

# LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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**LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT TECHNICIAN (LEST)**

**Informational Guide**

01-29-21/TMM

LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT TECHNICIAN  
INFORMATIONAL GUIDE

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**INTRODUCTION**

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This Guide is designed to assist you in preparing for the position of Law Enforcement Support. It contains 1) information about the LEST position; 2) an overview of the most common areas of assignment (Detention Records, Records and Fingerprint Bureau and Tourist Safety and Community Policing Divisions); 3) career opportunities within the LEST series; 4) answers to frequently asked questions; and 5) how to study for the testing process.

This information will provide you with a good understanding of the position and the work environment of each of the most common areas of assignment. Reading through this guide and gaining an understanding of the LEST position will assist you in the testing process.

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**INFORMATION ABOUT THE LEST POSITION**

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LEST is the largest entry-level classification of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD). There are approximately 400 LESTs employed with the LVMPD, the majority of which are assigned to Detention Records and the Records and Fingerprint Bureau. The remaining positions are assigned to Tourist Safety and Community Policing Divisions, and other sections throughout the LVMPD.

LESTs employed with the LVMPD are assigned to work 80 hours, bi-weekly, during day, swing, relief, or graveyard shifts. Shifts are 8, 9, 10 or 12 hours, depending on the assignment. They are paid on a bi-weekly basis.

## OVERVIEW OF THE COMMON ENTRY-LEVEL AREAS

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The Detention Records Bureau operates 24 hours, 7 days per week. They provide services to many areas of the LVMPD, other law enforcement agencies, and the general public. The majority of the sections within the Records and Fingerprint Bureau operate Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm. The Tourist Safety and Community Policing Divisions include all of the area commands in the Las Vegas valley and Laughlin. Based on operational need for their particular area, they currently operate Monday through Friday.

### ***DETENTION RECORDS BUREAU***

The Clark County Detention Center (CCDC) is located at 330 South Casino Center Drive, in the downtown area. It is a jail which houses persons who are: 1) arrested for committing crimes and waiting for court hearings; 2) found guilty or pled guilty to misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor charges, and sentenced to jail for up to one year; and 3) found guilty or pled guilty to felony charges, sentenced to the state prison, and waiting for transport. They may be male or female, adult or juvenile.

The CCDC is headed by the Sheriff and run by the Deputy Chief of the Detention Services Division (DSD). The DSD handles the booking, processing, transporting, and releasing of inmates. It also provides inmates with security, housing, meals, health care, clothing, social and legal visits, and many programs. The DSD maintains records on all phases of inmate movement within the CCDC from booking to release. It also handles taking inmates to and from courts, hospitals, medical appointments, and other detention facilities and agencies; and serving warrants and other legal papers.

#### **Detention Records Bureau**

The Detention Records Bureau within CCDC maintains, controls, retrieves, and disseminates information in the inmate records system. This system includes booking, court calendaring, clearing warrants, and releasing inmates. The Detention Records Bureau enters and maintains the outlying Justice Court and Eighth Judicial District Court warrants in the state's warrant system. The Detention Records Bureau also provides information to the public and other law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, according to privacy and security guidelines set up by the LVMPD and the State of Nevada.

When working at any of the posts within the Detention Records Bureau, there are some things to be aware of. First, there is a great deal of contact with people from very diverse backgrounds, including personnel from other law enforcement agencies, LVMPD Corrections and Police Officers, inmates and members of the public. This may occur face-to-face or over the phone. The members of the public may be in a highly emotional state and, therefore, may be demanding and appear difficult at times. The LESTs assigned to the Detention Records Bureau have contact with inmates during booking and releasing. They may also have contact with them while walking throughout the secured walkways in CCDC, where inmates are being escorted by Corrections Officers to housing or court. The inmates may be rude, offensive and lacking personal hygiene. This is an aspect of the job the LEST must be willing to deal with effectively and courteously.

Second, the LESTs perform a great deal of computer work. LESTs enter and retrieve inmate data, enter and clear warrant data, and enter statistical data. A high degree of accuracy in these duties is crucial to the proper processing of inmates from the time they are booked until the time they are released. These tasks provide DSD, the LVMPD, and the criminal justice community with a wealth of information that is crucial to the incarceration of an arrestee.

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Of prime importance to all of the duties performed by the LESTs assigned to the Detention Records Bureau is the willingness to: 1) work in a confined place (the CCD); 2) have a great deal of contact with the public and inmates; and 3) strive for 100% accuracy and timeliness in computer entries.

### **LESTs Assigned to the Detention Records Bureau, Platoons**

The Detention Records Bureau Platoon LESTs work 12-hour shifts with alternating 3-day and 4-day weekends, and an 8-hour day, for a total of 80 hours bi-weekly, which are assigned by the shift supervisor. The LESTs assigned to the Detention Records Bureau Platoon assist with the functions described above. They may be assigned to work any of the below posts:

1. Administrative Desk
2. Screening/Booking
3. Document Distribution
4. Information Center (Switchboard)
5. Lead Release
6. Releases

In addition to the duties described above, when assigned to these posts, they will also screen and/or enter data regarding Temporary Custody Records (TCRs), Class II and Walk-Throughs; verify jurisdiction, charges and warrant status of incoming arrests; enter appearance orders and/or sentencing information in the ITAG computer system; distribute paperwork to various areas; receive and prepare requests for prosecution packets for scanning to the District Attorney's office; fax court paperwork to appropriate jurisdictions to set court appearances; prepare necessary paperwork and data entry for the release of inmates and transfers to other facilities; and respond to law enforcement inquiries reference inmate status and warrant confirmation.

These posts are mostly rotated on a daily basis. When being trained on a specific post, the LEST may be assigned to that post for several days or weeks until training is complete. Therefore, each LEST is trained in and required to know the procedures used at each post.

### **LESTs assigned to the Detention Records Bureau, Specialized Assignment Units**

The LESTs assigned to the Detention Records Bureau, Specialized Assignment Units, work 8-hour shifts with weekends and holidays off. In addition to providing support to the Platoons, the LESTs perform other duties related to inmate incarceration and recordkeeping. These Units consist of:

1. Records Support (Warrants, Doe/Double IDs, Sealing and Correspondence)
2. Court Services/Court Calendars
3. Training/Quality Assurance

In addition to the duties described above, when assigned to the:

**Records Support Unit** - maintain and confirm active Outlying Justice Court, District Court and Civil warrants; distribute warrants and related documents to the courts and other agencies; complete NCIC and NCJIS validation reports; process employment background and firearms checks; prepare bail bond notifications, subpoenas, seal orders, Doe notification and file checks; research and resolve discrepancies in warrants and/or recalls, reports; interpret court and legal documents, court policies and terminology; access various law enforcement computer systems and disseminate criminal history dispositions to law enforcement personnel; review and sort out-of-custody inmate files and determine which documents must be retained; scan, maintain, transfer and index records into optical storage; verify the quality of imaged documents; retrieve stored images for records corrections, court subpoenas

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and certified copies; conduct count of records scanned; maintain computer equipment and scanners; and track and reconcile beds and monies for Henderson, City of Las Vegas and Lincoln County detention facilities.

