

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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<b>Telephone Usage and Release of Personal Information</b>		



## I. Introduction

A telephone call may be the only contact an individual will have with the Division of Police. Therefore, it is important for Division personnel to project a professional image while engaged in a telephone conversation.

## II. Policy Statements

- A. Personnel shall answer the telephone promptly, identify themselves by rank (if sworn) and name, offer assistance, and obtain information by speaking distinctly and in a helpful, professional manner. Records Unit personnel shall follow the telephone provisions set forth in their SOP manual.
- B. Personnel answering calls shall attempt to assist the caller and shall not transfer calls unnecessarily. When it is necessary to place a caller on hold, the caller shall be advised of the reason and shall not be left on hold for an extended period of time.
- C. Division telephones may be monitored and/or recorded.
- D. Outgoing voicemail messages shall be professional and shall identify the Division component and/or the employee to which it is assigned. When appropriate, the message should include a number to call when immediate assistance is needed.
- E. Long-distance calls on Division telephones shall be restricted to official police business and justification may be required.
- F. Personnel shall not use the telephone function on the police radio to discuss confidential information or to relay telephone numbers that are restricted to "law enforcement use only" distribution.
- G. Calls requesting employment verification shall be referred to Human Resources.
- H. Home addresses and telephone numbers of Division personnel are confidential and shall be released only to Division personnel for official business. Prosecutors and city attorneys requesting this information for preparation of court cases shall be referred to the Court Liaison Section or the Legal Advisor's Office.
- I. Computer-generated printouts containing home addresses and telephone numbers of Division personnel shall be kept in a secure place, shall not be duplicated, and shall be rendered unreadable upon expiration.

### **III. Procedures**

#### **A. Releasing Personnel Information Over the Phone**

1. Verify the caller's identity and employment with the Division by asking for his or her telephone number, PNumber, or other identifying information.
2. Utilize the appropriate Division database to obtain home telephone numbers and/or addresses for authorized callers.
3. Advise callers not authorized by Division policy that the employee's information will not be released.
4. Refer inquiries to which you cannot respond and requests from persons other than Division personnel to the Headquarters Operations Unit.
5. Transfer the call to the on-duty Headquarters Operations Unit Sergeant for final disposition when the caller's status cannot be verified.

#### **B. Incoming Telephone Calls for Personnel**

1. Verify the requested employee's assignment through the Division's computerized personnel database system as necessary.
2. Connect the caller to the employee's assigned bureau.
3. Connect the caller to the Headquarters Operations Unit when the employee's assignment cannot be determined or the employee's bureau is closed.
4. Offer to take a message and forward it to the employee without delay.