

Cape Elizabeth Fire Department Policy & Procedure Manual

Policy: Apparatus Operations

Section: 7.100: General

Policy # 7.104

Date Effective: 01-01-2006

EMERGENCY RESPONSE & OPERATION:

Apparatus

All operators, officers and passengers **will be seat belted** whenever the apparatus is in motion. Personnel providing medical care in the passenger compartment of an ambulance will wear seatbelts when it does not limit their ability to provide effective patient care. **Riding while standing is strictly forbidden, as well as riding on tailboards and running boards.**

Operators will obey all traffic regulations in accordance with Title 29-A Section 2056. Do not use excessive speed. It is better to take a little longer and get there, than to have an accident. Drivers should govern their own choice of speed according to a "Basic Speed Rule," which can be stated simply:

"Never exceed a speed which is reasonable and proper for existing conditions, even where the law permits a speed higher than that at which you are driving. Safe, prudent speeds vary with such factors as driver reaction time, driver condition, and brake efficiency, condition of pavement, weather, and traffic congestion. A speed, which is reasonable when there are few persons or vehicles on the street, may be excessive in heavy traffic, or at hours when school children must cross the streets. Over the same stretch of roadway, speeds that are safe at certain times may be unsafe at other times."

All department vehicles must come to a stop at red traffic lights, blinking red lights blinking school bus lights and stop signs.

Whenever approaching an intersection that may be used by other emergency vehicles responding to the same call, use your radio to inform the other apparatus of your approach. Do not rely on the fact that you are well ahead of other responding equipment. Always expect the unexpected. Stop if in question.

Normally all department vehicles responding from one station shall take the same route to an alarm. If more than one vehicle is using the same street when responding to or returning from an alarm, they shall do so in single file. No apparatus shall pass another unless the latter is disabled or signaled to pass.

To guard against accidents when responding to alarms, the sirens on department vehicles must be sounded as necessary. However, discretion should be used when it is consistent with safety.

The red lights and headlights on all emergency equipment shall be kept lighted at all

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times when responding to emergency calls.

All department vehicles parked on the street should have all red lights, front and rear, and directional signals "ON" as a warning of their presence to approaching traffic. Discretion shall be used so that batteries are not unnecessarily expended.

Apparatus shall not pass through a red light or stop sign without stopping, checking traffic, and using the siren. Travel against traffic on a one-way street should be avoided.

The driver should make every effort to develop safe and courteous driving habits. Public opinion of the department can be greatly influenced by the driving habits of the department member behind the steering wheel.

Remember: when you are driving any fire department vehicle, to the public - who is always watching you - **YOU REPRESENT THE ENTIRE FIRE DEPARTMENT.**

Priority of Apparatus Response

On known structure fires an Engine should respond before the Ladder when leaving Town Center Station. The Ladder will respond before the second Engine. Rescue will respond after the Ladder unless patient injury has been reported at the scene. Drivers should position the Rescue so additional apparatus and hose lines will not block it in.

When responding to reports of patient injury at motor vehicle accidents and other non-hazardous condition emergencies the Rescue will respond immediately, and will be given right of way.

Personal Vehicles

As an emergency responder in a personal vehicle, members have no other rights than any other citizen. Thus, members must obey all traffic regulations. Excessive speed, failure to stop or yield at an intersection, etc., is not a right. The use of a courtesy "Red Light" does not give members the right to violate traffic laws, but does serve, as a warning to the public that members are on the way to an emergency and extra courtesy should be extended to the member, but in no way has to be.

Use of courtesy red lights is authorized only in accordance with State laws & the following:

The State of Maine Motor Vehicle Laws, "Title 29-A, section. 2054.2. F.2" is very specific in what is permitted. All department personnel must abide by the law.

