



Township of Belleville *New Jersey*

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Belleville Police Department Hires Civilian Dispatchers

BELLEVILLE, NJ - September 14, 2021 - For the first time in two decades, the Belleville Police Department has hired civilian dispatchers to assist officers at the Chief Mark Minichini Communications Center.

With the emergency line previously staffed by police officers, civilian dispatchers are considered a key part of creating a smoother communication center. Hiring civilian dispatchers allows police officers to be on the streets while professional dispatchers answer calls, according to Police Chief Mark Minichini.

“Adding civilian dispatchers relieves us as a department and allows us to become more effective and efficient,” said Minichini, “Now our officers can be out in the community where they are needed, so this is a win-win. I am grateful to the mayor and council for supporting this initiative.”

The dispatchers are trained as Emergency Medical Dispatchers (EMD) as well as 9/11 dispatchers. They handle everything from answering emergency calls and dispatching officers to data entry and GPS monitoring.

Right now, there are four part-time dispatchers, but the department has plans to move the civilians to full time to fill the need within the township.

“This is just another step in creating a communication hub for the township,” said Mayor Michael Melham. “Our new dispatchers pride themselves on ensuring that the public receives the services they need.”

The new communications center, which includes upgraded equipment and technology, opened in February after it was moved into a former common area space inside police headquarters.

End.