**Court Services/Court Calendars Unit** - verify, interpret and process court documents; perform entries into the inmate management system; access and interpret inmate information in all related computer systems; process Nevada Department of Corrections and Lakes Crossing moves, Form VI detainers, Nevada Parole and Probation retake warrants, Nevada State fugitives and civil mental petitions; receive, log, verify, mail and distribute inmate Judgments of Conviction received from the court; verify daily reports and process for release or rebooking; complete TCR or detainer for inmates remanded to CCDC custody from the courts; receive and review court calendar documents; review, update and prepare notices for inmates to appear in court; and verify remand list from North Las Vegas and Henderson jails to determine inmate custody status.

**Training/Quality Assurance Unit** - tabulate and enter daily platoon statistics; prepare daily delayed release report and release average reports, submit Own Recognizance (O/R) Report to Director of Records; collate and enter statistics into Excel spreadsheet and distribute various reports; respond to inquiries of less experienced staff; provide administrative support to Training/Quality Assurance Supervisor; and resolve administrative issues as they arise to ensure work unit deadlines are met.

### **RECORDS AND FINGERPRINT BUREAU**

The Records and Fingerprint Bureau performs a variety of functions relating to the entry, processing, maintenance and dissemination of criminal records and criminal justice information systems. The bureau also issues work cards, processes carrying concealed weapon applications, and registers convicted persons. It is staffed with over 200 team members to include LESTs, Senior LESTs, LEST Supervisors, CJIS Supervisor, Records Managers, a Supply Technician, a CJIS Manager, an IT Manager, an Administrative Assistant and a Director. Approximately 10% of its team members are Temporary Support Assistants.

#### **LESTs Assigned to the Records and Fingerprint Bureau**

LESTs assigned to the Records and Fingerprint Bureau work Monday through Friday with holidays off, and work 9-hour shifts with 3 days off every other week.

Training is intense and comprehensive and includes a training, observation and reinforcement phase. When being trained at a certain post, LESTs are assigned to a post for several weeks until training is completed. They are next released from training where they will continue to work that post for a period of time, commonly referred to as the "reinforcement" period.

All assignments in the Records and Fingerprint Bureau are very fast-paced, challenging, and exciting. The LESTs work hard and with a high degree of efficiency and accuracy. Positions assigned to the Customer Service Section require heavy public contact with people of diverse backgrounds. These positions serve the public daily and require strong customer service and communication skills, courtesy, and the ability to multi-task and be flexible in an ever-changing environment.

Below describes the different sections and units within the Records and Fingerprint Bureau that entry-level LESTs may be assigned to.

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### Criminal History and Identify Section (CHIS)

- SCOPE: The SCOPE Unit enters data relating to adult and juvenile bookings, releases, and citations into our SCOPE criminal history system. The unit also enters temporary registration information of convicted persons until permanent registration forms are completed. Information about final arrest dispositions are also entered by this unit to include Justice and District court dispositions and city and county denials, in addition to summonses-in-lieu of arrest, erroneous and duplicate bookings and double ID numbers in SCOPE.
- Sealing: This unit receives Orders to Seal from the courts and ensures that eligible records are sealed from a variety of criminal justice information systems. This unit researches and queries for arrest and criminal history records; updates arrest dispositions and scans, monitors, retrieves, redacts, deletes, and prints all related information to an event being sealed.

### Customer Service Section (CSS)

- Fingerprint Unit: LESTs assigned to this unit compile, type, modify, enter, copy and distribute applications for work cards, concealed firearms permits and records of registrations; perform direct customer service duties; stay abreast of laws related to work cards, concealed firearms permits and convicted person registrations; handle and balance money drawer; review and interpret criminal history for the approval or denial of a work card; review concealed firearm permit applications for completeness and accuracy; and conduct criminal history searches and determine registration for convicted persons and sex offenders based upon the NRS code. LESTs rotate posts on a daily basis, and below is a list of sample posts LESTs may be assigned to:
  1. Front Counter – process all applicants for work cards and concealed firearms permits, and persons appearing for summons processing; take fingerprints; and handle inquiries.
  2. Livescan Station – enter data and fingerprint work card applicants, individuals responding to a summons, and convicted persons; and take miscellaneous fingerprints.
  3. Imageware Photo Capture – enter data and photograph applicants for work cards, individuals responding to a summons, and convicted persons; and handle special orders.
  4. Back Office Duties – create and update records efficiently and accurately, review FBI and Nevada State criminal history responses, research criminal justice databases, create and update logs, check data entry for accuracy, and file.
- Police Records and Reports (PRR) Unit: LESTs assigned to this unit process requests for reports from the public, to include background checks, traffic accident reports, crime reports and other documents; interview and take crime reports in person and over the telephone; and respond to public inquiries over the phone.

### Document and Report Management (DRM) Section

- DRM Unit. This unit is responsible for preparing criminal packets for court; processing criminal citations; processing fax requests from outside law enforcement agencies, including military and governmental, for criminal history information or incident crime reports; and processing

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electronic requests for traffic reports from insurance companies and attorneys. Scanning is also an important function of this unit. They batch, scan and index all paperwork in order for electronic access within Department computer systems. The unit also handles both criminal and civil subpoenas by processing criminal subpoenas issued to the Custodian of Records and the distribution of subpoenas issued to LVMPD Officers.

- UCR Unit. The primary mission of this unit is to perform Uniform Crime Reporting by classifying and tallying crimes. They review official crime reports, arrests, and citations to determine the classification in accordance with FBI UCR guidelines; review daily booking/arrests logs to update and complete daily/monthly tally sheets; and review other reports/documents and input required data for the completion of UCR report.

