

Emergency Response

301.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe and appropriate response to emergencies while maintaining the safety of district members and the public by requiring operators of district vehicles to conform to applicable Illinois laws and regulations during an emergency response.

301.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Authorized emergency vehicle - District vehicles of the fire department as authorized by 625 ILCS 5/1-105.

Emergency response - Any call for service or assistance involving fire, explosion or violent rupture; human rescue; human entrapment; illness or injury; hazardous materials release or threat of contamination; flooding; threatened or actual acts of violence; any explosive, bomb or threatened bombing; any act of terrorism; any natural disaster; or any other circumstance that presents a threat to life-safety or to property.

301.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Richmond Township Fire Protection District to appropriately respond to all emergency calls.

301.3 EMERGENCY CALLS

Fire personnel dispatched to an emergency shall proceed immediately, shall continuously operate emergency lighting equipment and shall sound the siren as reasonably necessary (625 ILCS 5/12-601(b)).

Responding with emergency lights and siren does not relieve personnel of the duty to continue to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, or protect the driver from the consequences of his/her reckless disregard for the safety of others (625 ILCS 5/11-205(e)).

Personnel should only respond with emergency lights and siren when dispatched to an emergency or when circumstances reasonably indicate an emergency response is required.

Personnel not authorized to respond with emergency lights and siren shall observe all traffic laws and proceed without the use of emergency lights and siren.

301.4 MULTIPLE EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSES

When more than one apparatus responds to an emergency, emergency vehicle operators should remain alert to the presence of other emergency vehicles and exercise due caution. Personnel must further exercise due caution in recognizing that traffic yielding to one emergency vehicle may not expect other emergency vehicles to follow.

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301.5 INITIATING AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

If a Person In Charge (PIC) or member believes an emergency response to any call is appropriate, the Person In Charge (PIC) or member shall ensure McHenry County Sheriff Dispatch is immediately notified.

301.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPONDING PERSONNEL

Authorized emergency vehicle operators shall exercise sound judgment and care, with due regard for life and property, while operating a vehicle en route to an emergency response.

In addition, emergency vehicle operators should reduce speed at all street intersections and should come to a complete stop at all blind street intersections or intersections where there is either a red light, a flashing red light or a stop sign. Emergency vehicle operators should also come to a complete stop at intersections whenever they reasonably believe they cannot account for traffic in approaching lanes or when vehicles have not yielded the right-of-way. After coming to a complete stop, emergency vehicle operators should only proceed when it is safe to do so.

During a response to an emergency call, the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may, with lights and sirens activated (625 ILCS 5/11-205(c)(d)):

- (a) Park or stand.
- (b) Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be required and necessary for safe operation.
- (c) Exceed the maximum speed limit so long as the driver does not endanger life or property.
- (d) Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

The decision to continue an emergency response is at the discretion of the authorized emergency vehicle operator or Person In Charge (PIC) an/or Officer. If, in the judgment of either individual, the roadway conditions or traffic congestion do not permit such a response without unreasonable risk, the response may be continued without the use of red lights and siren and at the legal speed limit. In such an event, the Person In Charge (PIC) and/or Officer should ensure McHenry County Sheriff Dispatch is promptly notified. Personnel shall also discontinue the emergency response when directed by any supervisor.

301.7 FAILURE OF EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

If the emergency equipment on the vehicle should fail to operate, the vehicle operator must terminate the emergency response and respond accordingly. In all cases, the Shift Officer shall notify McHenry County Sheriff Dispatch of the equipment failure so that another apparatus may be assigned to the emergency response.