



# CRISIS MANAGEMENT:

How automated scheduling can help public safety agencies with employee notification and cost recovery for emergency staffing

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Sufficient staffing is a critical need for public safety agencies 24/7/365. Whether it's an emergency response to a natural or man-made disaster or ensuring adequate coverage for special events and schools, the public safety workforce (and budgets) can be stretched thin.

Labor costs for disaster response – or even a large-scale special event – is one of the largest operational expenses for any public safety agency involved. Unfortunately, manual scheduling and notification systems make it difficult, if not impossible, to respond quickly with adequate personnel resources and track who worked, when they worked, where they worked and for how long so that those labor expenses can be allocated to the right cost center and reported accurately.

Tracking matters, because many public safety organizations seek reimbursement from event venues or from third party public and private agencies like FEMA. However,

the reporting requirements for cost recovery are complicated, and the accountability and transparency obligations require levels of reporting detail that few public safety organizations can assemble using manual scheduling systems.

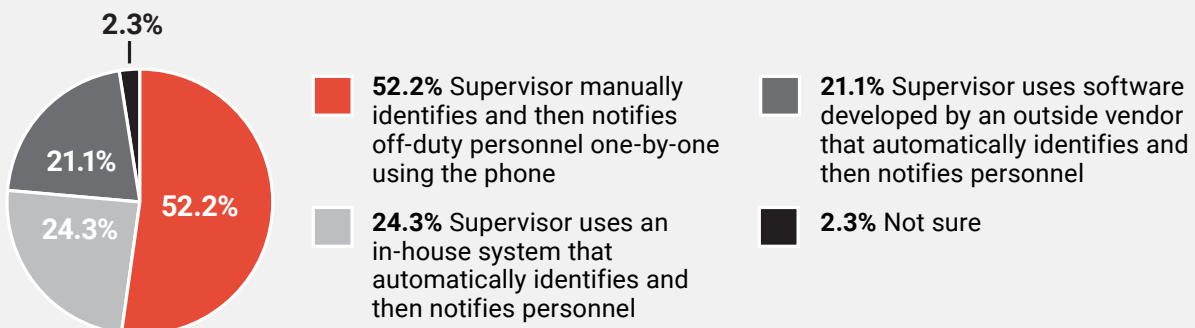
This white paper will explore how an automated scheduling platform that offers rapid communication via technologies such as interactive voice response (IVR) and short message service (SMS or texting) can help public safety organizations quickly fill positions and get the right responders on scene rapidly. This paper will also discuss how automated scheduling technology can provide an accurate and auditable trail of labor expenses after the fact to help ensure complete cost recovery from managing the crisis or event.

## TODAY'S DISASTERS, YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS

We live in the Mobile Age, but when it comes to crisis staffing, many public safety

## HOW DO PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCIES HANDLE STAFFING DURING A MAJOR EMERGENCY OR DISASTER?

Which of the following best describes your organization's response during a time of major emergency crisis such as man-made or natural disaster?



**Over 52% indicated their agency supervisors have to manually identify then phone staff one by one when a disaster strikes and emergency recall is needed.**

Natural disasters are on the rise and the threat of man-made disasters are always a threat. Manual emergency recall can severely impact incident response times. When the unthinkable happens, it's critical that federal public safety can immediately through the use of technology find, contact, and deploy first responders.

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agencies still rely on manual notification processes like phone calls. A survey conducted by **Kronos**, in partnership with PoliceOne, FireRescue1 and EMS1, revealed that about half of the respondents were still using phone trees to reach employees.

For 52.2% of the agencies participating in that survey, finding staff to cover major man-made or natural disasters meant supervisors getting on the phone and calling off-duty personnel one by one. Only 24.3% of agencies reported using in-house automated systems that identify and then notify off-duty personnel when additional or backfill help is needed. Of those, 21.3% used third-party software to do this for them, and 2.3% weren't sure how they contacted off-duty personnel during major emergencies and critical events.

To make matters worse, nearly two-thirds of survey respondents indicated they either never, or only sometimes, had access to real-time, accurate staffing information within a centralized system. This means that at least some (if not all) of the 52.2% who are relying on paper timesheets and the phone to manage staffing may not have accurate contact information to work with, so critical time is being wasted on calling wrong and out-of-service numbers when a major crisis is underway.

### **AUTOMATED SCHEDULING AND NOTIFICATION DELIVER HELP FAST**

Automated scheduling and notification systems can enhance emergency

preparedness and help with performance and cost effectiveness, as well as downstream documentation requirements that assist with cost recovery.

In addition to communicating outbound job offers to individuals or groups of people and subsequently notifying staff of their position or assignment, automated scheduling systems allow staffing managers to fill open positions while applying rules-based technology, such as requirements for specific skills and certifications, adherence to complicated labor laws, fatigue restrictions and union specifications.

Automated public safety scheduling technology accomplishes this by storing job-related details associated with every employee in the department, including their certifications, desired schedules, job rules and relevant contact information. This creates models for each role that allow leaders to efficiently execute communication to qualified employees to fill specific positions when event or crisis management teams need to be assembled fast. Additionally, automated scheduling gives leaders the ability to adequately staff around a specific position that may be required to address the situation or to prioritize staffing for certain positions ahead of others.

Automation is only as good as the speed with which scheduling information can be communicated when a crisis strikes. By integrating automated scheduling

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## DID YOU KNOW?

In a 2018 [GovLoop](#) survey of state and local government employees, more than 1 in 4 (27%) selected “incorporating technologies that help the workforce” as their biggest focus for 2019.