### National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Section

- NCIC Unit. The NCIC Unit operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a high-paced unit with heavy officer contact. The unit is responsible for taking missing person and runaway juvenile reports over the phone and sending teletypes for administrative messages, fatal information, and criminal history information. They enter, update, and clear information in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system, to include missing persons, stolen vehicles and wanted subjects; enter license plate, and stolen, recovered and impounded vehicle information from officers, citizens, and tow companies received via report, email, fax or phone; and enter felony vehicles and missing persons' vehicles.
- Validation Unit. The primary mission of this unit is to ensure the validity of entries made into NCIC by checking the various criminal justice information systems. They “pack” or add additional information to an entry such as aliases, scars/marks/tattoos, or additional dates of birth. They liaison with the Clark County Detention Center, courts and District Attorney’s office to check status of warrants; send letters to victims to check status of property; correspond with the individual details responsible for entry to resolve questions; and conduct research when necessary to validate questionable items within an entry.

### Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) Section

- TAC Unit. LESTs assigned to this unit maintain an accurate and up to date database on all Department personnel regarding classifications, transfers, new hires, terminations, and modifications to assignment and supervision; prepare class materials, to include issuance of guides/workbooks, tests, handouts, and signature sheets; grade and record test scores upon completion of NCIC proficiency classes; send monthly notifications to Department employees who are due for recertification and track those who have completed the course/test; and scan all class materials, special forms and signatures.

## **TOURIST SAFETY AND COMMUNITY POLICING DIVISION**

There are 10 area commands in the Las Vegas valley: Bolden, Convention Center, Downtown, Enterprise, Northeast, Northwest, South Central, Southeast, Spring Valley and Summerlin. There is also a substation in Laughlin.

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### **LESTs Assigned to the Tourist Safety and Community Policing Division**

The LESTs assigned to the Tourist Safety and Community Policing Divisions work 9-hour shifts, Monday through Friday. The area commands are closed on holidays. In addition to commissioned personnel, area commands are comprised of LESTs, a Sr. LEST and a LEST Supervisor and/or Administrative Assistant. Part-time employees and volunteers may also work in the area commands.

Below is a list of sample duties performed by Tourist Safety and Community Policing Divisions LESTs on a daily basis. It is not intended to provide ALL duties required of this position.

- **Citizen Reports** - determine the type of crime and take the appropriate report from citizens.
- **Customer Service** - take information/complaints in person or over the phone, and handle or route as needed.
- **Clerical Duties** - retrieve, log and distribute subpoenas received from databases, faxes and interoffice mail; complete and route service requests; perform clerical duties, including typing correspondence, forms, and reports; maintain both manual and computerized filing systems; maintain and update logs; order and maintain supplies; transcribe from recorded dictation; compile reports and stats; retrieve data and text from computer systems; receive, log, sort, and distribute mail, reports and citations; and provide support to supervisor and unit.
- **Data Entry** - enter station reports and field interview cards into the Premiere One (P1) system.
- **Scanning** – batch, scan, index and quality control all paperwork turned in to the Bureau for OnBase entry. Scanning will also prepare criminal packets for court and process criminal citations.
- **Systems Training** – train in the various computer programs used by the LVMPD to include but not limited to OnBase, SCOPE II, P1, CAD, J-LINK, C-Track, Mugshots, Odyssey, NCIC, NLETS, and Triple III.

### ***TOURIST SAFETY AND COMMUNITY POLICING DIVISION (LAUGHLIN SUBSTATION)***

In addition to performing the functions of LESTs in the Area Commands, LESTs assigned to the Laughlin Substation will also perform functions described on page 5 related to the Fingerprint Unit and Police Records and Reports Unit. Other duties include: provide clerical/technical support for the Laughlin Substation and Laughlin Work Card Section; perform various clerical duties including but not limited to typing correspondence, forms, and reports; maintain both manual and computerized filing systems; handle telephone calls from citizens and other Department personnel; provide and/or obtain information by telephone and in person, take incident/crime reports from citizens; enter reports into P1; serve as receptionist; fingerprint applicants; take photos; register convicted felons; handle money and balance money drawer; conduct searches of various criminal justice computer systems for detection or confirmation; scan records into OnBase; maintain a variety of logs and lists; and process concealed weapon permits.

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE LEST SERIES**

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The LVMPD offers many promotional and transfer opportunities for LESTs. After meeting the necessary training and experience requirements, you may choose to test for promotion to Senior LEST and then LEST Supervisor, as well as other positions within the LVMPD. You may also test for LEST openings in other areas after you successfully complete probation as a LEST, and fulfil a 2 year commitment, if assigned to the Detention Records or Records and Fingerprint Bureau.



## **ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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### **If I am offered a position, will I be able to choose my shift?**

No. Specific shift assignment is a management decision. Individuals are required to work any shift. This is a condition of employment without exception. New hires are normally assigned to work in the Detention Records, Records and Fingerprint Bureau, or the Tourist Safety and Community Policing Division. They are assigned to work where there is a vacancy, which is often swing or graveyard shift in Detention Records or Records and Fingerprint Bureau. In rare circumstances, a newly hired LEST will be assigned to another, hard-to-fill assignment.

### **If I am offered a position on a shift that is inconvenient and accept the position, when will I be able to change shifts?**

Again, specific shift assignment is a management decision. New hires must complete a probationary period in their initial area of assignment. Based on operational needs, your shift may be changed so you may not end up on the shift you were initially hired into.

### **How long is the probationary period?**

The probationary period is 12 months and may be extended, if necessary, to complete the structured training program.

### **If I am offered a position, will I be able to choose my regular days off (RDOs)?**

No. Individuals are required to work any days of assignment. This is a condition of employment without exception. Regular days off are based on seniority; therefore, the more seniority you attain in your classification, the more likely you are to get your desired days off. New hires are generally assigned to where the vacancy lies, which often includes working weekends and holidays.

### **If I am offered a position, will I be able to choose my area of assignment?**

No. Individuals will usually be assigned to one of three areas: 1) Detention Records; 2) Records and Fingerprint; or 3) Tourist Safety and Community Policing Division. Assignments will be based solely on Department need. This is a condition of employment without exception.

### **What will happen if I am offered a position and I decline the job offer because I am unable to work the shift, assigned RDOs, and/or area of assignment?**

If you are offered a position and decline it, your name will be taken off the eligibility list. Once your name is removed from the list, you will have to reapply and complete the testing process again if you decide you want to become a LEST. We encourage you to consider whether or not this position is for you prior to applying. We also encourage you to really consider the long-term benefits, knowing that as your seniority increases, you will have more choice in shifts and/or RDOs. Do not let the initial shift or RDOs given deter you from a rewarding career with the LVMPD. Most of us started on a less-than-desirable shift, worked holidays, etc.

### **As a newly hired LEST, when will I be eligible to take vacation time?**

New employees are eligible to take vacation after six months. You begin earning vacation time on your date of hire. In your first year, you will earn a minimum of three weeks of vacation.

