

Ellis, Amy

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 5:55 AM
To: Donnelly, Tom
Subject: Police communications staffing issues

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To whom it may concern:

My name is [REDACTED]. I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) for [REDACTED]. I am writing to you out of concern for what is going on in the communications section where I work. I feel our current work environment is crumbling and I don't know where to turn. Our staffing situation is in dire need. Within in the last year, the normal practice of hiring separate Emergency Complaint Operators (ECO) and PSD's has been stopped. They are currently only hiring dispatchers even though I do believe there is a list of people who have taken both tests separately. The idea of hiring only dispatchers is done because then we can be used to fulfill the staffing on the ECO and side and PSD side as needed since part of a dispatchers job is to know how to do the ECO job. In the long run I guess this is seen as a good idea from a managerial standpoint but the execution has been done very poorly. We are drastically short in both titles. In 2020 alone we had 9 people start training for dispatch only to not make it to the end of their training or go back to the ECO side where they came from. Normally in the past they would give those people a chance to train just for ECO so they would still keep a job and we could at least have that position filled. This is no longer done, resulting in the ECO and PSD positions becoming very low in staffing numbers. We currently have 54 PSD's and 50 ECO's. I don't know exactly what we are budgeted for but I do know it should definitely be higher for both titles. The overtime is through the roof. Of course overtime is nice, but when it's mandated almost everyday, thats a problem. It is at the point that if you don't sign up to come in early, you will most likely get mandated to stay. The PSD's can get mandated for both positions. While there is a limit to 2 mandates per week of a PSD for the ECO side, we are still getting hit. We also sometimes gets mandated for ECO before an actual ECO which i do not feel is right because we are getting mandated out of title and we can get hit for both titles, while the ECO's cannot. It really is not cost effective right now either because now a PSD is getting paid overtime for a lesser position. Supervisors as well are doing overtime for both positions at times, but again that really isn't cost effective as they are even higher pay grades. Overtime should not be relied on to fulfill the everyday staffing. I personally feel these titles need to be separately hired for. Dispatching is very hard and not for everyone and thats okay, and for that reason relying on just hiring dispatchers is not doing any good. At least if the ECO position was filled, we would only be short on the PSD side and overtime and mandated overtime would be less. I don't believe the transition was planned very well. To make a transition like this when we are already short was not a good idea. When people weren't making it there should have been changes made to scrap the idea and regroup; instead we were just led deeper into a hole. We currently have some trainees but even IF they make it, its not close to the numbers we need. More retirements are on the horizon as well.

Now on top of all that, add COVID to the mix. Obviously no one knew that was going to happen or to what extent but when it did, no changes were made as to the hiring. We have had many people go out COVID related in the last few months. The procedures are constantly changing as to how long someone stays out of work if they are sick, a family member is sick, they had contact with someone, etc. We do get our temperature checked daily and we all wear masks on the communications floor but we still have no plexiglass separating us from our coworkers. I understand the design may need to be a little creative the way our room is but there is no good reason why nothing has been done. They did

hang shower curtains for about a month but they were never actually put into use. We are all cleaning our desks much more than ever because its all shared, but why hasn't anything else been done?

I implore you to please help us. We are tired, burnt out, getting sick and there is no end in sight. Many of my coworkers who don't have much time on are thinking about looking elsewhere. The cons of the job are starting to outweigh the pros and thats sad because it really is a great job. We are going downhill fast.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and have a pleasant day.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPad

Ellis, Amy

From: Kennedy, Leslie
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2021 12:33 PM
To: Simpson, Sarah; Ellis, Amy
Subject: FW: Public Safety Communications

Scan to the bottom for original email

Leslie Kennedy
Suffolk County Legislator, 12th L.D.
631-854-3735 (Tel.)
631-854-3744 (Fax)
leslie.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov

*"We could change the world tomorrow if all the millions of people around the world acted the way they believe."
~Jane Goodall*

From: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 2:49 PM
To: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: FW: Public Safety Communications

Leslie Kennedy
Suffolk County Legislator, 12th L.D.
631-854-3735 (Tel.)
631-854-3744 (Fax)
leslie.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov

*"We could change the world tomorrow if all the millions of people around the world acted the way they believe."
~Jane Goodall*

From: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 2:11 PM
To: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: FW: Public Safety Communications

Leslie Kennedy
Suffolk County Legislator, 12th L.D.
631-854-3735 (Tel.)
631-854-3744 (Fax)
leslie.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov

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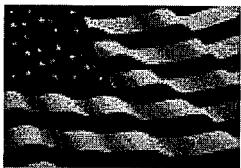
From: Martinez, Robert <Robert.Martinez@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 11:24 AM
To: Caracappa, Nick <Nick.Caracappa@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Cc: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Sunderman, Rudy
<Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Flotteron, Steven <Steven.Flotteron@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: FW: Public Safety Communications

For your information. I am not finding her name in our voter log.

Thanks,

Bob

Robert L. Martinez, Chief of Staff to
Suffolk County Legislator Nick Caracappa, 4th Legislative District
325 Middle Country Road, Suite 3
Selden, New York 11784-2545
Office: 631-854-9292
Fax: 631-854-9351
Email: robert.martinez@suffolkcountyny.gov



From: Martinez, Robert **On Behalf Of** Caracappa, Nick
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 10:24 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Auerbach, Lauren <Lauren.Auerbach@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Chamberlain, Brendan
<Brendan.Chamberlain@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Maggi, William <William.Maggi@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: RE: Public Safety Communications

Good Morning [REDACTED]

We hope that you and yours are all well.

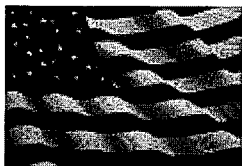
Thank you for alerting Legislator Caracappa to this ongoing issue.

Please call me ASAP.

Thank you and best regards,

Bob

Robert L. Martinez, Chief of Staff to
Suffolk County Legislator Nick Caracappa, 4th Legislative District
325 Middle Country Road, Suite 3
Selden, New York 11784-2545
Office: 631-854-9292
Fax: 631-854-9351
Email: robert.martinez@suffolkcountyny.gov



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 6:15 PM
To: Caracappa, Nick <Nick.Caracappa@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: Public Safety Communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To Whom It May Concern

My name is [REDACTED] and I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) for Suffolk County Police for [REDACTED] now. While this job does offer good benefits, at this time the cons are outweighing the pros. I am writing to you out of sheer concern for myself, coworkers and police officers. Our current work environment is on the brink of a catastrophic disaster. When I agreed to this job five years ago, I knew the stress factor and the occasional mandated overtime. At this time, we all have to allocate 80 hours of our availability (four hours before shift and four hours after shift) for the likely chance of being mandated. The amount of mandates are climbing drastically with no end in sight. In order to have some time to live a normal life outside of the workplace, the majority of us are reluctantly signing up for the overtime to decide what part of the day we get stuck at work. For example, if u have a doctors appointment in the afternoon, I HAVE to sign up for overtime in the morning. This is the only way I can guarantee that I will not be mandated that afternoon.

