

# **BLOOMFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## **Communications Unit**

### Communications Unit

Six full time civilian dispatchers staff the communications unit under the supervision of the [Support Services Division Commander](#). The communications unit is operational and staffed 24 hours a day and acts as liaison to the public for anything from directions, lost and found items, safety advice and calls for public safety and other community services.

## **When to call 9-1-1**

Dial 9-1-1 To Stop a Crime, To Report a Fire, or to Save a Life. Please use 9-1-1 only for emergencies. The non-emergency number for the police department is 242-5501. By using the non-emergency number properly, the 9-1-1 lines are left free for emergencies.

Emergency calls (911) and non-emergency calls (860-242-5501) are then prioritized. Calls of an immediate, life threatening nature receive the highest priority. Officers are dispatched to the highest priority calls before they are sent to other calls.

### What Happens When You Call?

For many people, their first and sometimes only contact with the police department is a telephone call answered by a dispatcher, which means that the department's entire reputation may well rest on the person in that job. Some have suggested that the telephone call for police service is the single most critical point in the entire criminal justice system. It is the dispatcher who typically has the first contact with the citizen, and the decisions that they make can dictate the entire department's response. The dispatcher's job is to listen to the information offered by the caller, ask appropriate questions to discover the true nature of the call, assess the information and quickly make a decision about how to field the call. The pressures on dispatchers are enormous. In discussing the "forgotten victim," researchers have compared the occupational stress of the dispatcher to the stress suffered by air traffic controllers. Within the pressure imposed by time, dispatchers must make critical decisions, direct the activities of several police units, receive and assimilate a variety of information, and then communicate effectively with police officers and citizens.