

## **APPARATUS STAFFING POLICY**

Issued by: Montgomery County Fire and Rescue [Commission] Service  
Regulation No. [14-90AM] 25-08

Authority: Code Section 21-4B(e)(3)

Supersedes: Regulation No. 14-90AM

Council Review : Method (2) under Code Section 2A-15  
Register Vol. 25, No.

Effective Date: [February 11, 1993]

**SUMMARY:** This Regulation [establishes staffing levels for fire and rescue apparatus to ensure personnel] is being amended to enhance personnel safety and operational efficiency on all fire and rescue incidents. [The regulation has been amended to require that personnel must be at least 18 years of age and certified as a Maryland EMT-B to count towards minimum staffing on MICUs or ambulances].

**DEADLINES:** Montgomery County Register Comment: December 31, 2008

**BACKGROUND:** Adequate staffing levels of qualified personnel on fire and rescue apparatus are necessary to ensure the safety of all personnel, and to facilitate the efficient delivery of fire and rescue services. [Levels of desirable as well as minimum staffing have been determined and are set forth in this regulation.]

**Sec. 1. Purpose.** [The purpose of this Regulation to establish appropriate staffing levels and qualifications of personnel for fire and rescue apparatus.] This Regulation is being amended to increase the number of personnel who staff MCFRS apparatus by adding qualified personnel to the minimum staffing levels on primary units, as determined by the Fire Chief. This staffing level is the minimum level, as recommended in fire and rescue industry standards, including National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1500, *Standard on Occupational Safety and Health Program*, and NFPA Standard 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments.*

The Fire Chief has implemented a new initiative to staff all primary units with four-

person staffing, and has issued Fire Chief's General Orders designating certain apparatus to comply with this staffing plan. Implementing this requirement is also consistent with provisions in the Integrated Emergency Command Structure, Executive Regulation 16-05AM, and the Certification Standards for Training, Experience, and Credentialing Requirements Executive Regulation #21-06AM. This initiative will continue until all primary units have completed the four-person staffing requirement. [Adherence to this regulation will help to ensure the safety of all personnel and provide for the efficient delivery of fire, rescue, and emergency medical services.]

**Section 2. Applicability.** This Regulation applies to [the Corporations, the Department, and] all MCFRS fire, rescue, and emergency medical service personnel, both career and volunteer.

**Sec. 3. Definitions.**

- [a. Apparatus. Engines, Ladder Trucks, Rescue Squads, Extrication Units, Brush Trucks, Mobile Intensive Care Units (MICUs), Ambulances, and special units.]
- a. **AFRA.** Acronym for **ALS First Responder Apparatus.**
- [b. Certified. Certified by the Fire and Rescue Commission as eligible to serve at a specific rank in accordance with the Fire and Rescue Commission regulation on the Minimum Training Requirements and Certification Standards.]
- b. **ALS Provider.** An individual who is Maryland-licensed and Montgomery County-credentialed to provide EMT-P or Cardiac Rescue Technician (CRT or CRT99) emergency medical services.
- [c. Corporation. A fire and rescue Corporation established in the County, authorized to provide fire, rescue, or emergency medical services.]
- c. **Advanced Life Support Unit (ALS Unit).** An ambulance staffed by at least one Montgomery County-credentialed and Maryland-licensed emergency medical services provider at the level of EMT-P, CRT or CRT99, and one EMT-B provider.
- [d. Department. Department of Fire and Rescue Services.]
- [a]d. **Apparatus.** Engines, Aerial Units, Rescue Squads, Brush Trucks, Advanced Life Support (ALS) Units, Basic Life Support (BLS) Units, and Special Units.

- [e] Desired Staffing Level. The desired minimum number of qualified personnel to staff a specific emergency vehicle.]
- e. **BLS (Basic Life Support) Provider.** An individual who is Maryland-licensed and County-credentialed to provide EMT-B level emergency medical service.
- [f. Emergency Incident. An incident requiring the dispatch of a fire or rescue unit by the Emergency Communications Center (ECC).]
- f. **Basic Life Support (BLS) Unit.** An ambulance staffed by at least two Maryland-Certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) who provide basic life support level emergency medical service.
- [g. Minimum Staffing Level. The least number of qualified personnel required to staff specified apparatus.]
- g. **Desired Staffing Level.** The desired minimum number of qualified personnel to staff a specific emergency vehicle.
- [h. MICU. Mobile Intensive Care Unit.]
- [f]h. **Emergency Incident.** Any event requiring the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) to dispatch a fire or rescue unit.
- [i. Personnel. Volunteer or career Firefighter/Rescuers, Rescuers, or Medical Attendants who are certified at the training level required for the position assigned.]
- i. **Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS).** The operational chain of command and rank structure that integrates all fire and rescue services personnel, both career and volunteer, who have met the applicable training, experience, certification, and credentialing requirements.
- [j] Primary Unit. Primary units are engines, ladder trucks, rescue squads and extrication units that have been dispatched, or are available to be dispatched to an emergency incident.]
- i. **IECS-Certified.** The status indicating an individual's eligibility to serve at a specific rank level, as noted in the *IECS Executive Regulation*, and the *Certification Standards for Training, Experience, and Credentialing Requirements Executive Regulation*.
- [k] Primary Unit Officer. Individual certified as a Firefighter/Rescuer III, Rescuer III, or higher level.]

