

Reference Material: NA

ILEAP Standards Covered: ADM.24.02(a), ADM.24.03, ADM.24.06

Page 1 of 5

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to outline the department's general police radio procedure.

POLICY: It is the policy of the department to use its police radio system for official use only, and to follow certain protocols for its use. The department utilizes plain English for most transmissions, standard "10-codes" to report items of common occurrence, and a phonetic alphabet. The department requires its members to use professional language and use the radio system efficiently and effectively.

DEFINITIONS: NA

PROCEDURE:

I. Police Radio System

- A. The police radio system includes various transmission sources:
 - 1. Communications center consoles.
 - 2. Police vehicle mobile radios.
 - 3. Portable radios.
- B. The police radio system may include several frequencies:
 - 1. Main DeKalb Police frequency.
 - 2. Secondary, or tactical frequencies.
 - 3. Regional or statewide channels on a common network.
 - 4. In emergency situations, or for specialized assignments, the Public Works or other Statewide Interoperability IEMA approved frequency may be used.
- C. The police radio system may be used by:
 - 1. Police officers, community service officers, or other department employees.
 - 2. Communications employees.
 - 3. Civilian personnel such as interns and volunteers while under the supervision of an employee and after becoming familiar with radio procedure and being trained in their use.

[ILEAP ADM.24.02(a)]

II. Police Radio Protocol

- A. The police radio system is for official public safety operations only.
- B. Ten-codes: the department uses the commonly-known Illinois State Police ten codes for various communications.
- C. The department uses a standard phonetic alphabet (not military) to ensure the correct spelling of names, locations, or other items.
- D. Other standard police radio codes or abbreviations may be used; e.g., "Signal 8", "UTL"-unable to locate, etc.
- E. All other communication shall be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures, stating it is unlawful to:
 - 1. Transmit superfluous signals or messages of a personal nature;
 - 2. Use profane, indecent or obscene language;
 - 3. Willfully damage or permit radio equipment to be damaged;
 - 4. Cause unlawful or malicious interference with other radio communications;

Reference Material: NA

ILEAP Standards Covered: ADM.24.02(a), ADM.24.03, ADM.24.06

Page 2 of 5

5. Intercept and use or publish the contents of any radio message without the express written permission of the proper authority;
 6. Make unnecessary or unidentified transmissions;
 7. Transmit without first making sure that the transmission will not cause harmful interference;
 8. Make adjustments, repairs or alterations whatsoever to a radio transmitter. Only a radio technician may make adjustments and/or repairs;
 9. Deny access to any radio equipment if a properly identified representative of the FCC asks to inspect it. The equipment must be available to inspect at any reasonable time.
- [ILEAP ADM.24.03]

III. Communications Radio P rotocol

A. Operation of Radio s

1. Only authorized communications personnel may use the radio consoles within the Communications Center.
2. Each telecommunicator assigned to a dispatch position will transmit only on their assigned radio frequencies. The only exceptions are as follows:
 - a. Circumstances, such as workload or special events, dictates that another employee transmits on the radio frequency.
 - b. If you are monitoring the channels while the other employee is busy and/or away from the console.
3. Radio transmissions shall be answered immediately, including the transmitting officer's call sign. If communications personnel are busy on another channel or on a 9-1-1 call, the calling unit should be responded to with "Standby." If the calling unit has an emergency, it is assumed the unit will continue with their radio traffic.

B. Transmitting on the Radio

1. Clear and concise speech, ten codes, phonetic alphabet and 24-hour military time shall be used when transmitting over the radio. The normal dispatch rate is between 40 and 60 words per minute.
2. Speak with a voice that is calm and even, regardless of the situation. Do not allow your voice to reflect your attitudes, feelings, or opinions about citizens, employees, or situations.
3. Refer to employees of the departments by their assigned call sign, not nicknames, first or last names. If their call sign is not readily known, use their rank and last name, such as "Sergeant Jones."
4. Lengthy transmissions should be made by telephone whenever possible. If such a transmission is necessary, perform the transmission in intervals of 30 seconds or less to allow for other required radio traffic.

IV. General Radio Procedure s

- #### **A. Officers on duty should be attentive to radio traffic:**
1. Respond when being called on the radio.