"The municipal officers or a municipal official designated by the municipal officers, with the approval of the fire chief, may authorize an active member of a municipal or volunteer fire department to use one red or combination red and white flashing auxiliary light mounted as near as practicable above the front registration plate on the front of the vehicle, behind the rearview mirror or on the

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dashboard or 2 flashing red or combination red and white auxiliary lights mounted on the front of the vehicle above the front bumper and below the hood. The light or lights may be displayed but may be used only while the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or other emergency. A light mounted on the dashboard or behind the rearview mirror must be shielded so that the emitted light does not interfere with the operator's vision. The use of lights may be revoked at any time by the fire chief."

To utilize a red light while responding to calls personnel must have a signed and authorized "Red Light" permit from the Chief of Department.

The only Department personnel authorized to display and operate additional emergency lights on their vehicles are the Chief Officers.

Sirens & other audible warning devices are prohibited in accordance with State law on all personal vehicles, with the exception of the Chief Officers.

Once at the scene, be sure all personal vehicles are kept out of the way and do not impede the movement of apparatus. If on a narrow road, all personal vehicles should park on same side of the roadway and not impede emergency vehicles.

AUTHORIZED DRIVERS

Chief of Department Responsibility

The Chief of Department is responsible for implementing and monitoring a program of driver selection, training, and supervision, which will allow for the safe and efficient operation of emergency vehicles that make up the apparatus of the Fire Department. In order for this responsibility to be carried out, certain tasks are delegated to company officers and department staff as needed to facilitate a comprehensive program.

Company Captain Responsibility

Company Captains shall maintain a list of probationary and authorized drivers who may operate apparatus assigned to their company. They shall designate personnel, officers, department staff, or consultants who will act as trainer-evaluators. They shall see that appropriate record keeping is kept for the program. They shall supervise & schedule driver training and review driving problems as warranted. The Company Captains, after notifying the Chief of Department, may suspend the emergency vehicle driving privileges of personnel under their authority for just cause.

Safety Officer Responsibility

The Department Safety Officer will assist the Chief of Department in the maintenance and updating the program and development and/or selection of training materials. The Safety Officer will have a lead role in the promotion of safe apparatus operation and operator behavior.

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Safety Committee Responsibility

The Safety Committee will annually review the overall program and suggest improvements as warranted. The committee will independently review any collisions with apparatus and render a report identifying significant factors and preventive measures.

Personnel Responsibility

Personnel who wish to be authorized drivers must possess at a minimum an active State of Maine Class C license and be 18 years of age. Personnel who maintain a commercial driver's license (CDL) or a military license will not be exempt from this training program.

AUTHORIZED DRIVER SELECTION

Driver's License Record Review

The driver's license record for personnel will be reviewed during the initial employment, and when deemed necessary by the Chief of Department or his/her designee. The finding of an adverse driving record shall solely be the responsibility of the Chief of Department, and may be taken in conjunction with the Town of Cape Elizabeth auto liability insurance carrier. The time element involved, violations, accidents, or a significant violation (OAS, OUI, HO, DTE, etc.) may all be taken into consideration for such a finding of "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory".

License Suspension / Revocation Notification

Personnel performing driving duties for the Cape Elizabeth Fire Department shall immediately inform their Company Captain(s), who will in turn notify the Chief of Department, of any suspension or revocation of their driver's license and the reason. It is to be understood by all personnel that the privilege to operate any department apparatus is also suspended pending review by the Chief of Department, and is not automatically restored in line with Bureau of Motor Vehicle or Court actions.

Department Prerequisites for Certification

Knowledge of dispatch and apparatus operations procedures.

Knowledge of use of radio system.

Knowledge of local geography, roads and landmarks

Knowledge of laws governing the operation of emergency vehicles (Title 29-A M.S.R.A.)

Knowledge of laws governing use of courtesy red light (Title 29-A M.S.R.A.)

Medical Review

Required Training & Materials

Company Prerequisites for Certification

Knowledge of district / response area and routes

Knowledge of mutual aid areas and routes

Knowledge of vehicle / apparatus

Vehicle operation skills

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Company interview

AUTHORIZED DRIVER TRAINING

E.V.O.C. / A.V.O.C.