## PREPARATION GUIDE

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**IMPORTANT: Some Written Exam and Oral Board questions will be based on information provided on the remaining pages of this Preparation Guide.**

### DEPARTMENT VISION, VALUES, MISSION AND GOALS

VISION - The vision of the LVMPD is to be the safest community in America.

VALUES - The values of the LVMPD are:

Integrity  
Courage  
Accountability  
Respect  
Excellence

The acronym “**I CARE**” is the guiding principle for each and every employee.

The values are supported by behaviors and demonstrated by the actions of employees, as they live these values. All employees are expected to represent the values of the Department while in the workplace and off-duty.

MISSION - The mission of the LVMPD is to provide exceptional police services in partnership with the community.

DEPARTMENT GOALS - The goals of the LVMPD, represented by the acronym “SAFE,” are:

Strategic prevention and reduction of crime.  
Appreciate our employees and those we serve.  
Foster leadership, accountability, and reform.  
Excel in communication, innovation, and technology.

### DISSEMINATION OF CRIMINAL HISTORY INFORMATION (CHI)

It is the policy of the LVMPD to comply with all state and federal requirements when disseminating criminal history information.

#### GENERAL

Any person who willfully requests, obtains or seeks to obtain records of criminal history under false pretenses; willfully communicates or seeks to communicate records of criminal history to any agency or person except pursuant to this procedure; or willfully falsifies any record of criminal history or any record relating to any record of criminal history, is guilty of a misdemeanor (NRS 179A).

All requests for criminal history information (CHI) from criminal justice and non-criminal justice agencies (except those made from within the LVMPD) shall be referred to the Records and Fingerprint Bureau

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except as noted below. This also includes inquiries wherein no record exists, as disclosure of the “No Record” status is actually dissemination of CHI.

A centralized area for CHI dissemination is mandated to ensure that the complexities of law, inter-local agreements and contracts that regulate such dissemination are followed. That centralized area is designated to be the Records and Fingerprint Bureau. It is the responsibility of the centralized area to maintain a log of dissemination as required by NRS 179A.

### LIMITATIONS ON DISSEMINATION

Members of the LVMPD are authorized to disseminate, under the guidelines of this procedure, criminal history information which originated within the LVMPD only (SCOPE). Dissemination of CHI that is obtained through NCJIS, NCIC and NLETS is prohibited.

CHI is NOT to be requested, used, or released:

1. Outside of official duties.
2. For personal use, interest, or gain.
3. Where such dissemination would violate either local, state, or federal statutes or inter-local agreements or inter-state contracts.

CHI may be made available:

1. To criminal justice agencies for criminal justice purposes.
2. To federal agencies authorized to receive it pursuant to federal statute or executive order.
3. To the media.

### LOG OF DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION OR RECORDS

This agency will only disseminate information relating to sexual offenses or other records of criminal history which originate within this agency (SCOPE). Any unit which maintains and disseminates this information must maintain a log of each dissemination of that information (other than a dissemination of the fact that the agency has no record relating to that person). The log must be maintained for at least one year after the information has been disseminated and must contain:

1. The name of the agency or person the CHI was provided to;
2. The date the information was provided;
3. The person who is the subject of the information; and
4. A brief description of information provided.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES**

It is the policy of the LVMPD that electronic mail, Internet and telecommunications access are resources made available for LVMPD employees to communicate with each other, other governmental entities, companies and individuals for the benefit of the Department. The systems are not to be used for employee personal gain. They are also not to be used to support or advocate any non-Departmental business or purpose. In addition, all computers, databases and confidential information must be protected from unauthorized and/or inappropriate use.

### GUIDELINES FOR USE

1. Only work-related activities are authorized.

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2. Circumventing passwords, user authentication or other security measures is prohibited.
3. Downloading or distributing copyrighted materials or software is prohibited.
4. Unlawful activities or solicitations are prohibited.
5. Transmitting threatening, obscene or harassing messages is prohibited.

### COMPUTER AND PASSWORD SECURITY

A password is a unique user access code required to enter the computer system. A password will not be shared or otherwise compromised without the express permission of a lieutenant or higher. If it becomes necessary to divulge a password to another member, the password should be changed as soon as the need for the "shared" password is no longer required. The Information Technologies Bureau will automatically request all users to change their password every 90 days.

When you have to leave a work area unattended, members should log out of the computer or lock their workstation to ensure security of their computer and Microsoft Outlook account. (Note: To lock a workstation, press "ctrl-alt-delete," then select "lock workstation." To unlock the workstation, select "ctrl-alt-delete" then enter your password when prompted.) Members may allow other members to "proxy" into their Microsoft Outlook account when needed to allow for the conduct of daily business, but become responsible for any activities conducted on their account even by the proxy. (Exception: Information Technologies personnel may proxy into workstations, with verbal permission of the user, to conduct official business as necessary.)

The LVMPD reserves the right to monitor and will conduct an annual audit of all aspects of electronic telecommunications, including e-mail and Internet communications. No electronic communications systems within the LVMPD are considered private and/or confidential. System administrators have access to all mail and user access requests and may monitor messages as necessary to assure efficient performance and appropriate use.

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

When working in a large organization, especially in a police environment, it is important to recognize and follow established chains of command. The chains of command are listed below:

#### Records and Fingerprint and Detention Records:

LEST → Senior LEST → LEST Supervisor → Records Manager → Director → Deputy Chief

#### Tourist Safety and Community Policing Division:

LEST → LEST Supervisor → Admin Lieutenant → Captain → Deputy Chief

#### Tourist Safety and Community Policing Division (Laughlin Substation):

LEST → LEST Supervisor → Lieutenant → Captain → Deputy Chief

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**INTRODUCTION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPUTER SYSTEMS**

**AFIS**

Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) is a computer system that converts ten-print fingerprint images and latent prints (those barely visible to the naked eye) into a computer readable digital format for searching and storing. Due to its high speed, AFIS can conduct searches/matches which would otherwise be impractical, if not impossible. One of its main functions is to search newly-acquired ten-print images captured electronically against the existing database of fingerprints to see if the prints match another record in the system. Another of its main functions is to conduct searches of crime scene latent prints against the database to try to identify criminal suspects.

**PREMIER ONE (P1)**

Premier One is a computerized system that manages the recording, indexing, and tracking of detailed information related to reported incidents. The LEST assigned to Records and Fingerprint enters reports of crimes into this database. Any handwritten reports taken by officers in the field are scanned into OnBase, and depending upon the type of report, are entered into Premier One by either a LEST assigned to Tourist Safety and Community Policing Divisions or Records and Fingerprint Bureau.