- k. **Minimum Staffing Level.** The least number of qualified personnel required to staff specified apparatus.
- l. **Personnel.** For the purposes of this regulation, all active IECS-certified firefighter/rescuer and emergency medical service providers, including volunteers and employees of the local fire and rescue departments and County Merit System employees of the MCFRS.
- m. **Primary Unit.** Engines, aerial units, and rescue squads that have been dispatched, or are available to be dispatched to an incident.
- n. **Primary Unit Officer.** [Individual certified as a Firefighter/Rescuer III, Rescuer III, or higher level.] An individual certified at the rank of Master Firefighter/Rescuer or higher rank, as specified in the *Integrated Emergency Command Structure* Executive Regulation. However, in extenuating circumstances, a Firefighter/Rescuer III may act as a Primary Unit Officer.
- o. **Undermanned Unit.** Apparatus responding to an incident that has IECS-certified personnel on board, but does not meet the minimum number of qualified staffing.
- p. **Understaffed Unit.** Apparatus responding to an incident whose crew does not meet the minimum staffing number of qualified personnel.

**Section 4. Policy.** It is the policy of the Fire [and Rescue Commission] Chief to [ensure the safety of fire and rescue personnel and] enhance the efficient delivery of fire, rescue, and emergency medical services on all **emergency incidents** by establishing [minimum] **staffing levels** of qualified **personnel** for all **apparatus**. [The] Those required [minimum] **staffing levels** are specified in this Regulation[: will promote these objectives].

- a. **Minimum Staffing Levels.** The **minimum staffing levels** required for the following **apparatus** are:

Engines- three **personnel**  
 [Ladder Trucks] Aerial Units- three **personnel**  
 Rescue Squads - three **personnel**  
 [Extrication Units - three personnel]  
 Brush Truck- one person  
 [MICUs] **ALS Units**-[three] two **personnel**  
 [Ambulance] **BLS Units**- two **personnel**  
Tankers – one person

## Special Units - one **person**

1. To determine whether **minimum staffing levels** have been achieved for a specific **apparatus**, the following standard applies:
  - A. **Personnel** must be at least [16] 17 years of age and **IECS-certified** at the Firefighter/Rescuer [I] II [or Rescuer I] level to count towards **minimum staffing levels** for Engines, [Ladder Trucks,] Aerial Units, Rescue Squads, [Extrication Units,] Brush Trucks, and Special Units.
  - B. **Personnel** must be at least 18 years of age and **IECS-certified** as a Maryland EMT-[A] B to count towards **minimum staffing** on [MICUs] ALS Units or [ambulances] BLS Units.
  - C. A **primary unit officer** must be included in the **minimum staffing levels** [in] of all **primary units**.
  - D. At least one Maryland [CRT] paramedic and one CRT or CRT99, or EMT-P or EMT-B must be included in the **minimum staffing levels** on all [MICUs] ALS Units and AFRAs.
2. **Personnel** who are IECS-certified at the Firefighter/Rescuer I [or Rescuer] level[s] may be used as supplemental staffing on all **apparatus** but [do] will not count toward **minimum staffing levels**.
3. **Apparatus** responding with less than the **minimum staffing level** must notify the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) that [it] the unit is responding **understaffed/undermanned**, and state the number of qualified **personnel**, including the officer, on the **apparatus**.
  - A. The ECC must dispatch an additional unit to supplement each **understaffed/undermanned unit** [only after consulting with the Incident Commander].
  - B. If the additional unit responds with less than the **minimum staffing level**, but with enough qualified **personnel** to complete the **minimum staffing level** of the original **understaffed/undermanned unit**, it will not be necessary for ECC to dispatch an additional unit.
4. [MICUs] ALS Units and [ambulances] BLS Units [should] must not respond if staffed with fewer than two **personnel**.

- b. **Desired Staffing Levels.** When sufficient **personnel** are available, the **desired staffing levels** for **apparatus** are [at least]:

Engines- four **personnel**  
[Ladder Trucks] **Aerial Units**- four **personnel**  
Rescue Squads- four **personnel**  
[Extrication Units- four personnel]  
Brush Trucks- two **personnel**  
[MICUs] **ALS Units**- three **personnel**  
[Ambulances] **BLS Units**- three **personnel**  
**Tankers** – two **personnel**  
Special Units- two **personnel**

- c. If a **primary unit** responds with the assigned four-person staffing, but because of the nature of the incident the staffing is reduced (i.e., **ALS provider**, EMT-B, etc.) to three qualified **personnel**, the **primary unit** will remain in service as a **minimum-staffed** unit, in accordance with this Regulation.
- d. The **desired staffing level** for [MICUs] **ALS Units** is at least [one] **two** Maryland **Certified** EMT-[A] **B's**, [one CRT,] and one [EMT-P] **ALS Provider**.

#### **Section 5. Responsibilities.**

- a. The [Corporations, with the assistance of the Department,] **Fire Chief** must [attempt to] ensure that **minimum staffing levels** are available for [all] **apparatus**, in accordance with this Regulation.
- b. All **MCFRS personnel** must [ensure compliance] comply with this [policy] Regulation by reporting to the ECC any **apparatus** responding with less than the **minimum staffing level** as “responding **understaffed/undermanned.**”

**Section 6. Implementation and Enforcement.** The Fire Chief is the implementation and enforcement authority for all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

**Section [6] 7. Severability.** If a court of final appeal holds that any part of this Regulation is invalid, that ruling does not affect the validity of other parts of the Regulation.

**Section [7] 8. Effective Date.** This Regulation is effective on the date the County Council adopts a resolution approving it.

[Attest: George Giebel, Chairman, Fire and Rescue Commission]

Recommended:

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Thomas W. Carr, Jr., Fire Chief  
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

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Date

Approved:

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Isiah Leggett, County Executive  
Montgomery County, Maryland

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Date