# Protecting Law Enforcement Responders

Protecting Law Enforcement Responders prepares public safety telecommunicators to recognize, communicate, and respond to situations that may place law enforcement personnel at risk. The course emphasizes the dispatcher's critical role as an officer's lifeline by focusing on effective questioning, information gathering, pre-arrival instructions, situational awareness, radio communication, and adherence to agency policies and procedures.

Learners examine incidents and circumstances that may endanger officers, including traffic stops, extremist encounters, gang activity, domestic violence calls, active shooting incidents, barricaded or suicidal subjects, pursuits, and encounters with persons with autism or altered mental status. The course also addresses effective law enforcement radio dispatch practices and the effects of critical incident stress on telecommunicators.

## Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Explain the telecommunicator's role in protecting law enforcement responders during emergency and routine incidents.
2. Identify incidents, individuals, behaviors, and environmental factors that may present heightened risks to law enforcement personnel.
3. Apply effective call-handling, questioning, information-gathering, and pre-arrival instruction techniques to improve responder and caller safety.
4. Identify critical information that should be obtained and relayed during domestic violence calls, active shooting incidents, traffic stops, pursuits, and other high-risk events.
5. Demonstrate principles of clear, concise, accurate, and professional law enforcement radio communication.
6. Apply structured methods for gathering and broadcasting descriptions of persons, vehicles, locations, weapons, and other hazards.
7. Recognize the signs and effects of critical incident stress and describe strategies and resources that can support recovery following traumatic events.

# Module 1: Introduction

This module introduces the dispatcher's critical role in law enforcement responder safety. Learners examine line-of-duty deaths, incidents that can endanger officers, the importance of maintaining contact with field personnel, vehicular pursuits, and the special considerations involved when responders encounter a person with autism.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Explain how dispatcher questions, information, actions, and attitudes can affect responder safety and the quality of an emergency response.
2. Identify common incidents and circumstances that can place law enforcement officers at increased risk.
3. Explain the importance of following agency policies and maintaining regular contact with officers during potentially dangerous incidents.
4. Describe dispatcher considerations and responsibilities associated with motor vehicle pursuits.
5. Identify communication considerations, potential triggers, and safety information to relay when responders encounter a person with autism.

**Content/Activities**

- Fallen Officers and Line-of-Duty Deaths
- The Dispatcher's Role in Officer Safety
- Video: Police Officer Ambushed
- Audio: Last Call
- High-Risk Incidents, Protocols, and Officer Contact
- Audio: Motor Vehicle Pursuit
- Autism Recognition, Triggers, and Communication Tips
- Video: Autism and Brainteasers

# Module 2: Groups That Target & Endanger Law Enforcement

This module examines individuals and groups that may present heightened risks to law enforcement personnel. Learners explore extremists, street gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, sociopaths, psychopaths, wanted persons, and mentally disturbed individuals, with particular emphasis on traffic stops, officer location, records checks, and safe radio communication.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify groups and individuals that may target or present heightened risks to law enforcement personnel.
2. Explain why officer location and timely status checks are essential during traffic and suspect stops.
3. Identify information from records checks that should be communicated to officers while considering whether a suspect may overhear radio traffic.
4. Recognize potential extremist vehicle identifiers while explaining why such identifiers alone are not indicators of criminal activity.
5. Describe safety considerations when handling incidents involving gangs, mentally disturbed persons, sociopaths, or psychopaths.

**Content/Activities**

- Groups That May Target Law Enforcement
- Extremists and Traffic Stop Risks
- Officer Location, Status Checks, and Records Information
- Extremist Vehicle Identifiers
- Video: Extremist Traffic Stop
- Street Gangs and Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs
- Mentally Disturbed Callers, Sociopaths, and Psychopaths
- Video: Suspect Hunted Officers and Brainteasers

# Module 3: Dispatcher Tactics to Protect Officers

This module focuses on practical call-handling tactics dispatchers can use to prepare and protect responders. Learners examine scene assessment, victim and suspect information, call screening, control of emergency calls, structured questioning, inverted visualization, red flags, pre-arrival instructions, and effective communication of critical information.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Assess a caller's environment and gather information necessary to prepare responders for conditions at the scene.
2. Apply effective call-screening and call-control techniques without making assumptions about the caller or incident.
3. Use the Journalistic Investigative Approach to obtain essential information about an emergency.
4. Apply inverted visualization and recognize red flags that may indicate additional hazards or changing circumstances.
5. Provide appropriate pre-arrival instructions and communicate detailed suspect, vehicle, victim, and scene information to responders.

