

Dispatcher, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance

WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

New York City

2006 Entry-level hourly wage \$10.15

2006 Median hourly wage \$16.70

New York State

Job growth outlook 2004–2014
(from 11,430 in 2004) +3%

JOB CHARACTERISTICS

What do dispatchers do?

- Schedule and dispatch workers, work crews, equipment, or service vehicles to appropriate locations according to customer requests, specifications, or needs, using radios or telephones.
- Arrange for necessary repairs to restore service and schedules.
- Relay work orders, messages, and information to or from work crews, supervisors, and field inspectors using telephones or two-way radios.
- Confer with customers or supervising personnel to address questions, problems, and requests for service or equipment.
- Prepare daily work and run schedules.
- Receive or prepare work orders.
- Oversee all communications within specifically assigned territories.
- Monitor personnel or equipment locations and utilization to coordinate service and schedules.

- Record and maintain files and records of customer requests, work or services performed, charges, expenses, inventory, and other dispatch information.
- Determine types or amounts of equipment, vehicles, materials, or personnel required according to work orders or specifications.

In what type of *conditions* do dispatchers work?

- **Telephone.** Frequent telephone conversations.
- **Contact with others.** Frequent contact with others (face-to-face, by telephone, or otherwise).
- **Freedom to make decisions.** Offers freedom to make decisions without supervision
- **Importance of repeating same tasks.** Requires repeating the same physical activities (e.g., key entry) or mental activities (e.g., checking entries in a ledger) over and over, without stopping.
- **Structured versus unstructured work.** Highly structured environment.

EMPLOYEE CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALIFICATIONS

How much *education* must a dispatcher have?

A high school diploma or GED is usually required; some employers may require vocational training or job-related course work too.

What kind of *licensing* must a dispatcher have?

- Aircraft dispatchers must pass an FAA knowledge exam, known as the ADX in order to achieve an aircraft dispatcher license (ADL).
- Vehicle dispatchers may be required to hold a valid state driver's license and pass criminal and drug and alcohol background checks.

How much *work experience* should a dispatcher have?

Some work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is helpful but is usually not required.

What type of *job training* does a dispatcher need?

Anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees.

What are the most important *abilities* a dispatcher should have?

- **Oral expression.** The ability to verbally communicate information and ideas so others will understand.
- **Oral comprehension.** The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words.
- **Speech clarity.** The ability to speak clearly so others will understand.
- **Information ordering.** The ability to arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
- **Problem sensitivity.** The ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong.

What are the most important *skills* for a dispatcher to have?

- **Active listening.** Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- **Judgment and decision-making.** Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
- **Reading comprehension.** Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- **Speaking.** Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- **Time management.** Managing one's own time and the time of others.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

- Licensing Examiners and Inspectors
- Counter and Rental Clerks
- Procurement Clerks
- Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks
- Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks
- Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers
- Subway and Streetcar Operators

SOURCE O*NET Summary reports and occupational databases. Retrieved May 2008, from <http://online.onetcenter.org/>.