You may ask why or how we are in this predicament. Short staffing has always been a chronic issue during my employment here but our upper management has made a MAJOR change while going through a pandemic. Our command management thought that trying to dissolve a job title of Emergency Complaint Operator (ECO) that is offered by Suffolk County Civil Service, during a pandemic would be helpful. They are currently only hiring PSD's to fill both positions. When an ECO retires or resigns, they are not being replaced. Due to the fact that PSD's are a higher grade than ECO's the majority of the overtime is by no means financially responsible. This is not only hurting our command but not allowing the people of Suffolk County who took the ECO test a fair opportunity of employment. How unfortunate it is that there are potentially great employees on that list that could be a fix to an awful situation?

Our primary job as a PSD is to protect the police officers and to make sure they go home to their families at the end of shift. Unfortunately, the current status of our workplace, could effect the police officers and the community. For both ECO's and PSD's we are getting burnt out and suffering from pure exhaustion after working 8, 12 and sometimes even 16 hours to cover the shortages. Everyone at this command has important things in their lives outside of the workplace. It may be a health concern, being a caretaker for a family member, a spouse or a parent, the list could go on and on. We shouldn't be denied those things in life, for a poor decision made by our upper management. At this time, there are about six more people retiring or leaving in the first few months of 2021. There are even more trying to calculate if they can afford to retire earlier after being pushed to the breaking point. At this point because our command is so desperate for people, multiple supervisors have said that they will be pushing people through the training and certifying them as PSD's even if they are unable to do the job. As much as we are short on people, these are police officers lives on the other end of the radio. We don't have time for mistakes and/or people who are unable to do the job, it could cost someone their life!


As if our unit wasn't failing enough, we haven't even touched on the effects of Covid yet. Our management has forced people back to work prior to their quarantine period being over and if their family members that reside in the same house test positive. There have been no changes made to effectively space us out, add

plexiglass or take legitimate temperatures. We wear masks daily and get our temperature taken once or twice daily depending on how many hours we work. The thermometer that is used consistently shows severely hypothermic temperatures and no supervisors question its calibration or readings. Covid has run rampant in our command over the last couple months and we have been told we don't have to follow the Department of Health guidelines because we are essential. I have NEVER heard of that at any other essential business.

We have supervisors making major decisions for our command who both don't want to do our job and don't know how to do our job. These decisions are running our command into the ground and it will take YEARS to recover. I absolutely love what I do as a dispatcher but there's only so much we can take. Turnover rates in our field across the country are always high, but with all the problems listed above and some that haven't even been mentioned are making it nearly impossible to retain any new employees. I hope you take our pleas into consideration before it becomes exponentially worse. There needs to be a lot of SERIOUS changes made before this command implodes.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully,

 a proud but frustrated Public Safety Dispatcher.

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: Kennedy, Leslie
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2021 12:28 PM
To: Simpson, Sarah; Ellis, Amy
Subject: FW: Police communications staffing issues

Scan to the bottom.

Leslie Kennedy
Suffolk County Legislator, 12th L.D.
631-854-3735 (Tel.)
631-854-3744 (Fax)
leslie.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov

"We could change the world tomorrow if all the millions of people around the world acted the way they believe."
~Jane Goodall

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 11:45 AM
To: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: Re: Police communications staffing issues

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Thank you for your response and your efforts to help us out.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jan 13, 2021, at 11:42 AM, Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov> wrote:

>

> [REDACTED]

> We are aware and public safety committee is working on this. I spoke again with Tom Donnelly's office today as he is the chairman. Please believe me that we have been through this before and truly understand. We need you folks and do not want you stressed! This time is a little different due to money issues but we will try to push through. It takes time. The next public safety meeting is a zoom on 1/28, but that is not official. People can zoom in.

> Stay strong through the difficulty.

> Leslie

>

> Leslie Kennedy

> Suffolk County Legislator, 12th L.D.

> 631-854-3735 (Tel.)

> 631-854-3744 (Fax)

> leslie.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov

> "We could change the world tomorrow if all the millions of people around the world acted the way they believe."

> ~Jane Goodall

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> -----Original Message-----

>

> Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 5:53 AM

> To: Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>

> Subject: Police communications staffing issues

>

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> Sincerely,

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

Ellis, Amy

From: Liselli, Kerry on behalf of Flotteron, Steven
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Ellis, Amy
Subject: FW: Public Safety Communications

*Kerry A. Liselli
Chief Legislative Aide
Suffolk County Legislator Steven J. Flotteron
11th Legislative District
631-854-4100*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 6:19 PM
To: Flotteron, Steven <Steven.Flotteron@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: Public Safety Communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

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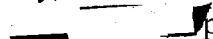
working 8, 12 and sometimes even 16 hours to cover the shortages. Everyone at this command has important things in their lives outside of the workplace. It may be a health concern, being a caretaker for a family member, a spouse or a parent, the list could go on and on. We shouldn't be denied those things in life, for a poor decision made by our upper management. At this time, there are about six more people retiring or leaving in the first few months of 2021. There are even more trying to calculate if they can afford to retire earlier after being pushed to the breaking point. At this point because our command is so desperate for people, multiple supervisors have said that they will be pushing people through the training and certifying them as PSD's even if they are unable to do the job. As much as we are short on people, these are police officers lives on the other end of the radio. We don't have time for mistakes and/or people who are unable to do the job, it could cost someone their life!

As if our unit wasn't failing enough, we haven't even touched on the effects of Covid yet. Our management has forced people back to work prior to their quarantine period being over and if their family members that reside in the same house test positive. There have been no changes made to effectively space us out, add plexiglass or take legitimate temperatures. We wear masks daily and get our temperature taken once or twice daily depending on how many hours we work. The thermometer that is used consistently shows severely hypothermic temperatures and no supervisors question its calibration or readings. Covid has run rampant in our command over the last couple months and we have been told we don't have to follow the Department of Health guidelines because we are essential. I have NEVER heard of that at any other essential business.

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Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully,

 proud but frustrated Public Safety Dispatcher.

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: Liselli, Kerry on behalf of Flotteron, Steven
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Ellis, Amy
Subject: FW: Police Communications Department staffing

Kerry A. Liselli
Chief Legislative Aide
Suffolk County Legislator Steven J. Flotteron 11th Legislative District
631-854-4100

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Hahn, Kara <Kara.Hahn@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Donnelly, Tom <Tom.Donnelly@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Fleming, Bridget <Bridget.Fleming@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Berland, Susan A. <Susan.Berland@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Flotteron, Steven <Steven.Flotteron@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Gonzalez, Samuel <Samuel.Gonzalez@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Spencer, William <William.Spencer@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Police Communications Department staffing

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Hello again! Hope everyone is doing well and staying safe.

