



CRYSTAL POLICE DEPARTMENT

Department Policy Manual

TITLE: Emergency Operation of Police Vehicles
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PURPOSE

The Crystal Police Department utilizes police vehicles in emergency situations. This policy regulates the use of those vehicles in emergency situations.

DEFINITIONS

EMERGENCY – when the immediate presence of police is required to:

- Protect a person from death or serious injury: a situation in which the physical safety and well-being of an individual is directly jeopardized; a “life and death” situation.
- Provide emergency medical treatment to the victims of accidents, illnesses or life-threatening situations.
- Assist another law enforcement officer(s) in a potentially dangerous situation: a situation in which personal injury is likely to occur if assistance is withheld or response is unnecessarily delayed. Included are those instances when a potentially dangerous assignment necessitates additional police officers at the scene.
- Make the timely apprehension of those suspected of being involved in a criminal activity. However, this is only justified when the necessity of immediate apprehension outweighs the level of risk created by the emergency operation of the police vehicle.

AUTHORIZED EMERGENCY VEHICLE – for purposes of this general order and pursuant to MSS §169.01 Subd.5, an authorized emergency vehicle is a vehicle equipped and identified as such and is publicly owned for use by a police officer for law enforcement work. Emergency equipment, consistent with applicable state statutes, shall consist of at least one red light to the front and a siren.

POLICY

RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

All emergency vehicle operations shall be conducted in strict accordance with existing state statutes. Additionally, police officers engaged in emergency vehicle operations shall utilize both audible (siren) and visual (emergency lights) emergency warning equipment in response to an emergency situation unless provided for in the exceptions in this policy.

In responding to an emergency situation, the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may disregard certain traffic regulations if both the siren and red lights are operating. The use of either the siren or red lights alone is not permitted when responding as an authorized emergency vehicle.

All personnel operating departmental vehicles shall exercise due regard for the safety of all persons. No assignment shall be of such importance, and no task shall be expedited with such emphasis, that the

principles of safety become secondary. There are no tasks in the department of such importance that they justify the reckless disregard for the safety of innocent persons. Departmental personnel will be held strictly accountable for the consequences of reckless disregard for the safety of others.

The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle when responding to an emergency call, upon approaching a red or stop signal or any stop sign, shall slow down as necessary for safety, but may proceed cautiously past such red or stop sign or signal after sounding siren and displaying red lights.

Responding police officer should attempt to coordinate response to emergencies. Upon arrival at the scene the first police officer(s) may request additional assistance if needed or the on-duty supervisor can so direct additional units to proceed to the location.

In a multi-vehicle response to an emergency call (i.e. other police units, fire trucks or ambulances), as a general rule, the operator of one vehicle should not pass another unless there is communication between the drivers or unless the vehicle to the front has become inoperable.

It is recognized that there are incidents which require an immediate response but the use of the siren could have a detrimental effect, (e.g., crimes in progress or hostage situations). Emergency lights without siren may be used when necessary to enhance the overall safety of the police response. The police officer operating the authorized emergency vehicle shall take into account the added risks of responding without the addition of the siren.

Consistent with MSS §169.03 Subd5, no driver of an authorized emergency vehicle shall assume any special privilege except when such vehicle is operated in response to an emergency call or in immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law.

The Crystal Police Department will not provide emergency escorts to private vehicles or other emergency vehicles (i.e., ambulances). Police officers may assist with traffic control at intersections to aid with the passage of emergency vehicles.