Reference Material: NA

ILEAP Standards Covered: ADM.24.02(a), ADM.24.03, ADM.24.06

Page 3 of 5

2. Monitor dispatch, other officer's radio communication, and other neighboring police agency's radio communication when possible.
3. Advise if able to assist at a pending call or back another officer.
- B. An officer's badge number is used as their radio call number, with the exception of command staff, which uses an "XO" call sign with a designated number.
[ILEAP ADM.24.06(c)]
- C. The communication center should be referred to as "DeKalb", or "PD."
- D. The communication center shall be notified by radio:
 1. For all traffic stops (license plate, location, and other pertinent information);
 2. When being flagged down (location and other applicable information);
 3. For involvement in a self-generated call or backup;
 4. When temporarily going out of service or off the air while on duty;
 5. Upon arrival at the scene of a call;
 6. To report any emergencies or other necessary information;
 7. When exiting the squad car for any other reason;
 8. When other circumstances dictate necessary radio communication.[ILEAP ADM.24.06(b)]
- E. **General radio operation :**
 1. Wait a full second after "keying up" (pressing the transmission button) before speaking;
 2. Speak at a normal tone, clearly, and slowly enough to be understood;
 3. Turn down the AM/FM radio, scanner, or other background noise;
 4. Turn down portable radio volume to avoid feedback;
 5. Be as brief and specific as possible;
 6. Use professional language.
- F. **The following acts or use of radio are prohibited :**
 1. Foul language, cursing, obscenities, speaking to mock someone else, using false accents, or inappropriate comments.
 2. Use of radio for purposes other than communication of police business.
 3. Arguing or debating any information with anyone else.
 4. Playing or re-broadcast of music.
 5. Turning off the police radio when on patrol duty.
 6. Ignoring radio traffic or failing to respond to radio communication.
 7. Voice inflections, voice tones, or sarcasm that project unprofessionalism to an intended or unintended receiver of the radio transmission.
- G. **Employees should not use the radio to :**
 1. Ask the identity or location of the zone car or other officer for purposes of avoiding response to any call;
 2. Advise of a pending break time for purposes of avoiding response to a call;
 3. Broadcast unnecessary information;
 4. Broadcast sensitive or confidential information if other communication means are possible and practical;
 5. Give lengthy dissertations on the disposition of a call or other information.

- H. **First responder notifications:** Police officers can and should use the radio to make appropriate requests in emergency situations, including, but not limited to:
1. Request additional officer's assistance;
 2. Notify supervisors in significant emergency events;
 3. Request supervisor notification of detectives, canine teams, or other specialized units;
 4. Notify EMS services for persons requiring emergency medical assistance;
 5. Notify the fire department of any fire emergency;
 6. Request notification of the city's street department for emergency maintenance of roadway-related issues;
 7. Request notification of the city's public works department for emergency public works services such as water main breaks;
 8. Request notification to the coroner's office in cases of obvious death;
 9. Request notification, with supervisor's approval, to the media to report public safety issues, emergency situations, evacuation efforts, closed roadways, or other related incidents.
- [ILEAP ADM.24.06(a)]

I. **Radio Operations in Specific Situations**

1. Employees should always give emergency radio traffic priority. A telecommunicator, supervisor, or officer may request "Emergency Traffic Only" to clear radio space for necessary emergency traffic only.
2. Communications with interacting agencies will be done in accordance to this policy.
 - a. Professionalism and adherence to applicable procedures are required, even when using another jurisdiction's radios or radio channels.
 - b. The department maintains radio channels that are intended for inter-operational use, but this does not preclude the use of the other jurisdiction's radio channels when authorized and appropriate.

[ILEAP ADM.24.06(d)]
3. At the determination of the patrol shift commander or a member of command staff, a sergeant or commander may announce the assuming of command at an incident or scene for purposes of coordinating radio traffic, responses, plans, or actions. [ILEAP ADM.24.06(e)]
4. Problems or malfunctioning radio equipment should be reported to a supervisor, and if necessary, placed out of service with a repair order.
5. Employees encountering any "dead zones" where radio transmissions cannot be received (inside Wal-Mart, Kishwaukee Hospital, or other large structures) should relocate if possible and pass this information on to a supervisor so other officers are aware of the "dead zones" and/or the situation can be rectified.
6. Employees should be aware that pressing the radio transmission button can trigger certain explosive devices up to 300 feet away; see Policy 407.2, Bomb Threats and Searches.

DEKALB POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: **Police Radio Procedure s**

Policy #: **301.1**

Effective Since: 8-21-03

Revision Effective: 1-1-19

FTO Training Task: # 2

Reference Material: NA

ILEAP Standards Covered: ADM.24.02(a), ADM.24.03, ADM.24.06

Page 5 of 5

7. Employees should be aware that police radio traffic can be received by anyone scanning police frequencies and can also be unintentionally received by other radio or scanning equipment.
8. Employees should be aware that police radio traffic recordings are continuously made and are subject to review and are also subject to FOIA or subpoena in legal proceedings; see Policy 301.0, Communications Procedures.

Policy originally issued 8-21-03; this revision becomes effective on 1-1-19 by authority of the Chief of Police.

NOTE: This policy and procedure summarizes the department's position on this specific matter. This policy is for general direction and guidance primarily designed for use by the department's members. This policy is for internal use only and does not create or enlarge an officer's liability in any way. This policy shall not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of an internal departmental complaint and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.