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CHIEF OF POLICE

GENERAL ORDER

EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATION

GENERAL ORDER - 28

Implementation Date: April 8, 1988

Revokes: none

28.1 INTRODUCTION

Officers in the course of their duties are called upon almost on a daily basis to engage in emergency vehicle operations in response to calls for assistance, crimes in progress, and in attempting to stop traffic law violators or suspects attempting to evade apprehension by fleeing in a vehicle.

28.2 DEFINITIONS

Emergency Situation - A situation in which the physical safety and well-being of an individual is directly jeopardized.

28.3 POLICY/PROCEDURE

28.3.1 Emergency/Urgent Call Response

Drivers of authorized emergency vehicles are granted exemptions from certain traffic laws when exercising their official duties and shall operate their vehicle pursuant to Section 316.072, Florida Statutes.

Section 316.072, Florida Statutes, Authorized Emergency Vehicles, is paraphrased as follows:

- A. The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when attempting to stop a fleeing violator 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.
- B. The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may:
 - 1. Park or stand, irrespective of the applicable statutes;
 - 2. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation;
 - 3. Exceed the maximum speed limits as long as he does not endanger life or property;
 - 4. Disregard regulation governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

- C. The exemptions herein granted to an authorized emergency vehicle shall apply only when such vehicle is making use of an audible signal and/or visual signals.
- D. The foregoing provisions shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provision protect the driver from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others.
- E. All emergency vehicle operations shall be conducted in strict accordance with existing statutes. Officers engaged in emergency vehicle operations shall utilize audible (siren) and/or visual (emergency lights) emergency warning equipment when responding to emergency situations and attempting to stop a fleeing vehicle.

28.3.2 Response Types

Officers shall use emergency warning equipment in accordance with applicable statutes when responding to an emergency situation or when specifically authorized to do so by a Supervisor. Supervisors and/or Communications personnel assigning officers to respond to calls for assistance shall, in addition to providing all other pertinent information, designate the response code to notify the assigned officer of the seriousness of the situation. The exception being Code Two responses. Code Two responses will not be dispatched. Officers may change a Code Three to Code Two when they believe this silent response is more appropriate based on the type of call and the information provided by Communications.

Code Two responses will be at the discretion of the responding officer(s). Code Two responses must be in compliance with all guidelines set for Code Two responses.

A. Response modes shall be designated as follows:

1. Code One - Officer is to respond to call in a timely manner obeying all traffic regulations.
2. Code Two - Officer is to respond to call immediately, proceeding to the location as quickly as reasonably possible, while operating the vehicle with due regard for the safety of all persons, utilizing emergency visual equipment (flashing lights -- no siren).
3. Code Three - Officer is to respond to call immediately, proceeding directly to the location as quickly as reasonably possible, while operating the vehicle with due regard for the safety of all persons, utilizing emergency audible (siren) and emergency visual (flashing lights) equipment.
4. Designated Code One or Code Three responses may be overridden, if deemed necessary by a Supervisor or the assigned officer(s). The person changing the response code shall advise the Communications Center, via radio, of any response change.

B. Response codes will be used as follows:

1. Code One will be used for routine non-emergency calls.
2. Code Two may, at the officer's discretion, be used only for the following types of calls:
 - Burglary in progress, where sirens would alert the perpetrator(s).

- In progress calls where death or injury may result from the use of sirens (i.e. armed robbery).
- Any back-up request from an officer who is in contact with an individual known to have outstanding warrants or a history of violent behavior.

NOTE: Officers must be aware of the additional care needed when responding Code Two.

3. Response Code Three shall be used only for the following types of calls:

- Officer in trouble/down
- Felony in progress, (except when Code Two is the strategically preferred response)
- Fight in progress
- Accidents, fires or injuries where human life may be in jeopardy
- Other incident's where a supervisor believes an actual life-threatening situation exists and a swift response is necessary.

APPROVED



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Chief of Police