal history information from the Arizona Criminal History systems in either automated or hard copy format; provide national crime history and logs data (e.g. FBI number print of criminal history, etc.); enter records and warrants into manual and automated systems.

Perform duties of Public Safety Answering Point/911 call taker; process public safety phone and radio calls for the Cottonwood police and fire departments and other contracting agencies; verify address, jurisdiction, and phone number; while receiving call information, must enter information into CAD system and quickly prioritize and assign calls for service; update unit activities; answer emergency and non-emergency phone calls; communicate, track and monitor the status, location, and availability of police, fire and EMS units.

Transfer calls to appropriate disciplines; release call times to appropriate officers and fire/EMS personnel; gather calls for service information; provide pre-arrival instructions to callers; route calls to proper jurisdiction; process call outs for dispatch purposes (i.e. wrecker call outs); process telephone requests for ambulance or medical services; re-contact hang-ups to ensure no emergency existed; take telephone messages for department employees; perform duties in accordance with departmental policies and procedures under the direct supervision of a Communications Supervisor or designee.

Upon completion of the required police, fire, and EMS certification and probation, and under general direction, may serve as a primary trainer for new or returning dispatchers and evaluate their performance; teach new dispatchers the policies, procedures and job tasks associated with the Communications Specialist classification while fulfilling all duties associated with the

Communications Specialist position; oversee operations of the Communications Division in the absence of the Communications Supervisor; provide leadership and supervision in the absence of the supervisor; may be responsible for work schedule, scheduling of overtime, comp time, sick leave, vacation leave, etc.; alter work schedules and call employees back to duty as required; and perform other duties as assigned.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:**

Knowledge of the policies and procedures of the Cottonwood communications division.  
Knowledge of the principles and practices of the Arizona Criminal Justice Information System (ACJIS).  
Knowledge of the principles and operations of electronic data processing.  
Knowledge of the Spillman System computer software.  
Knowledge of the code system used by Cottonwood Police/Fire Departments and contracting agencies.  
Knowledge of current practices, methods, and techniques used in emergency dispatching.  
Knowledge of customer service.  
Skill in developing and maintaining effective interpersonal relations.  
Skill in maintaining a calm demeanor during crisis situations.  
Skill in analyzing data and drawing valid conclusions.  
Skill in maintaining manual and automated records while handling emergency situations.  
Skill in maintaining currency on current practices, methods, and techniques used in emergency dispatching.  
Ability to make quick decisions.  
Ability to work under extreme pressure, exercise good judgment and make sound decisions during emergency situations.  
Ability to interpret a variety of instructions, both orally and written.  
Ability to maintain regular attendance and punctuality.  
Ability to obtain CPR and EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatch) certifications.  
Ability to obtain EPD (Emergency Police Dispatch) certification.  
Ability to obtain EFD (Emergency Fire Dispatch) certification.

### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Must be able to sit or stand for extended periods of time; must be able to multi-task such as typing while answering phones; must be able to visually observe and interpret data displayed on multiple dispatch computer monitors comprised of several windows per monitor; required to reach with hands and arms; must be able to hear radio and telephone conversations at an appropriate level so as to not cause radio interference; must possess the ability to communicate clearly when speaking.

#### Working Environment:

- Work various shift hours such as 8, 10, or 12 hour shifts
- Must be able to work day, swing, or night shift, weekends, and holidays
- Schedule changes with limited notice; overtime may be required
- Work within a structured "chain of command" organization

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

- 1.) Must be a citizen of United States or legal to work in United States.
- 2.) Must have at least one (1) year of customer service related work experience.
- 3.) Must type at a minimum of 35 correct words per minute.
- 4.) Must have high school diploma or equivalent.
- 5.) Must be 18 years of age or older.
- 6.) Must meet Physical Requirements.
- 7.) Must read and sign job description acknowledgement.

Job Description Acknowledgement  
(Submit with application)

I have read and considered each job task, definition, and/or description prior to testing for the position. I understand that if selected and hired as a Communications Specialist, I may not be permitted to test or apply for other positions within the Cottonwood Police or Fire Department until a minimum of 2 years have passed from my hire date.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name