The E.V.O.C. / A.V.O.C. component may be completed either within the confines of the Cape Elizabeth Fire Department or may be attended outside the Department where a completion certificate will be issued. E.V.O.C. will meet the standards set forth by Maine Fire Training & Education and A.V.O.C. will meet the standards established by Maine EMS. Cape Elizabeth Fire Department does not require E.V.O.C. / A.V.O.C. for operation of Department vehicles, individual company policies may differ.

Classroom Defensive Driving

A minimum 3-hour, every two years, of classroom defensive driving training shall conform to National Safety Council, FLI Learning Systems, or equivalent course materials and contents.

Practical Driver Training

Every two years, personnel who wish to maintain their authorized driver's status will be required to demonstrate their driving skills on a competency course, specifically designed for the vehicle type they wish to maintain certification in.

Updates to E.V.O.C. / A.V.O.C. & Continued Training

Updates to E.V.O.C. / A.V.O.C. will be made available as required by Maine EMS, Maine Fire Training & Education, and/or applicable Maine State Law. Personnel are encouraged to seek outside offerings related to emergency vehicle operation & safe driving, such as Advanced A.V.O.C., Skid Pan Driving Range, or other available programs.

Vehicle Familiarization

Vehicle familiarization shall be accomplished by trainer-driver review of each vehicle using the check-off-sheet for the particular vehicle to ensure that required information and skills are covered.

Initial Vehicle Operation

Initial vehicle operation will be supervised according to the prior driving experience of personnel. Personnel who have never driven apparatus will be given a large, secure area for driver coaching for the basic movement and control of the apparatus. Personnel that maintain a commercial driver's license (CDL) and have demonstrated experience may be given a limited review with succession to over-the-road work. This training & evaluation must be carried out at the pace of learning and skill development of the student. Turning radius, basic maneuvering, clearances, and backing with a spotter will be covered.

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Initial Over-the-Road Operation

Initial over-the-road operation will evaluate the ability of the driver to control the vehicle in a smooth manner, position the vehicle properly in lanes of travel, use mirrors & all senses to monitor the vehicle and the driving environment, and carry out basic maneuvers (stops, turns, lane changes, etc.) with the vehicle. The trainer shall use check-off-sheets to note progress of driver trainee.

Competency Course

A driving range or competency course of a configuration appropriate for the scope of training may be included as an adjunct during initial driver evaluation. The driving range which is part of the E.V.O.C. / A.V.O.C. course must be completed for certification in said programs. A driving range safety officer shall be designated for any such activity and will be in control of the range at all times. The driving range safety officer has the authority to stop and start vehicles on the course at his/her discretion.

AUTHORIZED DUTY DRIVING TRAINING

Probationary Operation

Company Captains, shall clear personnel after completing prerequisite training, to drive on a probationary status. During this probationary period they will be evaluated for skill to include:

- Road test / competency on main roads
- Road test / competency on side/narrow roads & special sites
- Road test / competency on reoccurring routes (Examples include: Station-to-station, hospitals, boat ramps, mutual-aid stations, dry-hydrants, etc.)
- Functional aspects of the apparatus

Non-Emergency Operation

The above is to be completed during non-emergency mode of operation with the probationary driver operating and an officer or trainer-evaluator in the officer seat. Probationary drivers will not operate apparatus without an officer or trainer-evaluator in the officer seat. The apparatus may be taken out-of-service, and returned to service by swapping out with an authorized driver.

Emergency Operation

Emergency mode driving will be permitted after the company captain determines that:

- Road test competencies (as defined in checklists & probationary operation) have been met.
- Training has been completed (as defined in training section)
- Continued attitude / behavior is appropriate
- Paper work has been completed & signed

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The officer or trainer-evaluator for a minimum of one emergency response will complete a road test competency report for emergency operation. This report will reflect driver performance under emergency mode conditions, concentration on task, control of speed, etc. The Captain, trainer-evaluator, or company rules may require additional responses.

Authorized Driver

Personnel will be authorized to drive after a letter of certification signed by the Company Captain is delivered to the Chief of Department's office with a copy of all records for the new authorized driver.