I am writing again about the staffing levels at Police HQ. As you have all been made aware, the Captain has been determined to combine the two titles of PSD and ECO. Unfortunately, it has not been a smooth and seamless transition. Our staffing levels are deplorable at this point and we have several people intent on leaving as quickly as they can find other employment. We have already had 2 people confirm retirement for the end of this month. We have had 2 others accept job offers in other townships and another who is moving out of the state. There are others who are just waiting for personal reasons but intend to leave in Nov/Dec. This is not including the multiple retirements coming starting in January 2021.

We were made aware of Leg.Hahn's latest change to the 5% notification rule on staffing levels. While we all appreciate the continued support, we feel this isn't enough to get us through the next several months of short staffing, mandates, 12 hour days and overall work flow. May of these circumstances have been brought forward to the Captain, but we feel our concerns are falling on deaf ears. We are currently operating with 56 dispatchers. We have one who is on LOA and it is unknown when they might return, if at all. We have 51 ECO currently. These numbers do not include the persons I mentioned earlier. There are supposedly 6 people starting soon, but nothing has been confirmed and there is no guarantee that all 6 will make it through the rigors of training.

I cannot express how deeply troubling this situation is for all of us at Communications. Maybe we are being incredibly pessimistic but we can see the anger, frustration, and exhaustion on our coworkers faces. The 12 hour days are tiring. Now we have to worry about additional mandates, which should only be used in extreme cases, but are becoming everyday norm. The frustration of not having clear rules while this transition occurs is skyrocketing, morale is in the pits.

I'm not sure what to ask you to do but something needs to happen and quickly. There will be a day that there are not enough dispatchers to man the police radios and not enough operators to take the calls from the public. We pride ourselves on getting calls in quickly and dispatched without delays, but I fear that those days are numbered.

It may also be helpful to know that many of the people who have come and gone seem to complain that the salary ranges are not comparable nationwide and that this is one of the lowest they have seen considering the first responder and essential employee status that we have been told we deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Ellis, Amy

From: Liselli, Kerry on behalf of Flotteron, Steven
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Ellis, Amy
Subject: FW: SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

*Kerry A. Liselli
Chief Legislative Aide
Suffolk County Legislator Steven J. Flotteron
11th Legislative District
631-854-4100*

From: Katie Cricchio <katiecricchio@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 7:07 PM
To: Flotteron, Steven <Steven.Flotteron@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I am writing to you as a very frustrated public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for [REDACTED] and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough but this “plan” to eliminate our emergency complaint operators DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I’ll start with the toll it is taking on our our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone. It is not fair to

us, not fair to our officers or to our community. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying to recalculate and move up their end date. Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks. Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

Today. December 19,2020 there were eight (8) MANDATED overtime spots at 1600 hours. As well as many other MANDATED overtime spots at changeover for each tour throughout the day. Each day that we are scheduled to work our (8 hour shift on paper) we need to devote the 4 hours before the shift and the 4 hours after the shift for possible MANDATED overtime. Although we took a job with a (35) hour work week, we must be able to provide (80) hours of our availability per week to cater to the extremely poor, failing planning by our unit.

Even if we were to hire 15-20 employees TOMORROW, that still wouldn't cover the staffing problem.

As if that isn't bad enough....

Let's touch on covid. MANDATORY CDC guidelines as far as spacing, exposure & quarantine. Our higher ups are forcing employees back in even if they are possibly still contagious, and if their family members are still at home and symptomatic. If one of us goes home sick, no one sitting around them meets the criteria for exposure and we carry on as if our health and our families don't matter. Covid is


continuing to hit our unit hard. We do not have plexiglass up, we are not spaced far enough apart. We get our temperature taken on a falsely calibrated thermometer that shows hypothermic readings for just about every employee walking through the door.

And let's not forget our x days that are still on the Calendar even after the lawsuit settlement this year. An understaffed, covid effected unit being worked by underpaid, burnt out, overworked employees that are still working 6 days a year for free on top of it all.

I am writing to you with hopes that changes can be made with efforts to save our unit. Turn over rates in our field are extremely high to begin with, not factoring in all of the above topics that this year has presented

I LOVE my career but I cannot even think about staying here through retirement unless some serious changes are made here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter

A redacted signature consisting of two horizontal lines, with the top line ending in a small hook.

Ellis, Amy

From:

Sent:

Saturday, December 19, 2020 8:55 PM

To:

Calarco, Robert; Kennedy, Leslie; Hahn, Kara

Subject:

Police Emergency

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Hello again... I hope everyone has been staying healthy and safe.

I am writing again reference our staffing levels. I know you have been aware of our past issues but we are literally at the bottom of the barrel. There isn't anyone left. Every weekend is the same drill. Mandate, mandate, mandate. If we don't volunteer to take a shift, we will just be mandated for the next shift. It is unbearable. Our families have basically been placed on hold for the foreseeable future. Between covid and staffing, everyone is on edge. There is no end in sight. There is no one left to hire. The lists have been exhausted. What is happening in this county that no one cares what happens to the 911 center? Does anyone care that your calls for help may not get answered right away? Does anyone care that people are actively looking for other employment? What will it take for some attention to be given to this department?

Any advice or assistance would be helpful. I know I speak for the majority when I say, we're done.

Thanks,

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: ([REDACTED])
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 7:09 PM
To: Hahn, Kara
Subject: SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I am writing to you as a very frustrated public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for [REDACTED], and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough but this “plan” to eliminate our emergency complaint operators DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I’ll start with the toll it is taking on our our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone. It is not fair to us, not fair to our officers or to our community. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying to recalculate and move up their end date. Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks.

Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

Today. December 19,2020 there were eight (8) MANDATED overtime spots at 1600 hours. As well as many other MANDATED overtime spots at changeover for each tour throughout the day. Each day that we are scheduled to work our (8 hour shift on paper) we need to devote the 4 hours before the shift and the 4 hours after the shift for possible MANDATED overtime. Although we took a job with a (35) hour work week, we must be able to provide (80) hours of our availability per week to cater to the extremely poor, failing planning by our unit.

Even if we were to hire 15-20 employees TOMORROW, that still wouldn't cover the staffing problem.

As if that isn't bad enough....

Let's touch on covid. MANDATORY CDC guidelines as far as spacing, exposure & quarantine. Our higher ups are forcing employees back in even if they are possibly still contagious, and if their family members are still at home and symptomatic. If one of us goes home sick, no one sitting around them meets the criteria for exposure and we carry on as if our health and our families don't matter. Covid is continuing to hit our unit hard. We do not have plexiglass up, we are not spaced far enough apart. We get our temperature taken on a falsely calibrated thermometer that shows

hypothermic readings for just about every employee walking through the door.

