

911 Telecommunicator Pension Benefits Working Group

Date: August 27, 2021

To: Members of the 911 Telecommunicator Pension Benefits Working Group

From: Amy Strenge, Policy Coordinator, Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA)

Subject: 911 Dispatchers and Hennepin Health Services

As promised, here is the follow up in regard to 911 dispatchers with Hennepin Health Services who have coverage in the Public Employees Police & Fire Plan.

Information on Hennepin Health’s “911 Call Center”

- Hennepin Health (HH) does have a dispatch center staffed by trained EMTs.
- They have a pool of trained staff who can move between paramedic, EMT and dispatch assignments.
- All employees filling the dispatch role are fully certified EMTs and qualified/able to go into the field at any time as needed.
- They provide specialized EMT dispatch assistance and do not provide general dispatch services.
- These employees receive PERA Police & Fire Plan coverage under the special provision for HH paramedics and EMTs in 353.64 Subd. 10.

Details

Martin Sheerer, Hennepin Health EMS Chief and Senior Director of Emergency Medicine, confirmed that Hennepin Health does have approximately 24 employees in a job classification that includes Paramedic, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Dispatch duties. These employees are able to move between the different roles but are required to remain qualified for and able to perform all aspects of the duties.

Employees currently performing the Dispatch work must also maintain their EMT certification by keeping up with continuing education, training requirements, and being physically able to perform EMT services in the field as needed (aka “remain street qualified”).

Martin clarified that this group does not serve as a primary dispatch center. Unlike typical EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatchers), these trained EMTs solely provide specialized services related to emergency medical services. Specifically, they provide “pre-arrival” instructions to callers by guiding them through protocols for assistance with seizures, CPR, and similar emergency treatments until Paramedics/EMTs arrive on the scene. The Hennepin Health facility also serves as a radio liaison between Twin Cities metropolitan area EMS ambulance crews and destination hospitals.