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and communication technology using integrated voice response and SMS (texting) technology, staffing managers can rapidly notify the employees best suited to handle the crisis. These technologies can be configured to send out automated phone calls, emails and text alerts regarding job offer requirements, as well as and monitor employees’ responses to these messages.

Kronos’ **Workforce TeleStaff** is an example of automated scheduling technology that provides these capabilities. Along with capabilities like IVR and SMS, Workforce TeleStaff supports many scheduling and rapid notification requirements for crisis management, including:

- **Communicate and deploy fast:** Send notice of staffing needs, share emergency information and deploy personnel quickly and easily.
- **Leverage multiple methods of delivery:** Provide inbound and outbound communications via multiple methods and media (SMS, phone, email, mobile device, tablet, computer or pager).
- **Apply flexible scheduling capabilities:** Configure employee scheduling and workflows as needed. Track employee hours, exceptions, overtime, work types, skills, certifications and more for reporting, training and payroll purposes.
- **Keep track of expenses:** Maintain

transparent audit trails for cost recovery reporting requirements.

- **Ensure compliance:** Make sure your agency is always on top of changes to regulations and union contracts with a tool that incorporates collective bargaining agreement requirements, staffing rules and other regulatory policies into the system.

## MAKING REIMBURSEMENT EASY

When it comes to reimbursing public safety agencies for their major disaster efforts, Washington and private sector organizations often work on the “respond now, get paid later” principle. This is why accurate, transparent record keeping of all staff hours (especially overtime) is an absolute must during any cost recovery situation. If the data isn’t there to back up your public safety agency’s claim, the payor may question your agency’s accountability, and you may not be reimbursed for resources and materials.

This is where an automated staff management system like Workforce TeleStaff can make a real difference. With these tools in place, employee hours associated with disaster response are recorded independently in the system, which can generate internal audits and reports for command staff, as well as produce custom reports to meet the reimbursement criteria of various government and private sector agencies. This makes it easy for public



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**— Denver Police Chief Gerald Whitman**

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safety leaders to compile and file complete, accurate reimbursement claims after the fact.

In line with major disaster reimbursements, Workforce TeleStaff has the functionality to populate cost recovery financial reports immediately following a disaster for faster and more accurate repayments. This reduces the amount of time a public safety agency must carry these costs on its books, ensuring that disaster response doesn't devour too much of the agency's overall operating budget.

## **REAL-WORLD RESULTS**

Many public safety agencies have effectively implemented Workforce TeleStaff to automate their staff scheduling and crisis management functions with positive results.

For instance, after reviewing its response to the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon, the Arlington County Fire Department in Virginia decided the agency needed an automated method to manage future situations more effectively. They chose Workforce Telestaff to do the job.

“The Kronos TeleStaff solution would have saved hours of staff time tracking personnel at the Pentagon incident site and made the callback process much easier to handle,” said ACFD Captain Kenneth Johnson.

When the Denver Police Department was tasked with handling the Democratic National Convention, DPD leadership knew they didn't have enough personnel nor the management infrastructure to handle the

job, so to help with the policing, the DPD teamed up with 57 agencies, including the Secret Service, the Pentagon, the FBI and the National Guard.

To help with human resources management and to get reimbursed for their own staffing, DPD deployed Workforce TeleStaff.

“Denver's law enforcement process for the DNC was so successful that it has been recommended as a model for other cities planning large events,” said DPD Chief Gerald Whitman. “Our use of the Kronos TeleStaff solution was a key to our planning for and managing the outside agency personnel staffing process.”

After an explosion aboard British Petroleum's Deepwater Horizon oil rig 50 miles off the Louisiana shore killed 11, injured 17 and created the worst oil spill in American history oil dispersed across more than 120 miles in the Gulf of Mexico and had come ashore onto the beaches, requiring a massive cleanup effort.

Escambia County EMS in Florida was contracted to be the sole provider of medical aid for the cleanup. It had to serve crews removing oil from 100-plus miles of shoreline ranging from the Louisiana/Alabama state line to Santa Rosa County in the western Florida Panhandle.

To provide 22 paramedics and EMTs at aid stations on shore and at sea 24 hours a day, ECEMS needed crisis staffing help. Fortunately, sister agency Escambia County



Fire-Rescue had been using Workforce TeleStaff for four years and suggested to ECEMS that they implement TeleStaff immediately to automate scheduling and notifications.

Within hours of contacting the Kronos TeleStaff technical team, Escambia County EMS had its data merged with fire personnel information, allowing the EMS agency to assign personnel to the cleanup in an efficient and effective manner.

ECEMS continues to schedule its crews with Workforce TeleStaff, saving time and money.

"Scheduling used to consume nine hours a day when I was working with a staff of 36.

Now we're at a staff of 122," said ECEMS Lt. Stephen Boothe. "But since we've had the Kronos TeleStaff solution up, I can honestly say it takes us maybe five minutes a day."

### THE BOTTOM LINE

An automated staff management solution like Kronos' **Workforce TeleStaff** is an efficient, effective and reliable way to manage crisis staffing before, during and after such events, streamlining the process and freeing those in charge for other, more important public safety duties – and helping to ensure that agencies get fully reimbursed once the crisis is over.



*Kronos is a leading provider of workforce management and human capital management cloud solutions. Tens of thousands of organizations in more than 100 countries – including half of the Fortune 1000 and over 2,500 public sector customers – use Kronos every day. For more about Kronos Workforce TeleStaff for Public Safety, please visit [www.kronos.com/publicsafety](http://www.kronos.com/publicsafety).*

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