**NCIC**

The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) is a nationwide computerized information system set up as a service to all criminal justice agencies--local, state, and federal. The goal of NCIC is to help the criminal justice community perform its duties by providing and maintaining a computerized filing system of accurate and timely documented criminal justice information. It can best be described as a computerized index of documented criminal justice information concerning crimes and criminals of nationwide interest and a locator type file for missing and unidentified persons. Various files contain information on vehicles, license plates, boats, guns, articles, securities, wanted persons, missing persons, Canadian warrants, US Secret Service, unidentified persons, foreign fugitives, and the Interstate Identification Index System.

**NLETS**

The National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) provides for the interstate and/or inter-agency exchange of criminal justice and criminal justice related information. This is the system's sole purpose. The system can receive, store, and forward message traffic to and from all of its user agencies. Administrative message traffic on the system includes all types of free-form, criminal justice-related data. Messages may be sent to one specific agency, statewide, regionally, or to all points on the system. NLETS supports inquiries into state motor vehicle, drivers' licenses, criminal history, and other state databases. NLETS provides access to road and weather conditions, boat and snowmobile registrations, aircraft tracking system, registration system, and hazardous materials sites.

**III (Triple I)**

The Interstate Identification Index (III) is an index of records of criminal history information collected by criminal justice agencies on individuals contained within the NCIC system. Each III criminal history record must have a criminal fingerprint card as its basic source document. All criminal history record information is based on a set of fingerprints submitted to the State or FBI for comparison before an entry is made.

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### **NCJIS**

The Nevada Criminal Justice Information System enables users to access Nevada criminal history and warrants, and information pertaining to parole and probation, sexual offenders, protection orders, and concealed weapons.

### **JLINK**

J-Link is the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety (DPS) computer program that allows the LVMPD to fully utilize new and emerging law enforcement communications. It enables the LVMPD to access state and federal criminal justice systems such as NCIC, NLETS, III (Triple I), and NCJIS.

### **SCOPE**

The Shared Computer Operations for Protection and Enforcement (SCOPE) system is a 24-hour, on-line computerized master name index. It provides information on individuals and businesses. It contains both criminal history (arrest and conviction-related data) and non-criminal history information (physical descriptors, work application information, traffic accidents, etc.)

### **WVS**

The Wanted Vehicle System (WVS) is available through SCOPE terminals. It provides detailed information regarding local wanted or impounded vehicles. LVMPD information is entered, updated and maintained by the Records and Fingerprint Bureau. Other Nevada agencies also enter information into the system. These agencies are responsible for entering, updating and maintaining their own information.

### **C-TRACK**

The Clark County Criminal Justice Information System (formerly known as C-TRACK) is an index by name, ID number, event number, citation number, social security number and court case number of individuals who have been cited, arrested, indicted by the Grand Jury or named in a warrant request for committing either a criminal offense or certain traffic violations within Clark County.

### **ITAG**

The Clark County Detention Center's Inmate Management System contains information related to an inmate's incarceration history, including personal identifiers, court appearances, bail, housing locations, and discipline reports.

### **ODYSSEY**

Odyssey is the computer system of the Clark County District Court and Justice Court systems. It provides access to information related to court proceedings, including traffic tickets, documents, and status.

### **MICROSOFT APPLICATIONS**

Microsoft Outlook is the e-mail application used by the LVMPD. The other Microsoft applications that are also used include Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

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**DEFINITIONS**

1. **Abuse**  
Willful and unjustified infliction of pain, injury, or mental anguish.
2. **Accessory**  
One who is not the chief actor in the offense, nor present at its performance, but in some way concerned therein, either before or after the act committed.
3. **Accomplice**  
Individual who is equally responsible for an offense considered a violation of law.
4. **Accused**  
A term for a defendant in a criminal case. Often used interchangeably with "prisoner" or "defendant."
5. **Adjudication**  
The formal giving or pronouncing of a judgment or decree.
6. **AFIS**  
Automated Fingerprint Identification System.
7. **Aggressor**  
One who first employs hostile force.
8. **Alleged**  
Claimed, but as yet, unproven.
9. **Arrest**  
The taking of a person into custody in a case and in the manner authorized by law.
10. **Assault**  
Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, coupled with present ability to do so, that would give the victim reason to fear immediate bodily harm.
11. **Battery**  
Any willful and unlawful use of force or violence upon the person of another.
12. **Booking**  
A DSD function whereby an individual is officially incarcerated after arrest, which includes photographing and fingerprinting the arrestee.
13. **Burglary**  
Entering a building with the intent of committing a crime.
14. **Charged**  
Being formally accused of a crime.

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15. **Commissioned**  
A duly sworn person who is authorized to execute police powers.
16. **Convicted Persons Registrant**  
Any person convicted of a crime required to register with a police agency by law.
17. **Crime**  
An act or omission forbidden by law and punishable upon conviction by death, imprisonment, fine or other penal discipline.
18. **Custody**  
Having responsibility for the care and control of a person or thing.
19. **Defendant**  
A person who is alleged to have committed some violation either in a civil or criminal suit.
20. **Dissemination**  
Disclosing records of criminal history or the absence of records of criminal history to a person or agency outside the organization which has control of the information.
21. **Embezzlement**  
Fraudulent appropriation of money or goods entrusted to one's care.
22. **Extortion**  
Is a very broad crime that may apply to any situation where a person wrongfully threatens another person to try to obtain something of value.
23. **Felony**  
A crime punishable by death or imprisonment in the state prison for not less than one year.
24. **Fingerprint**  
A reproduction of the smooth surface of the pattern or design formed by the ridges on the inside of the end joint of a finger or thumb.
25. **Grand Larceny**  
Theft of property which is worth more than a certain sum; that sum varies from state to state.
26. **Gross Misdemeanor**  
A crime punishable in the county jail for not more than one year or by a fine of not more than \$2,000, or both.
27. **Henry Fingerprint Classification System**  
A system or method of classifying fingerprint patterns.
28. **Incarcerated**  
Confined in a jail or prison.
29. **Indictment**  
A formal charging of a person of a crime by a grand jury.



