



Response Classifications and Guidelines

.01 Policy

It will be the policy of the Bladensburg Police Department to require employees operating police vehicles to do so with utmost caution. Employees will operate police vehicles in a manner that exemplifies safe driving and which conforms with Department policy and procedures, and the laws of the State of Maryland.

.02 Terms

Routine Response: All non-emergency calls for service.

Priority Response: All emergency calls for service.

.03 Governing Legislation and Reference

Governing Legislation:

Maryland Transportation Article.

Forms: N/A

.04 Procedure

A. Routine Response

Members responding to non-emergency calls will respond immediately while observing all traffic laws and parking ordinances.

B. Priority Response

Members responding priority will use lights, siren, and headlights, and stop at all intersections where their direction of movement is controlled by a stop signal or stop sign. After stopping, vehicle operators may proceed when it appears such movement can be made safely.

Units involved in a priority response will not pass each other, or other emergency vehicles (fire trucks, rescue squads, EMS units, etc.) except for some specific planned purpose. Each unit involved in the pass should be aware of the other's intentions and the pass should be coordinated verbally over the radio. Note: This section does not prevent or preclude a pass required because of safety requirements necessitated by unexpected movements of any vehicle.

Members will also comply with the provisions of Transportation Article Section 21-106, Emergency Vehicles, which provides, in part:

- The driver of an emergency vehicle may: park or stand without regard to the other provisions of this title;
- Pass red or stop signal, a stop sign, or a yield sign, but only after slowing down as necessary for safety;
- Exceed any maximum speed limit, but only so long as the driver does not endanger life or property; or,
- Disregard any traffic controlled device or regulation governing direction of movement or turning in a specified direction.

The emergency vehicle operator will be aware that Transportation Article Section 21-106 does not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, and within the scope of Department policy.

C. General Response Assignment Guidelines

Personnel receiving calls for service will make every effort to obtain all available information, concerning the call, based on the conversation with the complainant. If the call taker has any doubt concerning the nature of the incident, the doubt will be resolved in favor of the higher priority.

Dispatchers and Patrol Officers, with the approval of the Shift Supervisor or higher-ranking department officer, are able to change a call's priority code. The person changing a call's priority should have knowledge that indicates such change is needed. The responsibility for consequences of this decision rests with the Shift Supervisor or other officer making the decision. All patrol units will ensure that Communications is aware of their response status at all times. They will notify Communications of any changes in response status.

D. General Dispatch Guidelines for Priority Response Incidents.

Priority responses will be limited to those calls dispatched as emergency calls, unless information is known to the dispatcher or responding officer, which would justify

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changing the response classification.

Primary units are defined as units assigned to the call. Primary units may be directed by the Dispatcher to respond to the scene PRIORITY. All other response units are back-up or support units and will respond routine unless specifically directed otherwise. The Dispatcher will determine whether to assign one or two primary units based on available information.

The first unit to arrive on an incident scene will immediately notify the dispatcher if a change in response classification or additional units is necessary. If appropriate, the Dispatcher will then specify which units will respond and the nature of their response.

When an on-scene unit advises that other units may cancel their response, those units will not respond to the scene but will return to service.

E. Self-initiated Priority Responses

Officers may initiate a priority response or pursuit to:

- Protect life;
- Prevent the occurrence of personal injury;
- Prevent the commission of a crime; or,
- Prevent the escape of any law violator.

Officers self-initiating emergency responses will notify communications of their intended destination and response status.

HISTORY: Adopted July 1, 2012

This General Order supersedes all other orders and memoranda in conflict therewith.

Authority:



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Chief of Police