



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week** *Recognizing the dedicated service of Public Safety Dispatchers*

The week of April 14-20, 2019 is recognized as "National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week" bringing recognition to public safety dispatchers who are a vital part of the public safety team. These very special people are the voices that assure rapid response during emergencies. They play a critical role in coordinating first responders and lifesaving efforts.

During this week we formally acknowledge our dispatchers for their dedicated service. In 2018, public safety dispatchers and supervisors at the Ventura Police Department responded to more than 210,000 calls including 53,180 9-1-1 calls and every year that number grows. Public safety dispatchers are the lifeline that ensures the continued protection of police officers and the community members we serve. Day in, and day out, people depend on the skill, expertise and commitment of the dispatchers who work in public safety communications.

Dispatchers respond quickly and professionally, they play a crucial role in providing an invaluable connection between emergency services and the people who need them. We are very thankful for our team of Ventura Police Public Safety Dispatchers. These essential personnel play a crucial role in our ability to assist community members in times of crisis.

"The Ventura Police Department celebrates the valuable contributions that our public safety dispatchers make in serving Ventura. We are fortunate to have such talented and dedicated professionals who work so hard to support our community during times of crisis," said Assistant Police Chief Darin Schindler. "This year we recognize Dispatcher Megann Williams as our Dispatcher of the Year. Her positive attitude and ability to adapt easily to change exemplifies the many skills and values worthy of this special award. She shows compassion and professionalism to callers during very difficult calls."

Public safety dispatchers undergo a rigorous testing and background process before being hired. Once hired, dispatchers attend a Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training Dispatcher Course. Their training then includes 6-12 months of on the job training. Even then, approximately 50 % of the dispatchers hired are not able to successfully complete the training program due to the unique demands and stress of the job. The ones that make it through the training program are unique in their ability to multi-task under stressful conditions.

Telecommunicators Week began in California in 1981 at the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office and quickly grew to become a national week of recognition. In 1991, Congress officially designated the second week of April as a time to recognize the critical role that dispatchers play in keeping our communities safe.