APPARATUS COLLISIONS

Emergency Mode

A collision involving an emergency vehicle responding to a call with lights and sirens is an extremely serious matter. Upon occurrence of a collision, the driver shall bring the apparatus to an immediate stop, and the officer (or driver) shall check the welfare of self, crew, patient, and any other persons involved in the collision. The officer (or driver) will immediately notify the Public Safety Dispatcher of the collision, location, injuries, and resources needed as soon as humanly possible. The apparatus will stand by for Law Enforcement and any requested medical unit(s). In the event that a patient was being transported, an additional unit must be requested immediately to complete the patient transport. The apparatus is not to be moved unless ordered to do so by Law Enforcement personnel or it inhibits the critical movement of other emergency vehicles at the scene. At no time, will any personnel make any statement of fault to anyone regarding the collision. Statement of fact will only be made to Law Enforcement personnel investigating the accident. All other statements will be made by the Chief of Department or his / her designee.

Non-Emergency Mode

As above, collision during routine driving, returning to quarters, fueling, etc. should result in the stopping of the apparatus, reporting to the Public Safety Dispatcher checking the safety & condition of persons involved, and reporting injuries. At no time, will any personnel make any statement of fault to anyone regarding the collision. Statement of fact will only be made to Law Enforcement personnel investigating the accident. All other statements will be made by the Chief of Department or his / her designee.

Review Process

The Chief of Department or available Deputy Chief (EMS Director) will be notified to respond with jurisdictional Law Enforcement personnel (if outside of Cape Elizabeth town borders) to evaluate the circumstances and driver actions involved. The Shift Commander of the Cape Elizabeth Police Department should also be notified of all collisions involving Fire Department apparatus. The Safety Committee, including the Safety Officer, will perform a post incident review, which may include interviews of

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personnel involved. The committee shall promptly forward its report of findings and preventative recommendations to the Chief of Department.

BACKING OF APPARATUS

General Provisions

It is the responsibility of all personnel to stand clear of any backing apparatus and to warn all pedestrians away from the path of the backing apparatus. Personnel shall also warn the driver of any approaching obstacle, clearance hazards or other hazard.

It is ultimately the driver's responsibility to safely maneuver the apparatus and avoid a collision. The driver shall wait for a spotter, when available, to be in place before attempting to back any piece of apparatus. It is generally the role of the person in the Officer's Seat to get out of the apparatus and spot for the driver. The probationary driver will carry out the spotter role during the initial training so the probationary driver has a clear understanding of the operation.

Station

Spotters, when available, should assist apparatus into stations. The role of the spotter will be to keep vehicle & pedestrian traffic clear of the backing apparatus and prevent fixed object collisions. At NO time will a firefighter be inside the station bay while an apparatus is backing in. This is one of the most common fire fighter fatalities.

Back-up Alarms

Back-up alarms shall be maintained on all Cape Elizabeth Fire Department apparatus, and shall be verified as operational during truck checks and any other routine vehicle maintenance checks.

Back-up Cameras

Vehicles that equipped with back-up cameras will utilize them to assist with backing.

Positioning, Signals & Communication

All spotters will be positioned so they may be viewed from the driver's side of the vehicle. If a driver loses visual contact with the spotter the vehicle will be stopped immediately until visual contact is reestablished.

Signals will be used when the driver can clearly view the spotter. The spotter will use large arm motions to direct the operator. In darkness a flashlight should be utilized.

In the rare event when the apparatus must be backed into a location that a spotter cannot be viewed, a radio should be utilized.

COURTESY RED LIGHT PERMIT

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All members that wish to utilize a courtesy red light in their vehicle must receive a permit from the Chief of Department.

The Chief of Department is the only authorized person in the Department that may authorize the display of a courtesy red light warning device.

The permit must be maintained in the vehicle with the courtesy red light, and multiple permits are required for multiple vehicles.

The Chief of Department may revoke a permit at his/her discretion.

Personnel that operate a courtesy red light without a permit from the Chief of Department may face disciplinary action and may face criminal action by law enforcement officials.