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30. **Inmate**  
Any person, whether pretrial, unsentenced, or sentenced, who is confined in a detention or holding facility.
31. **Jurisdiction**  
The geographical or subject area in which a court, judge, or official has authority to act.
32. **Misdemeanor**  
A crime which is punishable in jail for not more than six months or by a fine of not more than \$1,000, or both.
33. **Module**  
A unit used to house inmates in the Clark County Detention Center.
34. **Petit Larceny**  
Theft of property which is worth less than a certain sum; that sum varies from state to state.
35. **Parole**  
Supervised release from prison before the full sentence is served.
36. **Probation**  
A form of sentence by which a person convicted of a crime is allowed to remain in the community under supervision instead of serving a jail or prison sentence.
37. **Recidivist**  
A person who continues to commit criminal acts; a habitual criminal.
38. **Referral**  
An application provided by employers to applicant to obtain a work card.
39. **Reticule**  
A magnifying-type device used to enlarge fingerprints so that they may be classified and ridge counts can be established.
40. **Robbery**  
The unlawful taking of personal property from the person of another, or in the person's presence, against his or her will, by means of force or violence or fear of injury
41. **Sallyport**  
An enclosure within a detention facility containing doors or gates at both ends, only one of which opens at a time, for security purposes.
42. **Subpoena**  
A court order commanding someone to appear at a certain time and place to give testimony on a certain matter.

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43. **Summons**  
A court order notifying an individual that an action has been commenced against him and requiring him to appear for processing in lieu of arrest.
44. **Witness**  
One who being present, personally sees or perceives a thing.
45. **Work Card**  
A picture card used for employment purposes and issued by a police department.

### ACRONYMS

1. DOA: Declaration of Arrest
2. TCR: Temporary Custody Record
3. ICR: Incident Crime Report
4. OR: Officer's Report

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

There's an old expression, "Perception is all there is." The customer's perception is reality, and perception is rarely neutral: it's either positive or negative. The key to long term success is changing the organization's culture to one that prizes customer service. Although it's true that service by itself does not guarantee success, without it you fail to meet the changing needs of our citizens and community at large.

There are two basic types of customers:

#### External Customers:

These are the people who need our services. They are external to, or outside of our Bureau, Department, other Criminal Justice Agencies, and any person within our jurisdictional area. Many times these external customers are also tourists who have come to this community.

#### Internal Customers:

These are the people who work for our agency. Regardless of whether they are at another location in our building, in another state or country, or sitting at the next desk in our Department, they depend on us and the work we do in order to complete their own work; often so they can serve our citizens at large; they are also "our customers."

External customers are pretty easy to identify. Sometimes, however, it's difficult to identify your customers when they are inside our own Department. Maybe we don't see them face-to-face. Maybe you are not sure what happens to your work when it leaves your desk or your Bureau. Maybe the same people you serve also serve you.

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Customers truly are everywhere, outside your organization as well as within. It is our job to identify our customers, to know what they need from us and how we can provide it for them. Doing so in ways that maximize both internal and external customer satisfaction is what creates that sense of teamwork and camaraderie that great organizations such as our Department thrive on.

Rule #1: The customer is always right...

Rule #2: If the customer is ever wrong, reread Rule #1

### **The Customer Is Always.... the Customer**

The customer is not always right.... but, if they are wrong, they are right. This customers-are-always-right thinking can put a stop to problem solving and customer education. You can't correct a problem or a customer's misconception if you can't admit that it exists. Many times when customers cause problems or believe untrue things, it's because we haven't taught them any differently. We are so familiar with the services we offer that we forget how much there is to know, how much we have to help our customers learn.

This puts the service provider in a one-down position. It says, "You're not paid to think or ask questions. Just smile and do whatever the customer tells you to do." No wonder that in such a position, our providing of service begins to feel like servitude: "Hello, my name is Pat and I'll be your personal servant today."

We blindly hold on to the idea that the customer is always right. This really means that when something goes wrong; which it eventually will, sooner or later, you must in turn be wrong. Even though you may know that to not be true, if you are behind the counter and the customer walks up and requests a background check, and you give him a copy of a report, it's very clear who's right and who's wrong. It's irrelevant. Your job at that point is to manage the situation so the customer continues to be a customer who walks away pleased with his service.

### **Three Ways to Make the Customers Right**

1. **Assume innocence.** "Guilty until proven innocent" doesn't play well with customers. Just because what they are saying sounds wrong to you, don't assume that it is. It may be that they are simply explaining what they need or want poorly, or that the directions they should have received were missing or misleading. Allow the customer to complete their sentences and then if you still do not understand what they are trying to request, then begin to ask them questions. Give them an opportunity to complete their thought.
2. **Look for teaching opportunities.** What information could your customers have used before the misunderstanding occurred? Make sure that they get it now. You can't educate the irate customer. While they are stressed and angry, customers do not take kindly to reeducation. Pick your time wisely. "In case you ever need our services again ....."
3. **Believe your customer.** Sometimes, the customer you initially think is 100 percent wrong will turn out to be right after all. The point of customer service is to keep a good customer relationship intact. When in doubt, give the customer the benefit of the doubt. "Let's check the Dissemination Guidelines....." Making a wrong customer right; or should I say feel right is the only outcome we wish to reach to establish good customer service. Remember, don't fix blame, fix the problem.

### **The Ten Sins of Customer Service That Can Be Controlled**

1. ***“I don’t know”***  
Customers expect you to know something about the services that are provided by your area of assignment. If you really can’t answer a customer’s question, add three essential words to the italicized sentence above: “but, I’ll find out.”
2. ***“I don’t care”***  
Customers want you to care about serving them. They want to sense that you take pride in what you are doing. This reinforces their belief that they have made a good choice in coming to the police department; and through this choice, coming to see you. When your attitude, conversation, or appearance makes it clear you would rather be somewhere else, they will find themselves wishing the same thing.
3. ***“I can’t be bothered”***  
Actions really do speak louder than words, BELIEVE IT. If your conversation with a co-worker or an obviously personal phone call takes precedence over a customer, or you studiously ignore someone’s attempt to catch your attention, your customer will be annoyed; and rightfully so.
4. ***“I don’t like you”***  
Customers are sensitive to attitudes that subtly or overtly say, “you’re a nuisance; please go away.” And no one enjoys the occasional encounter with a customer service person that is openly (or even covertly) hostile. The more aggressively obnoxious your behavior, the more memorable it will be for your customer, for all the wrong reasons.
5. ***“I know it all”***  
When you jump in with a solution or comment before a customer has finished explaining his/her problem or question, that’s being pushy. So, too, is trying to force a customer to make a decision too hastily. Knowledge is a tool to help you serve customers better, not a bludgeon with which to beat them into submission.
6. ***“You don’t know anything”***  
There are no dumb questions, only dumb answers. When you rudely or insensitively cut off, put down, or demean customers for having a confused or wrong idea of what exactly they need or what you can do for them, you slam the door in their face. Next time, they will look for another door to walk through to get what they need; possibly the Sheriff’s office.
7. ***“We don’t want your kind here”***  
Prejudice, like customers, comes in all shapes and sizes, ages, colors, educational levels, and any other characteristic you care to name. But regardless of class or category, every customer is an individual who wants (and deserves) to be treated with courtesy and respect. Do you treat customers who show up in suits better than those who dress in jeans and T-shirts? Do you assume that elderly customers won’t be able to understand complex issues, or that younger customers aren’t seriously interested in anything that you are saying? Your attitudes show in ways you may never even suspect.
8. ***“Don’t come back”***  
The purpose of serving customers well is to convince them that you have their best interest at heart and they don’t feel bad if they have to come back. The easiest way to discourage that is to make it clear in words or actions that they’re an inconvenience in your day. Telling them to “have

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a good day” helps to build a relationship of friendliness and concern that this Department wishes to convey to all those who enter through these doors.

