

# WHEN CAD GOES DOWN — FIRST 5 MINUTES

Job aid for 911 call takers and dispatchers

## OUTCOME

In the first five minutes of a CAD outage, the floor keeps taking calls, tracks units by hand, and tells the field the system is down.

### 1. Confirm it is not just you.

Check the workstation next to you and one mobile/MDT if you can.

One seat only → reboot that position and tell the supervisor. Stop here.

More than one seat / mobiles blank → treat it as system-wide. Do not wait for CAD to “come back.”

### 2. Say it out loud.

“CAD is down. Going manual.” Supervisor (or senior on duty) owns the clock from that sentence.

### 3. Grab the paper kit.

Call cards / intake sheets, unit status board or notepad, clock or stamp, spare pens, sector map.

If you cannot find the kit in 30 seconds, use blank paper. Do not hunt.

### 4. Tell the field.

Alert tone if you use one. Short radio:

*“All units — CAD is down. Status changes by radio. Stand by for paper dispatch.”*

Repeat on the second primary channel if you have one. Then tell field supervisors.

### 5. Keep answering 911.

Same interrogation: location, callback, nature, safety. Write it. Pass the card. Do not hold callers waiting for a screen.

### 6. Track units on paper.

One person owns the board if staffing allows. Log: unit, status, location, time.

Units call status on the radio. You write it. No “I’ll enter it later.”

### 7. Notify up, then work the calls.

Supervisor notifies: on-duty comms supervisor → IT/CAD vendor → center manager (per your list).

Floor does not stop taking calls to make those calls.

## WRITE THIS EVERY TIME

Time down

Who declared it

Channels notified

Who owns the board

## WHEN YOU FORGET UNDER STRESS

Phones still work. Radio still works. Paper still works.

Do not wait. Do not rebuild the incident in your head. Write location, nature, unit, time.

**Priority:** life-safety calls → unit safety / status → everything else.

## AFTER CAD RETURNS · not minute five — do this after the scramble

Confirm the system is actually up. Enter paper calls with real times. Do not guess times.

*Generic center. Swap local titles, radio IDs, and kit locations before use.*

## Instructional design note

*Attached so a training coordinator or hiring manager can see why the job aid is built this way. The floor only needs page 1.*

### Problem

When CAD fails, people freeze waiting for the screen instead of switching to a known manual path.

### Learners

Working call takers and dispatchers. Also useful for new-hire onboarding and an annual refresher.

### Objective

Given a system-wide CAD failure, the telecommunicator will declare manual mode, notify the field, and capture location / nature / unit / time on paper within five minutes.

### Why this format

One page, numbered verbs, stress box. People will not open a 12-page SOP at minute two.

### How you'd know it worked

Tabletop or unannounced drill: time-to-declare under 90 seconds; field notification goes out; sample cards have location, callback, nature, unit, and times; after-action shows who owned the board.

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*Built as a portfolio sample to show floor-fit training for 911 / public safety agencies. Customize to local SOP before use.*