

My name is Darian Marie Storm. I am a telecommunications officer aka dispatcher in Grant County, Oregon. I am in full support of SB 425 and SB 426. I have only been on the job for a year and four months now. This career has opened my eyes to how vital and fundamental this position is. When there is danger, emergency, fear, etc. we are that lifeline you call. We hear the pleas, the screams, the tears, first. We respond with empathy, positive ambiguity, proper voice tone, and repetitive persistence to get the vital information to send the physical help they need. We ask questions and verify, What is the address of your emergency? Are they breathing? are they conscious? Is the intruder still in the house? Did you see a weapon? What can you hear? Are they still there? Etc. We reassure, help is getting started, you're doing great, stay with me, don't hang up, help is on the way, etc. We give vital direction, Get everyone out of the house if it safe to do so, put pressure directly on the wound and do not let up, if it safe to do so lock all windows and doors, etc. We send the correct responders, keep in contact with, and are the safety net for responders via status checks, correct locations, correct information, back up needed, other agencies needed, etc. We record all of this information precisely while running this call, and other calls via phone, and radio, mapping, etc. I could include so many more facts, some figures, further statements, or even my most heartbreaking or successful experience, and it still wouldn't fully encompass this job. We are the vital link between callers and responders. We are the first contact, and the last contact on a call. It starts with someone's worst day, they pick up the phone and they dial. We answer that call. We are on scene until physical help arrives. Then we continue to monitor all aspects of agencies response while they are on scene until they are off duty or back in quarters. When it's a good call we rejoice afterward together with our fellow responders. When it's a bad call we cry together and hug and reassure each other. We may not be there physically, but in every other aspect we are one hundred percent. When a mom calls whose child isn't breathing, we are there. We immediately get that address and page the ambulance. Until they arrive though, it's you on scene. It's you, that baby, that father, and that mom. The mom who has to hand the phone to the dad because she can't pull it together and you need someone giving this baby compressions stat. So now it's dad you're giving precise instructions to. You're counting compressions with him out loud as the phone lays on speakerphone next to his unresponsive child. The mother is still screaming and begging God in the background. You're relaying information to the ambulance while you continue to keep that calm and cool voice and direction that family needs right now so we can continue to execute proper CPR to get their child breathing again. Then the ambulance gets on scene, they take over, the phone call has ended. The ambulance tells you they're enroute with one to the hospital. You're recording information all the while. Running radio all the while. Calling out law enforcement now because the child hasn't made it. Giving and recording all the information. One of the ambulance crew calls and you lament together. When it's the end of your shift and you leave your console, you can't go home yet. You want to because you were up all night and need sleep, but before you go home to your family you know you need a wind down. You drive, you park, and you just cry. This is what we do. If that's not a first responder, I honestly don't know what is.