



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

NO. 1104

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DATE May 17, 1993

TITLE EMERGENCY VEHICULAR RESPONSE FOR PERSONNEL OUTSIDE THE BUREAU OF OPERATIONS

DIRECTOR APPROVAL

## PURPOSE

- 1.0 To establish guidelines for emergency vehicular response by Department of Fire and Rescue Services personnel from other than the Bureau of Operations.

## APPLICABILITY

- 2.0 This policy pertains to all Department Personnel except the Bureau of Operations.

- 2.1  This policy was developed in cooperation with the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1664.

## DEFINITIONS

- 3.0 Emergency Vehicle - Defined in Sections 11-118 and 21-106 of the Maryland Vehicle Law 1992. (Attachment 7.0)
- 3.1 Operator - Drivers of County vehicles who possess a valid drivers license for the vehicle in question.

## POLICY

- 4.0 It is the policy of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services to provide a quick response to emergency calls where lives are endangered or where a crime is in progress. However, consideration must be given to the hazards involved in an emergency response so that motorists, pedestrians, other emergency units and the operator are not endangered. Operators of emergency vehicles may be held liable for negligence.

## RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.0 All personnel of the Department are responsible to maintain the appropriate motor vehicle operator's license and abide by this policy and procedure.

## PROCEDURE

- 6.0 Prior to driving a County emergency vehicle, all operators must check the operation of;
  - a. all safety equipment, including lights, brakes, horn, seat belts, etc., and



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- b. all visual and audible warning devices including warning lights, sirens, air horns, etc.
- 6.1 Personnel discovering defects which may impair the safe operation of the vehicle, must report the defect immediately to their supervisor. The vehicle should not be operated until the deficiency has been corrected.
- 6.2 All personnel must use seat belts when operating or riding in County vehicles.
- 6.3 Personnel operating a County vehicle must not permit persons other than authorized personnel to ride in the vehicle except;
- a. in the performance of duties;
  - b. in conjunction with authorized Department programs; or
  - c. as otherwise authorized by County Policy.
- 6.4 Personnel on routine patrol, traveling to business meetings, inspections, training sessions, or otherwise operating in a non-emergency or off duty status must obey all traffic laws and drive in a manner so as to enhance the public view of the Department.
- 6.5 When dispatched on an incident by the Emergency Communications Center, personnel may respond with lights and siren in accordance with Maryland Motor Vehicle laws. Such incidents may include:
- a. a bombing or suspicious package;
  - b. a call for "officer in trouble";
  - c. a fatal fire;
  - d. a multi-alarm fire or fire involving serious injury to personnel or civilians;
  - e. a traffic stop associated with any of the above; or
  - f. any other incidents to which personnel are dispatched by ECC.
- 6.6 When responding as the nearest available unit, the operator must advise ECC.
- 6.7 Vehicle operators must not participate in vehicular pursuit situations which require;



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- a. exceeding the posted speed limit; or
- b. violation of traffic signals or devices.

- 6.8 Upon arrival at an emergency scene, the operator must position the vehicle so that it does not interfere with the operation of other emergency vehicles, equipment, or operations.
- 6.9 Civilian employees of this Department must not respond with warning lights and sirens unless specifically instructed by the Emergency Communications Center.

#### ATTACHMENT

- 7.0 Maryland Vehicle Law 1992, Sections 11-118 and 21-106.

#### CANCELLATION

- 8.0 DFRS Policy \$1104 entitled "Emergency Vehicular Response" issued April 12, 1989, is hereby rescinded.

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ATTACHMENT 7.0

MARYLAND MOTOR VEHICLE LAW 1992  
SECTIONS 11-118 and 21-106

Subsection 11-118. Emergency vehicle.

"Emergency vehicle" means any of the following vehicles that are designated by the Administration as entitled to the exemptions and privileges set forth in the Maryland Vehicle Law for emergency vehicles:

- (1) Vehicles of federal, State, or local law enforcement agencies;
- (2) Vehicles of volunteer fire companies, rescue squads, fire departments, the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, and the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute;
- (3) State vehicles used in response to oil or hazardous materials spills;
- (4) State vehicles designated for emergency use by the Commission of Correction;
- (5) Ambulances; and
- (6) Special vehicles funded or provided by federal, State, or local government and used for emergency or rescue purposes in this State. (An. Code 1957, art. 66 1/2, subsection 1-103; 1977, ch. 14, subsection 2; ch. 222; 1983, chs. 309, 361; 1989, ch. 291, subsection 2; ch. 343.

Subsection 21-106. Emergency vehicles

- (a) Circumstances for which privileges granted - Subject to the conditions stated in this section, the driver of an emergency vehicles registered in any state may exercise the privileges set forth in this section while:
  - (1) Responding to an emergency call;
  - (2) Pursuing a violator or suspected violator of the law; or
  - (3) Responding to, but not while returning from, a fire alarm.
- (b) Enumeration of privileges - Under the circumstances stated in subsection (a) of this section, the driver of an emergency vehicle may:
  - (1) Park or stand without regard to the other provisions of this title;
  - (2) Pass a red or stop signal, a stop sign, or a yield sign, but only after slowing down as necessary for safety;
  - (3) Exceed any maximum speed limit, but only so long as the driver does not endanger life or property; and

ATTACHMENT 7.0 (continued)

MARYLAND MOTOR VEHICLE LAW 1992  
SECTIONS 11-118 and 21-106

- (4) Disregard any traffic control device or regulation governing direction of movement or turning in a specified direction.
- (c) Use of audible and visual signals required. - (1) The privileges set forth in this section apply only while the emergency vehicle is using audible and visual signals that meet the requirements of subsection 22-218 of this article, except that an emergency vehicle operated as a police vehicle need not be equipped with or display the visual signals.
  - (2) The driver of an emergency vehicle may not use flashing lights or a bell, siren, or exhaust whistle while returning from an emergency call or fire alarm except that fire apparatus carrying standing firemen may use flashing lights that are visible only to the rear.
- (d) Driver not relieved from duty of care. - This section does not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons. (An. Code 1957, art. 66 1/2, subsection 11-106; 1977, ch. 14, subsection 2; 1982, ch. 815.)

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