



Police Department City of Topeka, Kansas

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To whom it may concern,

I am authoring this memorandum to formalize the Topeka Police Department's complete & unwavering support for recently proposed legislation pertaining to reclassifying *emergency telecommunicators* (dispatchers) as first responders. This important piece of legislation's (*9-1-1 First Responders Act*) passage is an absolute necessity to acknowledge, in a broader capacity, the essential public safety role *emergency telecommunicators* successfully accomplish on a daily basis.

The inclusion of public safety telecommunicators as Emergency Responders will be pursuant to K.S.A.48-949, et.al, and amendments thereto, and will be applied wherever necessitated and appropriate in both legislative and administrative policies and guidelines.

This is an important step towards fully recognizing this committed & dedicated group of critical infrastructure workers for their sacrifice, perseverance and contribution to the overall public safety level across the state. They endure a lot of the same challenges and stressors as police officers and have earned this classification and the added employee benefits, such as mental health support services, that are contained therein.

I am appreciative of the opportunity to adjoin our agency's support to the Kansas Association of Public Safety Officials and Kansas 911 Coordinating Council, in full recommendation of this proposed legislation.



Bryan Wheelles

Chief of Police

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