



San Diego Community College District

EMERGENCY CALL BOX USE PROCEDURE

- When a *non-violent* student displays concerning behavior or causes a disruption, College Police services may be requested. If the request is made using the emergency call box located in the room, the faculty member (hereinafter referred to as “the caller”) should assess the situation to best determine whether or not answering the dispatcher’s questions could potentially aggravate the situation in the classroom.
- The College Police Dispatchers will answer the telephone call and begin processing the call. The dispatcher’s questions will provide the caller with an opportunity to opt out of further questioning. The caller will be asked “*Are you able to answer questions?*” The caller will then decide what impact answering questions may have on the situation and respond to the dispatcher accordingly; either “yes” and proceed with the call; or “no” and the dispatcher will acknowledge the caller. The line will remain open and the dispatcher will continue to listen to the classroom until officer(s) arrive on scene.
 - Please note. Comfort and ability are two very different things. A caller may not be *comfortable* answering questions, but he/she is still *able* to answer questions without causing further disruption to the situation. The decision to push the button was probably not *comfortable* to begin with; whatever is going on in the room is probably making people *uncomfortable*. Callers need to remember the police department’s first priority is everyone’s safety. If a caller is *able* to answer questions, he/she should answer questions.
- Once the caller has opted out of questions, he/she can, at any time, resume the conversation with the dispatcher; and should, especially if it means protecting the safety of students.

Examples of when this new protocol would apply:

- A student is being loud and disrupting class. Instructor has asked the student to leave but he/she refuses.
- A student is displaying *non-violent* abnormal behavior that might indicate he/she has a mental health issue or are possibly under the influence of something.

This new protocol does **not** apply to the following situations since gathering detailed information is essential to protect the safety of the campus:

- Calls for medical aid.
 - Calls involving weapons.
 - Calls where there is an immediate threat to student, faculty or officer safety.
 - Calls in which failure to answer the dispatcher's questions could jeopardize the safety of others in the room and/or the officers responding.
 - Calls from a landline or cellular telephone.
 - Calls from call boxes outside or in common areas of the campuses, i.e. parking structures, stairwells, etc.
- Things to remember:
 - If a student is causing a disruption and flees because the police were called, as long as the caller knows the identity of the student, officers can follow up afterwards.
 - The line will remain open, with the dispatcher listening, while officers are on their way.
 - If the situation changes, becomes violent in any way or there is knowledge of a weapon, the dispatcher needs to be advised **immediately!**

A flow chart of the call process is attached.

The following is an example of a call flow between a **CALLER** and a **DISPATCHER**.

There is a student in the classroom, passively defiant, being verbally disruptive and refusing to behave or leave the room. There is no indication of weapons or immediate threat to the other students or staff. The caller believes the dispatcher's normal line of questioning could aggravate the situation.