And let's not forget our x days that are still on the Calendar even after the lawsuit settlement this year. An understaffed, covid effected unit being worked by underpaid, burnt out, overworked employees that are still working 6 days a year for free on top of it all.

I am writing to you with hopes that changes can be made with efforts to save our unit. Turn over rates in our field are extremely high to begin with, not factoring in all of the above topics that this year has presented

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Ellis, Amy

From:
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 6:16 PM
To: Hahn, Kara
Subject: Public Safety Communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To Whom It May Concern

My name is [REDACTED] and I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) for Suffolk County Police for nearly [REDACTED] now. While this job does offer good benefits, at this time the cons are outweighing the pros. I am writing to you out of sheer concern for myself, coworkers and police officers. Our current work environment is on the brink of a catastrophic disaster. When I agreed to this job five years ago, I knew the stress factor and the occasional mandated overtime. At this time, we all have to allocate 80 hours of our availability (four hours before shift and four hours after shift) for the likely chance of being mandated. The amount of mandates are climbing drastically with no end in sight. In order to have some time to live a normal life outside of the workplace, the majority of us are reluctantly signing up for the overtime to decide what part of the day we get stuck at work. For example, if u have a doctors appointment in the afternoon, I HAVE to sign up for overtime in the morning. This is the only way I can guarantee that I will not be mandated that afternoon.

You may ask why or how we are in this predicament. Short staffing has always been a chronic issue during my employment here but our upper management has made a MAJOR change while going through a pandemic. Our command management thought that trying to dissolve a job title of Emergency Complaint Operator (ECO) that is offered by Suffolk County Civil Service, during a pandemic would be helpful. They are currently only hiring PSD's to fill both positions. When an ECO retires or resigns, they are not being replaced. Due to the fact that PSD's are a higher grade than ECO's the majority of the overtime is by no means financially responsible. This is not only hurting our command but not allowing the people of Suffolk County who took the ECO test a fair opportunity of employment. How unfortunate it is that there are potentially great employees on that list that could be a fix to an awful situation?

Our primary job as a PSD is to protect the police officers and to make sure they go home to their families at the end of shift. Unfortunately, the current status of our workplace, could effect the police officers and the community. For both ECO's and PSD's we are getting burnt out and suffering from pure exhaustion after working 8, 12 and sometimes even 16 hours to cover the shortages. Everyone at this command has important things in their lives outside of the workplace. It may be a health concern, being a caretaker for a family member, a spouse or a parent, the list could go on and on. We shouldn't be denied those things in life, for a poor decision made by our upper management. At this time, there are about six more people retiring or leaving in the first few months of 2021. There are even more trying to calculate if they can afford to retire earlier after being pushed to the breaking point. At this point because our command is so desperate for people, multiple supervisors have said that they will be pushing people through the training and certifying them as PSD's even if they are unable to do the job. As much as we are short on people, these are police officers lives on the other end of the radio. We don't have time for mistakes and/or people who are unable to do the job, it could cost someone their life!

As if our unit wasn't failing enough, we haven't even touched on the effects of Covid yet. Our management has forced people back to work prior to their quarantine period being over and if their family members that reside in the same house test positive. There have been no changes made to effectively space us out, add plexiglass or take legitimate temperatures. We wear masks daily and get our temperature taken once or twice daily depending on how many hours we work. The thermometer that is used consistently shows severely hypothermic temperatures and no supervisors question its calibration or readings. Covid has run rampant in our command over the last couple months and we have

been told we don't have to follow the Department of Health guidelines because we are essential. I have NEVER heard of that at any other essential business.

We have supervisors making major decisions for our command who both don't want to do our job and don't know how to do our job. These decisions are running our command into the ground and it will take YEARS to recover. I absolutely love what I do as a dispatcher but there's only so much we can take. Turnover rates in our field across the country are always high, but with all the problems listed above and some that haven't even been mentioned are making it nearly impossible to retain any new employees. I hope you take our pleas into consideration before it becomes exponentially worse. There needs to be a lot of SERIOUS changes made before this command implodes.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully,

_____, a proud but frustrated Public Safety Dispatcher.

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: _____
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 6:18 PM
To: Gonzalez, Samuel
Subject: Public Safety Communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To Whom It May Concern

My name is _____ and I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) for Suffolk County Police for nearly _____. While this job does offer good benefits, at this time the cons are outweighing the pros. I am writing to you out of sheer concern for myself, coworkers and police officers. Our current work environment is on the brink of a catastrophic disaster. When I agreed to this job five years ago, I knew the stress factor and the occasional mandated overtime. At this time, we all have to allocate 80 hours of our availability (four hours before shift and four hours after shift) for the likely chance of being mandated. The amount of mandates are climbing drastically with no end in sight. In order to have some time to live a normal life outside of the workplace, the majority of us are reluctantly signing up for the overtime to decide what part of the day we get stuck at work. For example, if u have a doctors appointment in the afternoon, I HAVE to sign up for overtime in the morning. This is the only way I can guarantee that I will not be mandated that afternoon.

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been told we don't have to follow the Department of Health guidelines because we are essential. I have NEVER heard of that at any other essential business.

We have supervisors making major decisions for our command who both don't want to do our job and don't know how to do our job. These decisions are running our command into the ground and it will take YEARS to recover. I absolutely love what I do as a dispatcher but there's only so much we can take. Turnover rates in our field across the country are always high, but with all the problems listed above and some that haven't even been mentioned are making it nearly impossible to retain any new employees. I hope you take our pleas into consideration before it becomes exponentially worse. There needs to be a lot of SERIOUS changes made before this command implodes.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully,

, a proud but frustrated Public Safety Dispatcher.

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: _____
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 5:51 AM
To: Gonzalez, Samuel
Subject: Police communications staffing issues

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To whom it may concern:

My name is _____ I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) For _____ I am writing to you out of concern for what is going on in the communications section where I work. I feel our current work environment is crumbling and I don't know where to turn. Our staffing situation is in dire need. Within in the last year, the normal practice of hiring separate Emergency Complaint Operators (ECO) and PSD's has been stopped. They are currently only hiring dispatchers even though I do believe there is a list of people who have taken both tests separately. The idea of hiring only dispatchers is done because then we can be used to fulfill the staffing on the ECO and side and PSD side as needed since part of a dispatchers job is to know how to do the ECO job. In the long run I guess this is seen as a good idea from a managerial standpoint but the execution has been done very poorly. We are drastically short in both titles. In 2020 alone we had 9 people start training for dispatch only to not make it to the end of their training or go back to the ECO side where they came from. Normally in the past they would give those people a chance to train just for ECO so they would still keep a job and we could at least have that position filled. This is no longer done, resulting in the ECO and PSD positions becoming very low in staffing numbers. We currently have 54 PSD's and 50 ECO's. I don't know exactly what we are budgeted for but I do know it should definitely be higher for both titles. The overtime is through the roof. Of course overtime is nice, but when it's mandated almost everyday, thats a problem. It is at the point that if you don't sign up to come in early, you will most likely get mandated to stay. The PSD's can get mandated for both positions. While there is a limit to 2 mandates per week of a PSD for the ECO side, we are still getting hit. We also sometimes gets mandated for ECO before an actual ECO which i do not feel is right because we are getting mandated out of title and we can get hit for both titles, while the ECO's cannot. It really is not cost effective right now either because now a PSD is getting paid overtime for a lesser position. Supervisors as well are doing overtime for both positions at times, but again that really isn't cost effective as they are even higher pay grades. Overtime should not be relied on to fulfill the everyday staffing. I personally feel these titles need to be separately hired for. Dispatching is very hard and not for everyone and thats okay, and for that reason relying on just hiring dispatchers is not doing any good. At least if the ECO position was filled, we would only be short on the PSD side and overtime and mandated overtime would be less. I don't believe the transition was planned very well. To make a transition like this when we are already short was not a good idea. When people weren't making it there should have been changes made to scrap the idea and regroup; instead we were just led deeper into a hole. We currently have some trainees but even IF they make it, its not close to the numbers we need. More retirements are on the horizon as well.

Now on top of all that, add COVID to the mix. Obviously no one knew that was going to happen or to what extent but when it did, no changes were made as to the hiring. We have had many people go out COVID related in the last few months. The procedures are constantly changing as to how long someone stays out of work if they are sick, a family member is sick, they had contact with someone, etc. We do get our temperature checked daily and we all wear masks on the communications floor but we still have no plexiglass separating us from our coworkers. I understand the design may need to be a little creative the way our room is but there is no good reason why nothing has been done. They did

hang shower curtains for about a month but they were never actually put into use. We are all cleaning our desks much more than ever because its all shared, but why hasn't anything else been done?

I implore you to please help us. We are tired, burnt out, getting sick and there is no end in sight. Many of my coworkers who don't have much time on are thinking about looking elsewhere. The cons of the job are starting to outweigh the pros and thats sad because it really is a great job. We are going downhill fast.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and have a pleasant day.

Sincerely, _____

Sent from my iPad

Ellis, Amy

From:
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2020 2:28 PM
To: tom.donnelly@suffolkcountyny.gov; Fleming, Bridget; Berland, Susan A.; Flotteron, Steven; Gonzalez, Samuel; Hahn, Kara; Kennedy, Leslie; Spencer, William; Sunderman, Rudy; McCaffrey, Kevin
Subject: Scpd communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I am writing to you as a very concerned public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for 7 years and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough, there is a "plan" to eliminate our emergency complaint operators and have one title I thinks DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I'll start with the toll it is taking on our our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone or radio. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying to recalculate and move up their end date. The numbers of people getting ready to or able to retire is astonishing, Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks. Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

December 19,2020 there were eight (8) MANDATED overtime spots at 1600 hours. As well as many other MANDATED overtime spots at changeover for each tour throughout the day. Each day that we are scheduled to work our (8 hour shift on paper) we need to devote the 4 hours before the shift and the 4 hours after the shift for possible MANDATED overtime. If you have any plans you need to play the schedule game to make sure you don't get mandated, Although we took a job with a (35) hour work week, we must be able to provide 40 to 50 hours of our availability per week to cater to the extremely poor, failing planning by our unit.

Even if we were to hire 15-20 employees TOMORROW, that still wouldn't cover the staffing problem, new employee need at least 6 months to be fully trained and certified.

As if that isn't bad enough....

Let's touch on covid. MANDATORY CDC guidelines as far as spacing, exposure & quarantine. It seems that they are forcing employees back in even if they are possibly still contagious, and if their family members are still at home and symptomatic. If one of us goes home sick, no one sitting around them meets the criteria for exposure and we carry on as if our health and our families don't matter. Covid is continuing to hit our unit hard. We do not have plexiglass up, we are not spaced far enough apart. We get our temperature taken daily on a thermometer that constantly runs low.

And let's not forget our x days that are still on the Calendar even after the lawsuit settlement this year. An understaffed, covid effected unit being worked by underpaid, burnt out, overworked employees that are still working 6 days a year for free on top of it all.

I am writing to you with hopes that changes can be made with efforts to save our unit. Turn over rates in our field are extremely high to begin with, not factoring in all of the above topics that this year has presented I LOVE my career but I cannot even think about staying here through retirement unless some serious changes are made here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From:

Sent:

To:

Subject:

Saturday, December 19, 2020 7:07 PM

Gonzalez, Samuel

SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I am writing to you as a very frustrated public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for _____, and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough but this “plan” to eliminate our emergency complaint operators DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I’ll start with the toll it is taking on our our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone. It is not fair to us, not fair to our officers or to our community. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying to recalculate and move up their end date. Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks. Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

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Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:11 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: Scpd communications

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2020 2:28 PM
To: tom.donnely@suffolkcountyny.gov; Fleming, Bridget <Bridget.Fleming@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Berland, Susan A. <Susan.Berland@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Flotteron, Steven <Steven.Flotteron@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Gonzalez, Samuel <Samuel.Gonzalez@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Hahn, Kara <Kara.Hahn@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Kennedy, Leslie <Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Spencer, William <William.Spencer@suffolkcountyny.gov>; Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>; McCaffrey, Kevin <Kevin.McCaffrey@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: Scpd communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I am writing to you as a very concerned public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for [redacted] and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough, there is a "plan" to eliminate our emergency complaint operators and have one title I think DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I'll start with the toll it is taking on our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone or radio. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying to recalculate and move up their end date. The numbers of people getting ready to or able to retire is astonishing, Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks. Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

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Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:10 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: Communications staffing issues

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 5:48 AM
To: Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: Communications staffing issues

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To whom it may concern:

My name I [REDACTED]. I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) For [REDACTED]. I am writing to you out of concern for what is going on in the communications section where I work. I feel our current work environment is crumbling and I don't know where to turn. Our staffing situation is in dire need. Within in the last year, the normal practice of hiring separate Emergency Complaint Operators (ECO) and PSD's has been stopped. They are currently only hiring dispatchers even though I do believe there is a list of people who have taken both tests separately. The idea of hiring only dispatchers is done because then we can be used to fulfill the staffing on the ECO and side and PSD side as needed since part of a dispatchers job is to know how to do the ECO job. In the long run I guess this is seen as a good idea from a managerial standpoint but the execution has been done very poorly. We are drastically short in both titles. In 2020 alone we had 9 people start training for dispatch only to not make it to the end of their training or go back to the ECO side where they came from. Normally in the past they would give those people a chance to train just for ECO so they would still keep a job and we could at least have that position filled. This is no longer done, resulting in the ECO and PSD positions becoming very low in staffing numbers. We currently have 54 PSD's and 50 ECO's. I don't know exactly what we are budgeted for but I do know it should definitely be higher for both titles. The overtime is through the roof. Of course overtime is nice, but when it's mandated almost everyday, thats a problem. It is at the point that if you don't sign up to come in early, you will most likely get mandated to stay. The PSD's can get mandated for both positions. While there is a limit to 2 mandates per week of a PSD for the ECO side, we are still getting hit. We also sometimes gets mandated for ECO before an actual ECO which i do not feel is right because we are getting mandated out of title and we can get hit for both titles, while the ECO's cannot. It really is not cost effective right now either because now a PSD is getting paid overtime for a lesser position. Supervisors as well are doing overtime for both positions at times, but again that really isn't cost effective as they are even higher pay grades. Overtime should not be relied on to fulfill the everyday staffing. I personally feel these titles need to be separately hired for. Dispatching is very hard and not for everyone and thats okay, and for that reason relying on just hiring dispatchers is not doing any good. At least if the ECO position was filled, we would only be short on the PSD side and overtime and mandated overtime would be less. I don't believe the transition was planned very well. To make a transition like this when we are already short was not a good idea. When people weren't making it there should have been changes made to scrap the idea and regroup; instead we were just led

deeper into a hole. We currently have some trainees but even IF they make it, its not close to the numbers we need. More retirements are on the horizon as well.

Now on top of all that, add COVID to the mix. Obviously no one knew that was going to happen or to what extent but when it did, no changes were made as to the hiring. We have had many people go out COVID related in the last few months. The procedures are constantly changing as to how long someone stays out of work if they are sick, a family member is sick, they had contact with someone, etc. We do get our temperature checked daily and we all wear masks on the communications floor but we still have no plexiglass separating us from our coworkers. I understand the design may need to be a little creative the way our room is but there is no good reason why nothing has been done. They did hang shower curtains for about a month but they were never actually put into use. We are all cleaning our desks much more than ever because its all shared, but why hasn't anything else been done?

I implore you to please help us. We are tired, burnt out, getting sick and there is no end in sight. Many of my coworkers who don't have much time on are thinking about looking elsewhere. The cons of the job are starting to outweigh the pros and thats sad because it really is a great job. We are going downhill fast.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and have a pleasant day.

Sincerely, _____

Sent from my iPad

Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:12 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 7:11 PM
To: Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I am writing to you as a very frustrated public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for [REDACTED] and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough but this “plan” to eliminate our emergency complaint operators DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I’ll start with the toll it is taking on our our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone. It is not fair to us, not fair to our officers or to our community. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying

to recalculate and move up their end date. Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks. Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

Today. December 19,2020 there were eight (8) MANDATED overtime spots at 1600 hours. As well as many other MANDATED overtime spots at changeover for each tour throughout the day. Each day that we are scheduled to work our (8 hour shift on paper) we need to devote the 4 hours before the shift and the 4 hours after the shift for possible MANDATED overtime. Although we took a job with a (35) hour work week, we must be able to provide (80) hours of our availability per week to cater to the extremely poor, failing planning by our unit.

Even if we were to hire 15-20 employees TOMORROW, that still wouldn't cover the staffing problem.

As if that isn't bad enough....

Let's touch on covid. MANDATORY CDC guidelines as far as spacing, exposure & quarantine. Our higher ups are forcing employees back in even if they are possibly still contagious, and if their family members are still at home and symptomatic. If one of us goes home sick, no one sitting around them meets the criteria for exposure and we carry on as if our health and our families don't matter. Covid is continuing to hit our unit hard. We do not have plexiglass up, we are not spaced far enough apart. We get our temperature taken on a falsely calibrated thermometer that

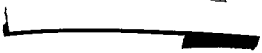
shows hypothermic readings for just about every employee walking through the door.

And let's not forget our x days that are still on the Calendar even after the lawsuit settlement this year. An understaffed, covid effected unit being worked by underpaid, burnt out, overworked employees that are still working 6 days a year for free on top of it all.

I am writing to you with hopes that changes can be made with efforts to save our unit. Turn over rates in our field are extremely high to begin with, not factoring in all of the above topics that this year has presented

I LOVE my career but I cannot even think about staying here through retirement unless some serious changes are made here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter



Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:10 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: Public Safety Communications

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 6:15 PM
To: Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: Public Safety Communications

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To Whom It May Concern

My name is [REDACTED] and I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) for Suffolk County Police for nearly [REDACTED] now. While this job does offer good benefits, at this time the cons are outweighing the pros. I am writing to you out of sheer concern for myself, coworkers and police officers. Our current work environment is on the brink of a catastrophic disaster. When I agreed to this job five years ago, I knew the stress factor and the occasional mandated overtime. At this time, we all have to allocate 80 hours of our availability (four hours before shift and four hours after shift) for the likely chance of being mandated. The amount of mandates are climbing drastically with no end in sight. In order to have some time to live a normal life outside of the workplace, the majority of us are reluctantly signing up for the overtime to decide what part of the day we get stuck at work. For example, if u have a doctors appointment in the afternoon, I HAVE to sign up for overtime in the morning. This is the only way I can guarantee that I will not be mandated that afternoon.

You may ask why or how we are in this predicament. Short staffing has always been a chronic issue during my employment here but our upper management has made a MAJOR change while going through a pandemic. Our command management thought that trying to dissolve a job title of Emergency Complaint Operator (ECO) that is offered by Suffolk County Civil Service, during a pandemic would be helpful. They are currently only hiring PSD's to fill both positions. When an ECO retires or resigns, they are not being replaced. Due to the fact that PSD's are a higher grade than ECO's the majority of the overtime is by no means financially responsible. This is not only hurting our command but not allowing the people of Suffolk County who took the ECO test a fair opportunity of employment. How unfortunate it is that there are potentially great employees on that list that could be a fix to an awful situation?

Our primary job as a PSD is to protect the police officers and to make sure they go home to their families at the end of shift. Unfortunately, the current status of our workplace, could effect the police officers and the community. For both ECO's and PSD's we are getting burnt out and suffering from pure exhaustion after working 8, 12 and sometimes even 16 hours to cover the shortages. Everyone at this command has important things in their lives outside of the workplace. It may be a health concern, being a caretaker for a family member, a spouse or a parent, the list could go on and on. We shouldn't be denied those things in life, for a poor decision made by our upper management. At this time, there are about six more people retiring or leaving in the first few months of 2021. There are even more trying to calculate if they can afford to retire earlier after being pushed to the breaking point. At this point because our command is so desperate for people, multiple supervisors have said that they will be pushing people through the training and certifying them as PSD's even if they are unable

to do the job. As much as we are short on people, these are police officers lives on the other end of the radio. We don't have time for mistakes and/or people who are unable to do the job, it could cost someone their life!

