



City of Roanoke E-911 Center Recruitment Plan

Reviewed / Revised February 2021



Objective:

The department's objective is to work actively with the City of Roanoke's Department of Human Resources Recruiter to hire a diverse group of dispatchers in rough proportion to the diversity of the community we serve.

Plan of Action:

The City of Roanoke E911 center works to actively recruit and hire a diverse workforce comparable to that of the city's compositional makeup. The department has made strides to increase this number by continuing to work cohesively with the City of Roanoke's Human Resources Department in an effort to improve the overall composition of the department.

During our most recent CALEA assessment, the assessor stated: "There is a trend nationally for Communication personnel to be designated as first responders and for licensing of dispatch staff as opposed to certification. These actions are indicative of an improved understanding of the high stress and technical nature of the tasks required from a telecommunicator. Pursuing these avenues will aid the agency in exhibiting the commitment to this function and attract individuals who want a career as opposed to a job". It is our goal to keep this future endeavor in mind as we recruit Communications Officers.

The E911 center's Community Involvement Team has members trained to assist in recruitment efforts at various events throughout the Commonwealth. The Community Involvement Team Chair and the E911 Recruitment Specialist will continue to work closely with Human Resources to ensure the E911 Center is participating in recruitment events and job fairs. The department will put its focus into events specifically geared towards recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce. To meet department goals of a more inclusive workforce, focus will be on attending events at local high schools, reaching out at area community colleges, job fairs, virtual career fairs, informational sessions and cultural festivals, etc.

In 2020, the department worked to hire qualified and diverse minority candidates, through pre-employment testing and interviews throughout the calendar year. These efforts were hampered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The E911 Center continues to hold applicant testing in accordance to the availability of the Roanoke Police Academy and Human Resources staff. Testing sessions occur within a three to four month window prior to the start of the next training academy session. The intent of this practice is to ensure that applicant testing only occurs when a new training academy session is scheduled. This should increase efficiency in the hiring process while also providing a clearer picture of the expected hiring process timeframe to the applicant.

We plan to continue working with members of Human Resources to advertise open job positions that can target specific minority groups, which in turn will help develop a well - rounded applicant pool. Our agency continues to explore available resources of advertising open positions. Focus will remain in advertising, job fair attendance and events through social media avenues such as Facebook and Instagram. Specifically relating to Facebook, the E911 Center will continue to focus efforts with posting available jobs and opportunities to the public. In 2021, the E911 Center will focus on

advertising campaigns centered on highlighting the E911 staff as the “The First-First Responder”. This campaign will utilize images of current staff members, testimony statements from staff about why they chose 911 for their careers, and a slogan: “Be the First”.

Additionally, E911 will work with HR on advertising employment with organizations such as Virginia APCO, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), Indeed.com, governmentjobs.com, USAjobs.com, LinkedIn, and various media outlets such as City electronic billboards, etc. The E911 Center also works closely with HR utilizing NeoGov (a web-based recruitment and applicant tracking system that automates the recruitment and selection process for internal departments and external customers). The plan of action is to continue advertising employment opportunities that seek diverse applicants regionally as well as nationally. The E911 Center will continue to work strategically with HR to determine other available advertising resources, keeping in mind any potential budgetary restrictions.

The City continues to see its demographics change annually, to include a more diverse population. The City continues to experience growth within the Hispanic population, as addressed in previous Community Involvement reports. The E911 Center did not meet the 2020 goals of hiring additional Hispanic employees or Spanish speaking employees. This was largely due to impacts to recruiting and hiring because of the COVID pandemic. The department will continue working with HR to recruit and hire bi-lingual applicants, specifically seeking those who are able to speak Spanish. This plan can be achieved by targeting and attending recruiting events, as well as community involvement events that are attended by specific minority groups that have direct ties to Hispanic organizations such as Local Colors and Latino hosted festivals, etc. (such as Cinco de Mayo). The department maintains its goal from 2020 of increasing our overall percentage of Hispanic Communications Officers by 2% for 2021.

Based on the demographics report completed by the department in February 2021, the department’s composition continues to be comprised of mostly females. The total percentage of males at the end of 2021 was at 23.7%. The department would like to refocus its efforts in recruiting more male applicants in 2021, with a goal to increase the number of male employees by at least 2%, again with the assistance of Human Resources and social media.

The E911 Center also plans to continue using specific community education events geared towards various adult groups as recruiting opportunities. Additionally, the E911 Center will expand its participation in recruiting events held at City high schools and school events, though this will likely be minimal in impact due to the ongoing pandemic. Furthermore, the E911 Center plans to expand its outreach efforts in an effort to bolster recruiting while enhancing community involvement, once COVID restrictions ease to a degree that this can be facilitated. Additionally, the E911 Center will begin producing a series of short, informational videos that highlight various aspect of the department and our people. These informative videos will serve to supplement and enhance recruiting and public education efforts, especially while operating under current pandemic restrictions. These tactics will assist in overall efforts to increase the number of diverse applicants.

Partnering with City of Roanoke Human Resources

The recruitment function of Human Resources ensures that the City of Roanoke is an employer of choice by implementing and marketing programs, practices and policies that will attract a diverse pool of applicants for current and future vacancies. The City has displayed dedication to increased cooperative efforts between local government and private citizens for the benefit of the local community. Our recruitment initiative strives to inform the public and surrounding areas about career opportunities within the organization. We seek diverse applicants to ensure that the organization reflects the community we serve, and participate in numerous career fairs annually. In the past three years, due to budgetary restrictions, the recruitment program has been strategic and selective in its attendance at local and national career fairs and visits to colleges and military bases. Half of our participation involves attendance at paid recruitment events while the other half involves recruitment

events that are at no cost or outreach efforts speaking opportunities where there is minimal cost (i.e., travel expenses).

The City of Roanoke attends an average of 35 job fairs/virtual career fairs and recruitment events each year. Continued outreach efforts occur at the community college and high school level by participating in workshops, classroom visits, as well as, sponsored events for local area high school and middle school students. Furthermore, the recruitment program continues its partnership with the local office of the Virginia Employment Commission.

Employees Responsible for Plan Administration:

- Department of Human Resources
- Current E911 Center Community Involvement Chair
- Current E911 Recruitment Specialist
- Members of the 911 Center’s Community Involvement Team

Evaluation:

Each year the E-911 Center Community Involvement Team Chair or their designee will prepare a report documenting the number of dispatchers hired during the previous year and the progress towards stated objectives, comparing our center workforce composition to the community.

Revision of the Plan:

The department’s Recruitment Plan is reviewed annually; the plan will be revised as needed.