



City of Roanoke E-911 Center Recruitment Plan

Reviewed / Revised March 2022



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 E-911 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.

There is currently legislation in process that would change the wording of the HB131/854 and SB585 to include Public Safety Telecommunicators as First Responders. This would give greater access to retirement and healthcare benefits. It is our goal to keep this endeavor in mind as we recruit Communications Officers.

The E-911 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 E-911 Recruitment Specialist will continue to work closely with Human Resources to ensure the E-911 Centre is participating in recruitment events and job fairs. The department will out its focus into events specifically geared towards recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce. To meet department goals of a more inclusive workforce, the focus will be on attending events at local high schools and colleges, coordinating events with the public libraries, in-person and virtual job fairs, and focusing on areas where citizens may have limited access to resources such as technology.

In 2021, the department worked to hire qualified and diverse minority candidates, through pre-employment testing and interviews throughout the calendar year. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, these efforts were negatively impacted. The E-911 Center is in the final stages of making the Critical test available online. We hope this change widens our candidate pool as it will allow for more flexibility in the testing phase. We are also working on provisions for handling those applicants who do not have the resources to test online from home.

We plan to continue working with members of Human Resources to advertise open job positions that can target specific minority groups, which will in turn help develop a well-rounded applicant

pool. Our agency continues to explore available resource 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 E-911 Center will continue to focus efforts with posting available jobs and opportunities to the public. In 2022, the E-911 Center will be utilizing resources such as RVTV-3, in-house created videos, live feed, etc, to seek interested and qualified applicants to “Answer the Call”. “Answer the Call” will be the focus of the current years recruiting campaign and should be included in all recruiting related information.

As part of the “Answer the Call” campaign, the Center will highlight current staff through informational posts on social media, short videos, and testimonials highlighting the skills of the dispatchers, the team environment, the new state-of-the-art facility, and invaluable service provided to the community. By highlighting these areas, the Center will be able to visualize and display the current diversity of our staff while also putting a personal touch and message into recruiting. This should serve to emphasize and define what it is to be a City of Roanoke E-911 Communications Officer.

In addition to Facebook/social media, current job openings and opportunities should be listed on other job-specific platforms, such as LinkedIn, Indeed, zip recruiter, and other third party job posting sites. Other area jurisdictions such as Roanoke County, Franklin County, and Bedford County are already utilizing these sites to post jobs and recruit new talent. A diversity in advertisement and job postings gives more people greater access to the available job openings in our department and will lead to a greater diversity of applicants that are hired. E-911 will work with HR on advertising employment with organizations such as Virginia APCO, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), governmentjobs.com, USAjobs.com, and media outlets such as City electronic billboards. Additionally, HR just recently registered with the College Central Network which is a job posting network for colleges who chose to participate. The E-911 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 E-911 Center will continue to work strategically with HR to determine other available advertising recourses, 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 E-911 Center did meet the 2021 goal of hiring additional Hispanic employees or Spanish speaking employees. One additional Spanish-speaking employee was hired. The department will continue working with HR to recruit and hire bi-lingual applicants, specifically seeking those who are able to speak Spanish. The 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. The department maintains its goal from 2021 of increasing our overall percentage of Hispanic Communications Officers by 2% for 2022. Additionally, there should be some incentive program specifically for bilingual

applicants. This will bolster recruiting efforts to support the growing need to have bilingual Communications Officers.

Based on the demographics report completed by the department in March 2022, the departments' composition continues to be comprised of mostly females. The total percentage of males at the end of 2021 was 21% - this is a decrease of 2.7% in 2020. The department will continue to focus its efforts in recruiting more male applicants in 2022, with a goal to increase the number of male employee by at least 2% again with the assistance of Human Resources.

The E-911 Center also plans to continue using specific community education events geared towards various adult groups as recruiting opportunities. Additionally, the E-911 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. To help offset the COVID impact, the Community Involvement Team will also focus on developing recruiting and educational opportunities in partnership with the City Library system. In the near future, our department hopes partner with the local school system explore options to provide training to high school students in hopes of potentially recruiting them post-graduation.

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

While the City of Roanoke normally anticipates attending an average of 35 job fairs/virtual career fairs and recruitment events each year, this proved to be very difficult given the pandemic. When feasible, continued outreach efforts will 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 E-911 Center Community Involvement Chair
- Current E-911 Recruitment Specialist
- Members of the E-911 Center's Community Involvement Team

Evaluation:

Each year the E-911 Center Community Involvement Team Chair and/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 departments' Recruitment Plan is reviewed annually; the plan will be revised as needed.