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Complaint and Internal Affairs Analysis 2012

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to review and analyze all complaints against ECC employees from citizens, responders and other ECC personnel. This includes the failure to follow ECC Guidelines for the period of January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012. The analysis was completed to identify patterns or trends which could indicate training needs, equipment issues or the need for Guideline modification.

Method:

This analysis was completed by reviewing all complaints made against ECC employees during the above stated time period. HRECC Administrative Guideline 32.6, Handling Complaints, requires that all complaints received against an employee of the ECC be investigated. Investigations are documented and in each case a Supervisor, Operations Manager or ECC Director has reviewed and fully investigated the complaint. This investigation may include a review of recordings, CAD reports, interviews with employees, interviews with outside agency personnel, interviews with citizens, interviews with the employee(s) involved or other means as needed.

Summary:

There were 51 complaints against ECC employees that addressed issues of improper dispatch assignment, dispatch delay, address errors, responder safety, tardiness, Radio Operator procedure error, improper use of EMD, unbecoming conduct, human relations violations, employee harassment and attention to detail. This is compared to 72 complaints in 2012. The decrease is partially attributed to the fact that the ECC changed the return contact policy and this has made it much easier for employees to comply with this expectation and therefore decreased the number of complaints and violations in that area.

There were additional violations detected as a result of quality control checks by management personnel and all complaints or errors resulted in 68 personnel actions during this timeframe.

Findings:

Attention to detail complaints remained high and it has been determined that workload plays a large part in some of these errors. Communicators may get distracted by another task that requires immediate performance and then fails to follow through on the first assignment. This is being addressed by management personnel with training in the areas

of a more teamwork approach to duties and assignments. It should also be noted that personnel staffing and the need for additional Communicators could be playing a part in this problematic area. Additionally, it has been directed to the supervisory staff that a secondary or backup Communicator should be assigned to each radio operator in order to help with these secondary tasks. This person serves primarily as a Call Taker due to staffing constraints, but will also be a backup when they are not on the phone processing a call for service or performing other phone related duties.

There were 7 dispatch delay complaints that were founded. Any delay in the dispatch of services is considered serious and dealt with accordingly. Three of the delay issues were related to the failure to see or hear a notification of the pending call from the Call Taker and the remaining 4 were for miscellaneous other reasons.

There were 11 occasions where an incorrect dispatch assignment was used. This could also fall within the realm of attention to detail and personnel should work to make certain that they pay close attention to the assignment needed for each event. Several of these incorrect assignments were caught by the Shift Supervisor and were able to be corrected immediately. Others went undetected and thus caused a delay in services to the citizen. Shift Supervisors should ensure that these assignments are being dispatched correctly. This solidifies the fact that the Shift Supervisor should not be tied up on a specialty assignment for an entire shift and should remain free to oversee operations.

It appears that responder safety continues to be a high priority for ECC personnel as there were no founded complaint involving safety. Personnel are commended for their efforts to ensure the safety of each responder. Solid call taking and status checks should continue to ensure this trend as well as the use of the CAD monitoring system.

The ECC continues to review 100% of EMD calls and it is noted that 6 complaints resulted in founded status of failure to properly use EMD protocols. 4 of these complaints were related to one specific EMD protocol and it was determined that the protocol needed to be realigned in order to make the information flow in a better format for the Communicator and the patient. Since that time, the errors have decreased. Continued EMD training is making for a well trained staff that can provide prearrival instructions to citizens as needed.

The Operations Manager will continue to ensure that all complaints received are investigated. This aids in the service that can be provided to our citizens and identifies any issues that should be addressed.