

FRIDLEY POLICE

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: Emergency Vehicle Operations	DATE OF ISSUE	NUMBER:
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I. PURPOSE

To implement guidelines and policy regarding emergency operation of police vehicles.

II. POLICY

There are times in police work when it is necessary to change the officer's location quickly in order to carry out the law enforcement mission. Exceeding the speed limit and disregarding traffic control devices create increased hazards to the officer operating the vehicle and members of the general public. The primary concern when operating a vehicle in an emergency mode is safety. You are of no value to anyone (public, fellow officers) if you don't complete the emergency run. The minimal amount of time you save by driving too fast or taking chances is seldom justified by the call you are responding to, and never worth injury or death to yourself or others.

III. REFERENCES

Minnesota Statutes § 169.01	Definition of Authorized Emergency Vehicle
Minnesota Statutes § 169.03	Emergency Vehicle Application
Minnesota Statutes § 169.17	Due Regard for Safety
Minnesota Statutes § 169.20	Failure to Yield for Emergency Vehicle
Minnesota Statutes § 609.487	Fleeing a Police Officer in a Motor Vehicle
Minnesota Statutes § 169.541	Lighting Exemptions; Law Enforcement Vehicles; Standards

IV. DEFINITIONS

Emergency

When the immediate presence of police is required to:

- A. Protect a person from death or serious injury;

- B. Provide emergency medical treatment to the victims of accidents, injuries or life threatening situations;
- C. Assist another law enforcement officer(s) in a potentially dangerous situation, or
- D. Make the timely apprehension of those suspected of being involved in a criminal activity.

Authorized Law Enforcement Emergency Vehicle

For purposes of this General Order and pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 169.01 Subd. 5, an authorized law enforcement 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.

V. PROCEDURE

A. RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY:

1. In responding to an emergency call, the driver of an authorized law enforcement emergency vehicle may disregard traffic control regulations if the red lights are displayed. However, the use of both the siren and red lights is preferred unless there is a legitimate justification for using only red lights when responding to an emergency call. The use of other equipment, such as a traffic signal preemption system, is encouraged while operating in an emergency response mode.
2. In responding to an emergency call, the driver of an authorized law enforcement emergency vehicle, upon approaching a red traffic signal light, stop signal or any stop sign, shall slow down as necessary for safety, but may proceed cautiously past such red traffic signal light, stop signal or stop sign if the red lights are displayed. However, the use of the siren and red lights is preferred unless there is a legitimate justification for using only red lights when responding to an emergency call.
3. Responding officers and supervisors should attempt to coordinate response to emergencies so as to minimize the number of vehicles responding to an emergency call in an emergency mode.
4. In a multi-vehicle response to an emergency call (i.e., other police units, fire trucks or ambulances) the operator of one vehicle should not pass another unless there are sufficient lanes to accommodate

the vehicles or, unless the vehicle to the front has become inoperable.

5. It is recognized that there are incidents, which require an immediate response, but the use of the siren could have a detrimental effect, i.e., crimes in progress or hostage situations. If only the red lights are being used officers are cautioned to drive with due regard for the safety of persons using the street. A squad responding to a call where both the siren and red lights would be detrimental may use a traffic signal preemption system to switch traffic lights but all traffic laws must be complied with and caution used.
6. Consistent with Minnesota Statutes § 169.03 subd. 5, no driver of any authorized emergency vehicle shall assume any special privilege except when such vehicle is operated in response to an emergency call or in the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law.
7. When approaching a traffic signal light while responding to an emergency call, the traffic signal preemption system (if squad is so equipped) should be activated. If the traffic signal light remains red use extreme caution and assume no right of way while proceeding through the intersection. The use of a traffic signal preemption system does not relieve the officer of the responsibility of using caution.
8. The Fridley Police Department will not provide emergency escorts to private vehicles or other emergency vehicles (i.e., ambulances), except as authorized by the Public Safety Director, or their designee, for the purpose of creating positive partnerships with the community (i.e., parades, school events, funerals). This does not prevent Fridley officers from assisting with traffic at intersections to assist with passage of emergency vehicles.
9. In accordance with POST Board Standards covered under Minnesota Statutes § 169.541 a peace officer may not operate a vehicle without lights:
 - a. On an interstate highway
 - b. At speeds greater than what is reasonable and prudent under existing weather, road, and traffic conditions.
 - c. Faster than the posted speed limit

- d. In situations where the peace officer is an active participant in the pursuit of a motor vehicle being operated in violation of Minnesota Statutes § 609 .487 (Fleeing).
- e. Contrary to the elements listed in Minnesota Statutes § 169.541.

B. OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY:

- 1. The judicial system has often determined that even if an officer has been responding to an emergency situation, the officer is not relieved of the responsibility of operating the emergency vehicle with due regard for the safety of persons using the roadways. In effect, police officers when responding to emergencies, while allowed to violate traffic control laws, must do so in a manner, which will not jeopardize the safety of others.