As if our unit wasn't failing enough, we haven't even touched on the effects of Covid yet. Our management has forced people back to work prior to their quarantine period being over and if their family members that reside in the same house test positive. There have been no changes made to effectively space us out, add plexiglass or take legitimate temperatures. We wear masks daily and get our temperature taken once or twice daily depending on how many hours we work. The thermometer that is used consistently shows severely hypothermic temperatures and no supervisors question its calibration or readings. Covid has run rampant in our command over the last couple months and we have been told we don't have to follow the Department of Health guidelines because we are essential. I have NEVER heard of that at any other essential business.

We have supervisors making major decisions for our command who both don't want to do our job and don't know how to do our job. These decisions are running our command into the ground and it will take YEARS to recover. I absolutely love what I do as a dispatcher but there's only so much we can take. Turnover rates in our field across the country are always high, but with all the problems listed above and some that haven't even been mentioned are making it nearly impossible to retain any new employees. I hope you take our pleas into consideration before it becomes exponentially worse. There needs to be a lot of SERIOUS changes made before this command implodes.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully,

_____, a proud but frustrated Public Safety Dispatcher.

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:11 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: 911 staffing

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, January 2, 2021 10:52 AM
To: Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: 911 staffing

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

My name is [REDACTED] I'm a resident of Center Moriches. I'm an employee at
SCPD/911 operator, since [REDACTED]

Currently there is a shortage of 911 operators/dispatchers. Mandated 12 hour shifts, every other day. The problem started when it was decided that 911 and dispatch would be combined. Future hires will be trained for both positions. Success rate low. The situation is dire and will only get worse in the coming months. Summer is our busiest season. Many employees feeling burnt out.

The only solution would be to hire more dispatchers/911 operators. I believe that the last group of hires pulled from the active dispatcher list tested in the low 70's. 9 hired, only 2 left, still in training.

Unfortunately due to covid-19 it's unknown when a new dispatchers/911 test will be given. The screening process after a test is given is also time consuming.

We at 911 are basically screwed unless our legislators can figure out a way to help us.

Sincerely,

Overworked, understaffed, underpaid & unappreciated.

SCPD Dispatch/911

Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: 911 staffing

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, January 2, 2021 10:52 AM
To: Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: 911 staffing

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SCPD/911 operator, since [REDACTED]

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SCPD Dispatch/911

Ellis, Amy

From: Sunderman, Rudy
Sent: Tuesday, February 09, 2021 11:08 AM
To: Ellis, Amy; Rothang, Tim
Subject: FW: 911/dispatch staffing shortage

-----Original Message-----

From: _____
Sent: Saturday, January 2, 2021 1:54 PM
To: Sunderman, Rudy <Rudy.Sunderman@suffolkcountyny.gov>
Subject: 911/dispatch staffing shortage

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

I have an idea for a temporary solution to the staffing shortage.

just an idea

What if we trained newly hired police officers in 911/dispatch. They would fill in when needed, until a new 911/dispatch test is given and canvassing is completed.

It would be beneficial for new officers to learn the other side of the job. Originally communications was manned by uniformed officers.

This idea would prepare us for the busy summer ahead. Only 6 months away.

Ellis, Amy

From: _____
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2020 2:28 PM
To: tom.donnelly@suffolkcountyny.gov; Fleming, Bridget; Berland, Susan A.; Flotteron, Steven; Gonzalez, Samuel; Hahn, Kara; Kennedy, Leslie; Spencer, William; Sunderman, Rudy; McCaffrey, Kevin
Subject: Scpd communications

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I am writing to you as a very concerned public safety dispatcher from SCPD communications. I have worked here for 7 years and our current work environment is complete chaos on an extremely dangerous, downward spiral. The job is stressful enough, there is a "plan" to eliminate our emergency complaint operators and have one title I think DURING A PANDEMIC is clearly failing. It is not safe for many reasons but I'll start with the toll it is taking on our mental health. We are the FIRST first responders and if we fail as a unit, the trickle down effect will continue through the entire department. Having the responsibility of being the first contact the public has in their greatest time of need should not be met with a room full of burnt out, breaking down voices on the other end of the phone or radio. Our senior employees who are on the verge of retiring cannot wait to run out the door faster, spending day in and day out trying to recalculate and move up their end date. The numbers of people getting ready to or able to retire is astonishing, Any new hire we see barely lasts the first few weeks. Morale is low. Mandated over time is high. We are working 8-12 and sometimes 16 hour days to cover short staffing.

December 19, 2020 there were eight (8) MANDATED overtime spots at 1600 hours. As well as many other MANDATED overtime spots at changeover for each tour throughout the day. Each day that we are scheduled to work our (8 hour shift on paper) we need to devote the 4 hours before the shift and the 4 hours after the shift for possible MANDATED overtime. If you have any plans you need to play the schedule game to make sure you don't get mandated, Although we took a job with a (35) hour work week, we must be able to provide 40 to 50 hours of our availability per week to cater to the extremely poor, failing planning by our unit.

Even if we were to hire 15-20 employees TOMORROW, that still wouldn't cover the staffing problem, new employee need at least 6 months to be fully trained and certified.

As if that isn't bad enough....

Let's touch on covid. MANDATORY CDC guidelines as far as spacing, exposure & quarantine. It seems that they are forcing employees back in even if they are possibly still contagious, and if their family members are still at home and symptomatic. If one of us goes home sick, no one sitting around them meets the criteria for exposure and we carry on as if our health and our families don't matter. Covid is continuing to hit our unit hard. We do not have plexiglass up, we are not spaced far enough apart. We get our temperature taken daily on a thermometer that constantly runs low.

And let's not forget our x days that are still on the Calendar even after the lawsuit settlement this year. An understaffed, covid effected unit being worked by underpaid, burnt out, overworked employees that are still working 6 days a year for free on top of it all.

