

Genesee County Association of Fire Chief's Recommended Operating Guidelines

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SUBJECT: Move up and Emergency Driving 86-1

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all Genesee County Fire Departments who may respond emergency apparatus to an emergency scene, or provide emergency apparatus to a mutual aid call or an emergency coordination situation.

An emergency is defined as a sudden and unexpected turn of events calling for immediate action.

PURPOSE

The Genesee County Association of Fire Chief's shall provide for the safety of all fire service personnel by establishment of a county wide guideline for emergency driving of all emergency apparatus.

All emergency response situations are hazardous and increase the potential for becoming involved in\or causing serious accidents. While the importance of a timely response is recognized, it is better to respond safely to the scene of an emergency, than to needlessly injure or kill fire personnel or a member of the general public, thus not completing the response.

RESPONSE CODES FOR EMERGENCY DRIVING

During an emergency response, by a fire department, whether the response is within the department's jurisdiction or a mutual aid call or an emergency coordination effort, not all emergency responses necessitate complete compliance of light and siren applications.

The following national light and siren codes for emergency vehicles shall be adhered to by all county fire departments when responding:

No Lights No Siren/Code 1 (one) shall mean a response with an emergency vehicle with no lights and\or siren in operation and all traffic laws under the Michigan Vehicle Code must be adhered to by the driver\engineer\operator.

Lights and Siren/Code 3 (three) shall mean a response with an emergency vehicle with lights and siren in operation to an emergency situation. The driver/operator is required to comply with Public Act 300 of 1949 during their emergency response.

MOTOR VEHICLE CODE EXEMPTIONS

The following sections of the Michigan Vehicle Code, Public Act 300 of the Public Acts of 1949, as amended, provides exemptions to certain traffic laws while responding to an emergency situation.

Section 603 states in part that the driver\engineer\operator of an emergency vehicle with lights and siren in operation may:

"proceed past a red light or stop signal, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operations";

"exceed the prima facie speed limit so long as he\she does not endanger life or property";

"disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in a specified direction".

Section 632 permits the emergency response vehicle, while responding to an emergency situation, to exceed the speed limit, however the driver\engineer\operator is not protected from consequences of a reckless disregard of the safety of others.

Section 653 states in part that other drivers must yield right-of-way to emergency vehicles which are operating their lights and siren. However, this does not relieve the driver\engineer\operator\ from driving with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway.

MUTUAL AID RESPONSE

During an incident where it may be necessary for other fire departments to move into vacant fire stations outside their jurisdiction, to provide fire protection with manpower or equipment, the responding department will do so in a Code 1 (one) response.

If an emergency occurs in an area that the assisting department is going to or providing fire protection for while in route to or while at the station, this department can upgrade their response to a Code 3 (three) emergency response.

EMERGENCY COORDINATION RESPONSE

When the Genesee County Emergency Coordination System has been activated, and the coordinators request emergency response by fire departments to given situations or locations, the coordinators will notify the fire department as to the emergency response code the fire department will respond under at the time of dispatch.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

All fire apparatus shall conform to O.S.H.A., part 74, Fire Fighting. Fire apparatus shall be equipped as follows under equipment rule 7421:

- Windshield wipers;
- Head lights, tail lights, stop lights, and back up lights, and a back up alarm;
- Horn, and overhead emergency lights with siren;
- Slip resistant steps, tailboard and work platforms;
- Seatbelts, for all seated employees
- Seatbelts shall be used when the apparatus is in motion.

ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of this guideline will be the direct responsibility of the and the officers and firefighters of the member departments within Genesee County.