9. ***“I’m right and you’re wrong”***

One of the easiest (and most human) traps to fall into is arguing with a customer over something that really is more a point of personal pride than professional service. Customers are not always right, of course, but it doesn’t cost you anything to give them the benefit of the doubt.

10. ***“Hurry up and wait”***

More than any other variable, time may be the number one obsession for people today. Everyone starts with only twenty-four hours a day; no one wants to waste any of it, whether waiting for something to take place or being forced into a hasty decision that they will sooner or later come to regret. Respect your customer’s time and you’ll find they respect you in return. If someone has been waiting, apologize for the delay and begin to help them without hesitation.

***“A strong man masters others; a truly wise man masters himself.”***  
***The Wisdom of the Taoist***

### **The Rater Factors**

It’s helpful to have a framework to hold together the things you know personally and the information passed on to you by the Central Records Training Section. We have found that customers evaluate service quality on five factors:

1. Reliability - The ability to provide what was promised, dependably and accurately.
2. Assurance - The knowledge and courtesy you show to customers, and your ability to convey trust, competence, and confidence.
3. Tangibles - The physical facilities and equipment, and appearance of your work area; also, your personal appearance.
4. Empathy - The degree of caring and individual attention you show customers.
5. Responsiveness - the willingness to help customers promptly.

Everything we do for and to our customers falls into one of these categories. Consider these common examples:

1. When you fulfill a customer’s needs whether it be for a traffic report, background check, etc. you show reliability.
2. When you smile and tell a customer, “I can help you with that”, and do, you build assurance.
3. When you take the time to make yourself and your work area presentable, you are paying attention to the tangibles.
4. When you are sensitive to an individual customer’s needs when solving a problem, you show empathy.

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5. When you notice a customer looking “puzzled” or “bewildered” and offer help and information, you show responsiveness.

All five of these factors are important to our customers. Customer expectations of service are loud and clear; look good, be responsive, be reassuring through courtesy and competence, and be empathetic but, most of all, be reliable.

### ***“Use the Rater Factors”***

#### **Listening Is a Skill - Use it**

Listening is about trust and respect and involvement and information sharing more than it is about ears.

Most of us listen to only about 25 percent of what we hear. What happens to the other 75 percent? We tune it out. In one ear and out the other, as if we never heard it. Listening is so important; it’s amazing how seldom we practice it well. But since good service involves listening, understanding, and responding to customers, good listening is an important skill for practitioners to achieve “knock your socks off customer service.” When you listen well you can figure out....

- What are your customers’ wants and needs?
- Prevent misunderstandings and errors.
- Gather clues about ways to improve the service you provide.
- Build a good customer relationship; building rapport between the citizens of this community and the police department.

It’s important to listen actively, almost aggressively. To serve your customers well, you need to know as exactly as possible what they want, how they want it, when they want it, how long they expect to wait, and what else they expect with it. There’s no need to guess and risk being wrong. Customers are ready, willing, and able to tell you everything (or almost everything) you need to know.

#### **Good Listeners Are Made Not Born**

People who seem to be natural listeners weren’t born that way. They just started practicing a lot earlier. It’s never too late to start improving because good listening is a skill that gets better as you exercise it. What’s more, the listener has a powerful advantage in any conversation: While most people speak at only 125 to 150 words per minute, we can listen at up to 450 words per minute. That means we have time while listening to identify the main points the speaker is trying to make and begin to organize those points in our head in order to give an effective response.

A good tip for reinforcing listening to your customer is by writing down information and ideas on how to respond, but don’t dilute your focus by trying to formulate a rebuttal or argument. When you have a chance to speak, you will be able to “reflect” back your customer’s key points. Reflection, even of the easy and obvious things, confirms that you have listened to and understood your customer and is ready to respond to the request, question, or problem.

- If the information is complex, confirm your understanding by repeating it.
- Ask questions if you are unclear about anything.
- Read back critical information.

### **Barriers to Effective Listening**

There are a wide variety of distractions that can get in the way of good listening.

1. **Noise** - too much noise in your business environment causes interference. Due to the type of work environment we work in, noise is our constant companion, but if you focus on the customer, this can and will be defeated. Constantly practice using your listening skills. Using the reinforcement method will work well under these conditions.
2. **Interruptions** - Communication happens when two people work at it together. Strive for good communication.
3. **Technology** - Technology can hinder effective listening as much as it can help to put us in touch. For all the good service made possible by telephones, voice-activated terminals, and remote microphones in drive-up windows, it's much harder to listen to someone you can't see face-to-face, or whose voice is distorted by a machine.
4. **Stereotypes** - When we label people, when we make assumptions about what they look like, how they will behave, and what they have to say. We make it difficult to understand what they're really saying. From this type of "false start", we fit what we later see, experience, and hear into a flawed prejudice and quite often, we are wrong.
5. **Trigger words and phrases** - All of us have hot buttons that customers may inadvertently push. And once the button is pushed, listening can stop. Remember that your main concern is to listen to what your customer is trying to say, not the individual words he or she uses. What rubs you the wrong way just may be completely innocent from the customer's perspective. (Even if someone is trying to dig at you from a previous experience that you may have had with them, letting it pass shows your good grace and style).
6. **Attitude** - Your attitudes distort what you hear and how you respond. Defensive people evaluate everything, looking for the hidden messages. People on the offensive are too often looking for a fight, formulating oh-yes-well-let-me-tell-you arguments even before the other person has finished speaking. Your attitudes should help you listen, not deafen you, to a customer's words.

It's also important to listen for the things that you don't hear, the things your customers aren't saying to you. If customers used to compliment you on speedy delivery, but haven't recently, maybe you need to re-evaluate your performance.