**Content/Activities**

- Dispatcher Responsibilities and Creating a Safe Environment
- Victim Focus, Primary Witness, and the 300 Call Syndrome
- Screening Calls and Repetitious Incidents
- Audio: Deputy DeGrow and Maintaining Call Control
- Journalistic Investigative Approach
- Inverted Visualization and Audio: Burglary
- Red Flags and Pre-Arrival Instructions
- Preparing and Protecting Officers, Audio: Joe Horn, and Brainteasers

# Module 4: The Danger in Domestic Violence Calls

This module examines the significant dangers law enforcement personnel face when responding to domestic violence incidents. Learners explore the dynamics of domestic violence, dispatch and backup considerations, departmental protocols, critical questions, restraining orders, victim behavior, 911 hang-ups, environmental red flags, and officer status checks.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Explain why domestic violence calls present significant risks to responding law enforcement officers.
2. Describe the dynamics of domestic violence and the importance of following agency protocols and applicable mandates.
3. Gather and relay critical information about suspects, victims, threats, weapons, injuries, intoxication, restraining orders, and incident history.
4. Apply appropriate call-handling techniques to incomplete calls, 911 hang-ups, and situations in which a caller cannot communicate openly.
5. Recognize environmental and behavioral red flags and explain the importance of continuing officer status checks according to agency policy.

**Content/Activities**

- Video: The Danger in Domestic Violence Calls
- Dynamics of Domestic Violence and Multiple-Officer Response
- Protocols, Department Policy, and State Mandates
- Critical Questions for Domestic Violence Calls
- Stockholm Syndrome and Audio Scenario
- 911 Hang-Ups and Alternative Communication Methods
- Domestic Violence Red Flags
- Status Checks and Brainteasers

# Module 5: Active Shooting Incidents & Barricaded Subjects

This module addresses the rapidly changing nature of active shooting incidents and the telecommunicator's responsibility to provide responding officers with current, actionable intelligence. Learners examine shooter location, weapons, pre-entry intelligence, Immediate Action Rapid Deployment, caller instructions, multiple hazards, suicide-by-cop situations, and communication during the law enforcement response.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Define an active shooting incident and explain why these events require continuous reassessment by the telecommunicator.
2. Gather and relay pre-entry intelligence concerning shooter location, number and descriptions of suspects, weapons, explosives, and other hazards.
3. Explain the purpose and basic principles of Immediate Action Rapid Deployment and the responder goal of locating, containing, and stopping the shooter.
4. Provide appropriate pre-arrival instructions to callers during an active law enforcement response.
5. Recognize potential suicide-by-cop warning signs and communicate information that may affect responder safety.

**Content/Activities**

- Active Shooting Incidents and Rapidly Changing Conditions
- Caller Identification and Pre-Entry Intelligence
- Shooter Location and Crisis Planning
- Immediate Action Rapid Deployment
- Video: Dallas Police Ambush
- Location Intelligence, Multiples, and Responder Updates
- Pre-Arrival Instructions and Law Enforcement Response
- Suicide by Cop, Closing the Call, and Brainteasers

# Module 6: Law Enforcement Radio Dispatch

This module focuses on radio procedures that support safe and effective law enforcement operations. Learners examine clear and concise transmissions, radio etiquette, plain language, phonetic alphabets, number broadcasting, structured vehicle and person descriptions, witness contamination, appropriate speaking rates, the echo principle, and the components of a broadcast message.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Apply clear, concise, accurate, and professional radio transmission procedures that support officer safety.
2. Use appropriate radio etiquette, plain language, phonetic alphabets, and number-broadcasting techniques.
3. Gather and broadcast vehicle descriptions using the CYMBAL framework and communicate license plate information accurately.
4. Gather and broadcast physical descriptions of persons while minimizing leading questions and witness contamination.
5. Explain and apply appropriate broadcast pacing, the echo principle, and the Preamble, Text, and Authority components of a radio message.

**Content/Activities**

- Broadcast Rules, Procedures, and “Click of the Mic”
- Radio Etiquette, Plain Language, and Phonetic Alphabets
- Number Broadcasting Practice
- CYMBAL and Vehicle Descriptions
- Audio: Police Officer Shooting and Video: Robbery in Progress
- Person Descriptions and Witness Contamination
- Broadcast Speed and the Echo Principle
- Preamble, Text, Authority, and Brainteasers

# Module 7: Critical Incident Stress

This module examines how traumatic events can affect public safety telecommunicators. Learners explore the physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive effects of critical incident stress, the purpose and phases of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, healthy recovery practices, and the role of training and structured procedural guides in preparing telecommunicators for traumatic calls.

**Module Objectives**

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Define a critical incident and explain how traumatic events can affect public safety telecommunicators.
2. Identify physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive symptoms associated with critical incident stress.
3. Describe the purpose and process of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing following a major incident.
4. Identify the major phases of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and the recovery practices discussed during the process.
5. Explain how preparation, training, support systems, and structured call-handling procedures can help telecommunicators manage traumatic events and related stress.

**Content/Activities**

- Critical Incidents and Trauma Responses
- Critical Incident Stress Symptoms
- Critical Incidents Experienced by Telecommunicators
- Video: Remembering Slain Officer
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- Phases of a CISD
- Recovery, Support, and Preparation Strategies
- Procedural Guides and Brainteasers

# Course Completion Criteria

To successfully complete this course and earn continuing education hours, learners must achieve a minimum score of 75%. The quiz must be completed within one hour.

- CE hours awarded: 3
- Certificate duration: 12 Months

## Technical Requirements

- Desktop, laptop, or mobile device
- Speakers or headphones
- High-speed Internet access
- A current web browser