



ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 40.08

TITLE: Emergency Driving

SERIES NUMBER: 40

SERIES TITLE / SUBJECT: Law Enforcement Operations

TOPICS/ REFERENCE: Driving, Emergency, Response

APPENDICIES: A

ORIGINAL / EFFECTIVE ISSUE DATE: April 22, 2005

DATE OF LAST REVISION: May 01, 2013

THIS ORDER REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RECINDED

CALEA STANDARDS: 41.2.1

Policy:

It is the policy of the Rockford Police Department to ensure that emergency operation of police vehicles is done in a manner that provides a reasonable amount of safety for the general public and the police officers involved. The decision to respond using emergency equipment must be based on the particular situation at the time. Emergency motor vehicle response is a serious matter and can potentially cause death, personal injury and/or property damage.

Purpose:

The purpose of this General Order is to establish the Department's policy, procedures and guidelines regarding the operation of motor vehicles in response to emergency calls for services.

These guidelines are not meant to be all-inclusive, since each incident must be dealt with on an individual basis, but are intended as broad guidelines to assist the employees and supervisors involved.

This Order is comprised of the following numbered sections.

- I. Definitions
 - II. Legal Authority
 - III. Department Emergency Response Policies and Procedures
 - IV. Effective Date
 - V. Reviews, Revisions and Cancellations
- Appendices:
- A. 625 ILCS 5/11-205

I. Definitions:

- A. Emergency Incidents: Situations such as in-progress forcible felonies, officers requesting emergency assistance, unknown and personal injury traffic crashes, all calls for services involving threat of injury or loss of life and any other situation or incident deemed to be an emergency.
- B. Priority Incidents: Calls for service involving situations where personal injury to any person or a potential risk of property loss is likely to occur if the response is unnecessarily delayed, and prompt police response may avert further injury or property loss, reduce the seriousness of the situation or increase the likelihood that an offender will be apprehended.
- C. Routine Incidents: Calls for police service where a quick response is not essential for the preservation of life or property. Examples would include delayed response calls or public care-taking calls.

II. Legal Authority:

- A. The Illinois Vehicle Code, 625 ILCS 5/11-205 (see Appendix A), provides that the driver of a police vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when attempting to stop the motor vehicle driven by an actual or suspected violator of the law, may:
 - 1. Proceed past a red stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down or stopping as may be required and necessary for safe operations.
 - 2. Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as not to endanger life or property.
 - 3. Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.
- B. The above provisions do not relieve the driver of a police vehicle from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others.

III. Department Emergency Response Policies and Procedures:

- A. General limitations and responsibilities:
 - 1. No officer will operate a vehicle at a speed or in a manner that interferes with complete control of the vehicle at all times.
 - 2. The basic rules of traffic safety will be adhered to regardless of the call classification.
 - 3. All officers will yield the right-of-way to fire department equipment, ambulances, and other life saving equipment.
- B. Emergency Incident Response:
 - 1. Officers responding to an emergency incident should respond in the most expeditious manner, without endangering their safety or that of others.
 - 2. Officers responding to an emergency incident must use emergency lighting and an audible siren (See section III. B. 3. for exceptions). Officers responding may do the following with due care:
 - a. Exceed the posted speed limit, but only to the degree as reasonable, taking into consideration the following factors:
 - 1. Time of day,
 - 2. Volume of vehicle and pedestrian traffic,
 - 3. Weather conditions; and

4. Road conditions.
 - b. Proceed past a stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down or stopping as may be required and necessary for safe operation.
 - c. Disregard regulation governing direction of movement or turning in specific directions
 - d. Park or stand irrespective of the provisions of the Illinois Compiled Statutes or local ordinances.
3. Officers may, when responding to certain emergency incidents, deactivate emergency equipment when close to the scene so as not to alert the suspect. When emergency equipment is deactivated officers must proceed with extreme caution and at a reasonable speed, so as not to endanger their life or the life and/or property of others.
 4. Officers should be aware that the use of emergency equipment does not guarantee the safe use of the right of way.
 5. These provisions do not relieve the officer from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the officer from the consequences of any reckless disregard for the safety of others.
- C. Priority Incident Response:
1. Officers responding to a priority incident may use the vehicle's emergency lights and audible siren based on the officer's discretion. Officers responding, with emergency equipment activated, may do the following with due care:
 - a. Exceed the posted speed limit, but only to the degree as reasonable, taking into consideration the following factors:
 1. Time of day,
 2. Volume of vehicle and pedestrian traffic,
 3. Weather conditions; and
 4. Road conditions.
 - b. Proceed past a stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down or stopping as may be required and necessary for safe operation.
 - c. Disregard regulation governing direction of movement or turning in specific directions
 - d. Park or stand irrespective of the provisions of the Illinois Compiled Statutes or local ordinances.
 2. If an officer is responding with only the use of emergency lighting, the use of an audible siren is necessary in advance of intersections, blind alleys, or whenever necessary to clear traffic ahead.
 3. Officers should be aware that the use of emergency equipment does not guarantee the safe use of the right of way
 4. These provisions do not relieve the officer from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the officer from the consequences of any reckless disregard for the safety of others.
- D. Routine Incident Response:
1. Police officer responding to a routine call will do so promptly while observing all traffic patterns, signs and signals.

- E. Any police response or action that results in a pursuit must follow the response to pursuits as detailed in General Order *40.07 – Vehicle Pursuits*.

- IV. Effective Date:
 - A. The Department’s policy on Emergency Driving became effective on April 27, 1983.

- V. Reviews, Revisions and Cancellations:
 - A. This General Order will be reviewed annually by the Training Unit Supervisor and, when necessary, revised or cancelled in accordance with the procedures for reviewing written directives established in General Order *10.01 – Written Directives*.
 - B. This order is a revision of and supercedes General Order *40.08 – Emergency Driving* issued April 22, 2005.
 - C. Any employee with suggestions for revisions and/or improvements to this order are encouraged to submit their ideas to the Commander of the Administrative Services Bureau.

BY ORDER OF

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Chet Epperson
Chief of Police

APPENDIX A

625 ILCS 5/11-205

(625 ILCS 5/11-205) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 11-205)
Sec. 11-205. Public officers and employees to obey Act
Exceptions.

(a) The provisions of this Chapter applicable to the drivers of vehicles upon the highways shall apply to the drivers of all vehicles owned or operated by the United States, this State or any county, city, town, district or any other political subdivision of the State, except as provided in this Section and subject to such specific exceptions as set forth in this Chapter with reference to authorized emergency vehicles.

(b) The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law or when responding to but not upon returning from a fire alarm, may exercise the privileges set forth in this Section, but subject to the conditions herein stated.

(c) The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may:

1. Park or stand, irrespective of the provisions of this Chapter;
2. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, But only after slowing down as may be required and necessary for safe operation;
3. Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as he does not endanger life or property;
4. Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

(d) The exceptions herein granted to an authorized emergency vehicle, other than a police vehicle, shall apply only when the vehicle is making use of either an audible signal when in motion or visual signals meeting the requirements of Section 12-215 of this Act.

(e) The foregoing provisions do not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others.