

GILA RIVER PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS PLAN

State and local public health agencies are closely monitoring the spread of the COVID-19 virus. On January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency to address the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and on March 11, 2020, Governor Doug Ducey issued a declaration of Public Health Emergency due to the necessity to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Emergency Communications Centers (ECC) have a duty to protect and serve the public, and Public Safety Emergency personnel they support. Steps must also be taken to protect the Telecommunicators working in the ECC. Therefore, this document was designed to guide and assist Emergency Communications Personnel in the preparation and execution of steps to mitigate exposure and respond to potentially reduced staffing due to the spread of the virus.

Preventative measures:

- An alert system for easy notification of ECC personnel has been established
- Hand sanitizer bottles at entrances and throughout the ECC have been placed
- Mandatory wipe downs of all work stations, common areas, door handles, refrigerators, coffee makers, etc. with bleach, Lysol wipes, or other disinfectant have been established
- Access to the ECC has been restricted including sit-along, tours, and non-essential personnel
- Medical masks have been made available to ECC personnel
- Dispatchers are pre-screening all calls for service with additional questions that indicate a caller may be suffering from COVID-19, such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing and advise responding to police, fire, and EMS
- All pre-approved vacation leave has been limited and no new leave is being approved
- Each call-taker has been issued a personal keyboard and mouse to be kept in a wrapped and clean area when not in use.
- Discuss policy related to exposed employees, employees showing symptoms, employees that may not have medical time available
- Discuss options for employees if schools close i.e., the possibility to work from home
- Start education of 9-1-1 employees regarding the value of the call-takers and dispatchers to the system, risks to the employee and their family, and best hygiene practices for PSAP at home.
- Cross-train clerks and other non-call-taker personnel to work as call-takers
- Encourage all employees to have personal emergency plans and supplies
- Plans for the use of mental health professionals to support PSAP personnel.
- Determine equipment needs for potential stay at home options

Measures for 20-25% (3-4) reduction in staff:

- Continue preventative measures
- 12-hour 4-day schedule will be implemented
- All Dispatch Supervisors will be added to shift schedules
- Audio recordings will be delayed to 5-10 business days
- Suspend CTO training program. Utilize trainees where possible to the level of their training (accepting non-emergency calls, phones only) and consider sending untrained employees home with study materials.
- Discuss the potential for keeping employees in Communications around the clock. Determine supplies such as cots or inflatable mattresses.
- Notify county 9-1-1 liaison and neighboring agencies of staffing decrease. (Assume that the trend will continue before decreasing)

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Measures for 30% (5)+ reduction in staff:

- Continue preventative measures.
- Run emergency traffic from main channels
- Prepare for alternatives to answering administrative (non-emergency) lines.
- Start preparing to utilize personnel from outside Communications, consider work from home options.
- Notify Public Information Officer

Measures for 40% (7) + reduction in staff:

- Continue preventative measures.
- Communicate daily with employees
- All audio request will be suspended until staffing levels improve
- Start to backfill with personnel from outside communications (admin/records staff)
- Request volunteers to prepare quarantine location near Communications
- Utilize online reporting for citizen complaints that do not require a response

Measures for 50% (9) + reduction in staff:

- Continue preventative measures.
- Minimum Staffing will drop to 3 per shift
- Suspend EMD, go into dispatch emergency mode
- Close non-emergency lines overnight.
- Continue to attempt to backfill with personnel from outside communications (admin/records staff)
- Implement message on non-emergency lines with alternatives such as delaying reports until the next business day, utilizing online reporting systems,
- Utilizing home personnel to assist with administrative type calls.

Measures for 60% (11) + reduction in staff:

- Continue preventative measures.
- 12-hour 5-day schedule will be implemented
- Start preparing Dispatch in the box with portable radios and laptop radios. To be utilized to dispatch from home.
- Make sure quarantine location is ready for dispatch personnel and equipment is ready

Measures for 70% (13) + reduction in staff:

- Continue preventative measures.
- The Quarantine team will be activated.
- The Quarantine schedule will be implemented. The team will be working around the clock.