Once you have learned how to listen, you now need to concentrate your efforts on asking intelligent questions. Customers are often less than articulate or even clear in their own minds about their wants and needs. The customer who says, "I'm not quite sure," in response to your "How may I help you?" is at least being straightforward, and is expressing the feelings of a lot of customers. It's your job to help them sort it all out. To be successful with the unsure or unclear or confused customer, you have to put on your detective hat. Three types of questions will help you in your search for clues to what the unsure customer needs from you.

***"It takes a deep commitment to change and an even deeper commitment to grow" Ralph Ellison***

## **Ask Intelligent Questions**

### ***Background Questions***

Background questions are the introduction to your conversation. They tell you who you are talking with and allow you to pull up a customer's record. They also help you evaluate whether you are the best person to help the customer, or if you should direct him or her to a different person, detail, or department.

- Do you have a driver's license or state identification card?
- May I have your complete name?
- Have you ever been arrested by this agency?

Sometimes, customers resist background questions. "Why do you need to know that?" they ask. Or they may protest, "I gave you that information last time, don't you keep records?" You can decrease resistance by explaining up front why you need the information.

### ***Probing Questions***

Probing questions help you dig more deeply into a customer's needs, problems, or complaint to identify the issues involved and begin to move toward a solution. There are two basic types of questions; closed and open-ended. Closed questions are generally answered with a yes or no or with a specific piece of information. A background question asking "Have you ever been arrested by this agency?" is a good example. Open-ended questions generally require more lengthy explanations and invite the customers into a conversation. More often than not, probing questions will be open-ended. Remember, probing questions are a way for you to get information. If the answer your customer gives sounds impossible or untrue, don't dispute it. Instead, ask another probing question. A good source of probing questions is the basic five W's: who, what, when, where, and why.

### ***Confirmation Questions***

Confirmation questions provide a "check and balance" system. They help you confirm that you have correctly understood the customer's message, and they give the customer an opportunity to add information or clarification. It's easy to take silence as confirmation of customer agreement. However, silence sometimes signals that the customer has given up, or is frustrated or angry, or that he or she is too embarrassed to indicate confusion. So, when your confirmation comes out as a statement, rather than as a question, it's a good idea to ask for a response.

NOTE: If you have ever had someone look you in the eye and ask "Do you understand?" in a slow and deliberate voice, you know how demeaning some questions can sound. Monitor your words and tone so that your confirmation doesn't communicate: "Only an idiot wouldn't understand this. Are you an idiot?"

### ***When Questions Go Wrong***

The right question, poorly timed or badly worded can undo all of the good customer service you have worked so hard to create. When questions go wrong, typically one of four things has happened:

- The question was asked at the wrong time.
- The customer thought you were asking about something you already know.
- The customer feels you are asking too many questions.
- The question feels too personal.

Remember, timing is key. It's not what you say, but how you say it. Only when you begin to ask the right questions do you begin to find the right answers. Body expressions also play a huge role in the



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interplay between the customer and you when asking delving questions. Be cognizant of your body language when speaking with a customer face to face. Realize that your gestures, posture, and facial expressions can make or break a conversation between you and the customer.

***“Service to others is the rent we pay for our stay here on earth.”  
Muhammad Ali***

### **Customer Service and the Telephone**

***“If I pick up a ringing phone, I accept the responsibility to ensure the caller is satisfied, no matter what the issue is.”***

The telephone requires you to be more aware of your voice than at any other time. Customers cannot hear your facial expressions or see such non-verbal clues as shrugs or hand gestures. They do form a mental picture of you based on the tone and quality of your voice. Your mood, smiling and happy or angry often comes through. That’s why, before you ever pick up a telephone, you should take a moment to be sure that you are mentally prepared to deal with the customer on the other end. A pleasant phone voice takes practice. Speaking in pleasant tones is a talent.

Professional telephone talk has four basic customer sensitive processes. Knowing and following them will ensure that your customers feel you are really taking care of them.

#### ***Answering the Phone***

When a customer calls and you pick up the telephone remember that the customer can hear you from the moment the handset leaves the cradle. You wouldn’t want your customer to be greeted with a distance voice of someone talking to another person. You want to answer the telephone with a solid, pleasant greeting, “Good morning, this is Records and Fingerprint, Jane speaking. How can I help you?”

#### ***Putting a Caller on Hold***

Sometimes callers have to be put on hold. You may need to answer a second line, you may need to leave your desk to get a piece of information, or you may just need a moment to regroup while handling a particularly volatile caller. Whatever the circumstances, never put a call on hold without first asking the caller for permission; “May I put you on hold?” or “Will you hold for a moment, please?” Remember, that the questions mean nothing if you don’t wait for the answer, and always respond with a “thank you.” It may take you a moment longer, but it is well worth the positive impression it creates.

If the caller says, “No” and does not wish to hold, you can either re-prioritize what you are doing or ask if you can call the caller back. If you choose to call the caller back, make sure that you do so, as quickly as possible. The caller who does not wish to hold is not necessarily being rude. Remember, delivering great customer service means to deal with the individual needs of each customer and meet their expectations.

***“We are ordinary people who choose to do extraordinary things.”  
Simone Davis***

#### ***Taking Messages***

Good messages are accurate and complete. Be sure to get the caller’s full name, telephone number, and company name; if applicable. To make sure that you have the correct spelling of the caller’s name and an accurate phone number, read it back. The date and time of the message is also important.

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Finally, be sure to put your own name on the message; if there is any question, the message recipient will be able to ask you for clarification.

### ***Transferring Calls***

Customers hate to be passed from one person to another. Whenever possible, don't do it. Help the caller yourself or take a message and have the appropriate person return the call. When you do have to transfer a call, be sure to give the name and phone number of the person who will help them. This way, if there is any problem with the switch, the caller will be able to get back to the right person. If you can, stay on the line to be sure the transfer goes smoothly.

### ***Voice Mail***

People as a whole have a "love-hate relationship" with voice mail. To use voice mail in the best possible way, remember these guidelines:

- Voice mail is not a substitute for, but a supplement to real phone communication. When you have the option, always try to talk directly to a customer rather than leave a message or series of messages.
- Change your message frequently, providing up-to-date information about whether or not you are in, when you will pick up and return messages, and who the caller might contact if their request can't wait.
- Return messages promptly.

Remember, in everything we do as a team, we represent this Department. Excellent customer service is required in all facets of the Department, whether dealing with internal or external customers, whether we are on the telephone or sitting in front of a customer; it is a privilege to service this community, never take that privilege for granted. Be the problem-solver, the care giver, and the person that will always step up to the plate and help whenever possible. Showing courage, accountability, respect for people, and excellence is what this Department is built on; honesty is our only policy and caring for this community is our greatest mission.