City of Bellingham
Classification Specification - Civil Service or AFSCME

CLASS TITLE	**Communications Division Chief**
DEPARTMENT	**Fire**
UNION:	**106S**
SG:	**Plan F**
CS:	**Yes**
FLSA:	**N**
EE04CODE:	**OA**

NATURE OF WORK:

This position is responsible for the Department's electronic communications and data management programs, including short and long range planning, direction, supervision, and operations of the Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Dispatch Center. Works closely and coordinates with Operations Battalion Chiefs, Fire Captains, EMS administration, Police Department/WhatComm Administration, and all county first response fire agencies.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This position is distinguished from other supervisory positions in the Fire Department by its responsibility for the Fire and Emergency Medical Services (Fire/EMS) dispatch services and all electronic communications of the Bellingham Fire Department.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the Assistant Chief. Directly supervises Fire/EMS dispatch services. Works closely with Operations Battalion Chiefs and other staff coordinate service and activities. Serves as a staff officer and member of the Fire Department management team.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Prepares the annual budget for the Division and presents it to the Assistant Chief; directs expenditure of Division funds in accordance with budget appropriations as approved by the City Council.

2. Responsible for short and long range planning to ensure continued reliable emergency communications for user agencies. Defines goals and objectives and makes recommendations to the Assistant Chief.

3. Supervises Fire/EMS dispatchers. Assigns work and is responsible for training, performance evaluations, corrective actions and discipline. Creates and coordinates dispatcher work schedules.

4. Researches new and available electronic components, procedures, and programs for integration into the existing technical systems. Acts as a technical adviser responsible for systems design, equipment selection, and expansion of the existing system.

5. Supervises all Fire Dispatch activities during major emergency incidents.

6. Develops and maintains comprehensive policies, procedures, and protocols as necessary for the efficient operations of the Center. Identifies deficiencies and develops new policies and procedures to improve the effectiveness of operations and minimize liability.

7. Coordinates activities between the Dispatch Center, WhatComm, and user agencies. Provides feedback to all first response fire agencies and other outside agencies on their performance as necessary.

8. Writes grants to procure additional funding for the dispatch center and operations and procures funding from outside agencies.

9. Oversees purchase, maintenance, and inventory control of all Department radio/telephone/paging equipment.

10. Participates in public relations for the Dispatch Division.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Other related duties as assigned.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities):

- Knowledge of the fire and EMS systems of Whatcom County, communications protocols, department policies, and procedures.
- Thorough knowledge of incident Command and modern emergency management principles, practices, and procedures.
- Working knowledge of state and federal communications laws and practices specific to fire department radio and computer communication systems.
- Strong knowledge of Incident Management Systems (IMS), related to EMS and fireground operations.
- Working knowledge of Department, City, State, and Federal rules, laws, codes and ordinances, and methods related to fire prevention, suppression, hazardous materials, EMS, and other related areas of responsibility.
- Ability to effectively supervise and coordinate the efforts of subordinates.
- Working knowledge of County/City geography, including locations of streets.
- Basic knowledge of radio operations, fire chemistry and physics, fire hazards, building construction, and materials.
- Skill in using personal computers for basic word processing, data management and spreadsheet work.
- Demonstrated ability to solve problem and make decisions under stress. Adaptable and flexible to meet the needs of differing circumstances.
- Ability to plan, organize, and implement programs to meet Department needs.
- Excellent oral communication skills including the ability to make presentations to the staff and the public.
- Demonstrated leadership skills.

- Excellent written communication skills to develop policies and a variety of reports for the department.
- Working knowledge of the operation and maintenance of the various electronic devices used in the Dispatch Center.
- Must maintain minimum required certifications.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in an office setting with extensive work at a computer workstation.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Five years experience as a Firefighter with the Bellingham Fire Department.

- A.A. or A.S. degree or 90 quarter credit hours of college with studies in education, public policy and administration, management, fire protection, fire technology, fire command and administration or related field required. A baccalaureate degree is preferred.

- Successful completion of Bellingham Fire Department Officer Academy or an equivalent certification that meets the requirements of NFPA Fire Officer I & II from a recognized accrediting agency.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

Valid Washington State drivers license.
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic certification

PREPARED BY: Mike Leigh

Steve Mahaffey
5/00

REVISED BY: Andy Day
Michelle Barrett
10/04
B. Hewett
1/19

REVIEWED BY:

Bill Newbold, Fire Chief

COMMISSION ADOPTION: March 13, 2019

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