

# Memorandum

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**TO:** Civil Service Commission

**FROM:** Jennifer Schembri

**SUBJECT: PROBATIONARY PERIOD  
FOR PUBLIC SAFETY  
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST**

**DATE:** November 28, 2023

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Establish a one-year (2080 hours) probationary period for the new classification of Public Safety Communications Specialist (8536/8537).

## **BACKGROUND**

Section 3.04.990A of the San Jose Municipal Code states that all appointments to the Classified Service shall be tentative and subject to the successful completion of a probationary period which shall not be less than six months of actual service.

Section 3.04.990B of the San Jose Municipal Code states the Civil Service Commission may, by resolution, establish a longer probationary period, not to exceed twelve months, for such classes as it may specify.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Public Safety Communications Specialist is responsible for answering and processing incoming emergency and non-emergency requests and entering information in a prescribed format into the City's computer aided dispatch telecommunications system for fire and medical assistance in the Fire Communications Division. The Public Safety Communications Specialist is also responsible for transferring calls to the proper emergency service provider; communicating with allied agency dispatch centers by phone or radio to exchange information, including coordination of mutual aid resources when needed; and adhering to the San José Fire Department's Communications Procedure Manual to utilize the Medical Priority Dispatch System and Fire Priority Dispatch System Protocols to process incoming requests for fire and medical assistance.

We are recommending a one-year probationary period for this classification. The initial training period is approximately six months (eight-week academy; 12-16 weeks on-the-job training; one week evaluation period). The additional time is necessary for the employee to perform the full

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range of job duties in a solo capacity following completion of the training. A six-month probationary period would not allow the employee opportunity to effectively demonstrate performance in a solo capacity.

This classification has a similar level of responsibilities as the Police Communication Specialist classification in that they both answer and process incoming emergency and non-emergency requests and enter information in a prescribed format into the City's computer aided dispatch telecommunications system. To maintain consistency among classifications with a similar level of scope and responsibilities, a one-year probationary period is appropriate for this classification. It is recommended that the probationary period for the Public Safety Communication Specialist classification be one year (2080 hours) to provide a sufficient period of time to satisfactorily assess the employee's performance and ensure that new employees can perform the responsibilities of the position in a manner that meets department standards.



Jennifer Schembri

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Director of Human Resources