I am writing to you with hopes that changes can be made with efforts to save our unit. Turn over rates in our field are extremely high to begin with, not factoring in all of the above topics that this year has presented I LOVE my career but I cannot even think about staying here through retirement unless some serious changes are made here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

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To: tom.donnelly@suffolkcountyny.gov; Fleming, Bridget; Berland, Susan A.; Flotteron, Steven; Gonzalez, Samuel; Hahn, Kara; Kennedy, Leslie; Spencer, William; Sunderman, Rudy; McCaffrey, Kevin
Subject: Scpd communications
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Thank you for your consideration in this matter



Sent from my iPhone

Ellis, Amy

From: _____
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 10:19 PM
To: Spencer, William
Subject: Staffing Inadequacies

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

To whom it may concern,

My name is _____ and I am a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) with Suffolk County Police Department. I hope this e-mail finds you well and that you are enjoying your Saturday night with your family. I wish I could say the same, but I find myself mandated for the third Saturday in a row at Headquarters. It doesn't seem to matter how much overtime I "willingly" (and I use that term loosely since I often feel backed into a corner) sign up for because the mandates fly around so quickly here. We could probably attribute that to Covid (roughly 7+ coworkers are sick with it), understaffing (around 30% below normal levels), and the fact that our Captain has decided to phase out the Emergency Call Operator (ECO) position during a pandemic.. Which has effectively doubled mandates for PSDs who are expected to cover overtime for both positions AND burning out the ECOs who cannot get time off because there is no one to cover. If we wanted/needed time off, we normally would need approximately 3-5 people to sign up for overtime. But now, on average, we need approximately 10 people to sign up making it almost impossible to take time off since we are so understaffed.

Granted, I am one of the newer employees here but, I have never seen morale so low in a workplace before. This year has been stressful enough with Covid-19. We have dutifully reported to work, risking our health and the health of our families and loved ones to do a thankless job with little to no recognition. But now during the holiday season we are being taken away from our families and forced to work mandated overtime because we don't have adequate staffing. What's going to happen when the county burns us out? Who will fill our shoes? New training classes? Oh, that's right, the success rate is less than 50% and takes months for that relief to set in before they are fully trained. When I went to orientation they explained mandates and overtime, that they would happen from time to time but that overtime was more of an option and not a necessity. But let me tell you, overtime is absolutely not optional at this point. I can do overtime on my days off and still be mandated my first day back.

This job is draining enough without feeling like the county owns us for 16 hours a day on our work days. We all have lives and obligations outside of work and since we don't work a normal "Monday-Friday 8-4 or 9-5," we have to schedule things before or after work. Which has become impossible because we are continually mandated before or after our scheduled shift to cover the staffing inadequacies, regardless if we have already done overtime in order to avoid a mandate. We are basically "on call" four hours before our shift and four hours after our shift since we are unable to refuse a mandate without disciplinary repercussions. Is the county going to pay us for being "on call" to make up for placing a hold on our personal time? I highly doubt it.

I'm not exactly sure what it will take to wake the county up, since our pleas keep falling on deaf ears. It'll probably only be taken seriously once the budget comes around and it is made aware how the explosion of overtime is not cost effective by any means. It would be more cost effective if we were properly staffed and the county didn't have to shell out an enormous amount for (what could be avoidable) overtime. Or, will this crisis only hit home when you or a loved one needs emergency assistance and you're put on hold because we're understaffed? The ECO side is the first to take the hit and run short because we HAVE to have all the radios covered with a Dispatcher. Our primary goal as ECOs/PSDs is to "save seconds that can save lives." We are unable to perform that primary function if we are understaffed and constituents have to be placed on hold for their emergencies. When it comes to life threatening emergencies or

situations, seconds can make all the difference in the outcome, and those valuable seconds are wasted when someone has to be placed on hold due to inadequate staffing.

Thank you for your time and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

A redacted signature consisting of a horizontal line followed by a small black square.

Ellis, Amy

From: _____
Sent: Saturday, December 19, 2020 7:10 PM
To: Spencer, William
Subject: SCPD COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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I LOVE my career but I cannot even think about staying here through retirement unless some serious changes are made here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Ellis, Amy

From: _____
Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 5:56 AM
To: Spencer, William
Subject: Police communications staffing issues

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To whom it may concern:

My name I _____ I have been a Public Safety Dispatcher (PSD) For _____ I am writing to you out of concern for what is going on in the communications section where I work. I feel our current work environment is crumbling and I don't know where to turn. Our staffing situation is in dire need. Within in the last year, the normal practice of hiring separate Emergency Complaint Operators (ECO) and PSD's has been stopped. They are currently only hiring dispatchers even though I do believe there is a list of people who have taken both tests separately. The idea of hiring only dispatchers is done because then we can be used to fulfill the staffing on the ECO and side and PSD side as needed since part of a dispatchers job is to know how to do the ECO job. In the long run I guess this is seen as a good idea from a managerial standpoint but the execution has been done very poorly. We are drastically short in both titles. In 2020 alone we had 9 people start training for dispatch only to not make it to the end of their training or go back to the ECO side where they came from. Normally in the past they would give those people a chance to train just for ECO so they would still keep a job and we could at least have that position filled. This is no longer done, resulting in the ECO and PSD positions becoming very low in staffing numbers. We currently have 54 PSD's and 50 ECO's. I don't know exactly what we are budgeted for but I do know it should definitely be higher for both titles. The overtime is through the roof. Of course overtime is nice, but when it's mandated almost everyday, thats a problem. It is at the point that if you don't sign up to come in early, you will most likely get mandated to stay. The PSD's can get mandated for both positions. While there is a limit to 2 mandates per week of a PSD for the ECO side, we are still getting hit. We also sometimes gets mandated for ECO before an actual ECO which i do not feel is right because we are getting mandated out of title and we can get hit for both titles, while the ECO's cannot. It really is not cost effective right now either because now a PSD is getting paid overtime for a lesser position. Supervisors as well are doing overtime for both positions at times, but again that really isn't cost effective as they are even higher pay grades. Overtime should not be relied on to fulfill the everyday staffing. I personally feel these titles need to be separately hired for. Dispatching is very hard and not for everyone and thats okay, and for that reason relying on just hiring dispatchers is not doing any good. At least if the ECO position was filled, we would only be short on the PSD side and overtime and mandated overtime would be less. I don't believe the transition was planned very well. To make a transition like this when we are already short was not a good idea. When people weren't making it there should have been changes made to scrap the idea and regroup; instead we were just led deeper into a hole. We currently have some trainees but even IF they make it, its not close to the numbers we need. More retirements are on the horizon as well.

Now on top of all that, add COVID to the mix. Obviously no one knew that was going to happen or to what extent but when it did, no changes were made as to the hiring. We have had many people go out COVID related in the last few months. The procedures are constantly changing as to how long someone stays out of work if they are sick, a family member is sick, they had contact with someone, etc. We do get our temperature checked daily and we all wear masks on the communications floor but we still have no plexiglass separating us from our coworkers. I understand the design may need to be a little creative the way our room is but there is no good reason why nothing has been done. They did

hang shower curtains for about a month but they were never actually put into use. We are all cleaning our desks much more than ever because its all shared, but why hasn't anything else been done?

I implore you to please help us. We are tired, burnt out, getting sick and there is no end in sight. Many of my coworkers who don't have much time on are thinking about looking elsewhere. The cons of the job are starting to outweigh the pros and thats sad because it really is a great job. We are going downhill fast.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and have a pleasant day.

Sincerely, _____

Sent from my iPad