



Polk City Fire Department

Standard Operating Guidelines

204a

#204 – Vehicle Operations

Date Issued: 3/04/2006

Date Last Revised: 12/30/2013

Purpose: The purpose of this SOG is to ensure safe operation and management of vehicles.

Guidelines

Training:

1. All new members of the department shall receive full driving training during the 6 month probation period and may not operate any vehicle during a response until this training has been completed. All new members must also complete CPR training before driving.
2. All existing members shall participate in training at a minimum of every 12 months.
3. Training should include:
 - a. Review of this policy and applicable state laws regarding emergency vehicle operations
 - b. Driving practice as needed on various apparatus

Responding:

1. Vehicles shall always be operated in a safe and prudent manner and in accordance with any additional guidelines provided by the Fire Chief and in compliance with the Iowa vehicle and traffic law.
2. While traveling with lights and sirens, all vehicles shall come to a complete stop at all red lights and stop signs to check for other traffic before proceeding through the intersection.
3. While traveling with lights and sirens, all vehicles shall maintain a speed that permits operation in a safe and prudent manner.
4. While the driver is in control of the operation of the vehicle, the officer is ultimately responsible to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle and ensure that all passengers are securely positioned on the apparatus. All passengers shall be seated and passenger restraint devices buckled prior to vehicle being put into motion with the exception of medical personnel providing patient care in the ambulance.
5. All drivers must have a valid Iowa driver's license and cannot have high risk insurance restrictions such as SR22 to operate department vehicles.
6. Response level to EMS calls is suggested by dispatch. Level 1 response is non-emergent with no emergency lights or sirens and traveling with regular traffic. Level 3 response is an emergent response with use of lights and sirens. The lead medic has the ability to upgrade the response level based on updates or other knowledge. Staff should not downgrade the response unless directed by the duty officer that is on scene. Any change to response level should be documented with the patient care report.
7. Vehicle operators shall be physically able to operate the vehicle and have completed the probationary training for operation and driving of the vehicle.
8. Talking on cellular phones or operating GPS units, MDT, or other electronic devices is discouraged while driving Polk City Fire Department apparatus.



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Miscellaneous:

1. All apparatus shall be equipped with back-up alarm devices if possible and, in addition, one or more firefighters should be positioned at the rear or side of the apparatus to assist in backing it up if the personnel is available.
2. All apparatus should be examined on a regular basis for routine maintenance items and the evaluation checklist as approved by the Fire Chief shall be completed. The Fire Chief shall also arrange for a maintenance program for each piece of apparatus as per the manufacturer's recommendation. The work should be completed by persons capable of doing such maintenance. Unsafe or non-serviceable equipment should be removed from service until it is repaired and the Chief notified.
3. No apparatus shall be removed from the fire station without permission from the Fire Chief, other than for a call, training, or maintenance.
4. Equipment incident reports shall be completed for any missing, damaged, or inoperable equipment or other vehicle problems.
5. No unauthorized person shall operate department vehicles.
6. No equipment will be relocated, removed, or added to department vehicles without notification of members and authorized by the Fire Chief.
7. All vehicles and equipment will be refueled and cleaned inside and out after each call.

Backing Vehicles

When the vehicle is manned by only the driver, they shall attempt to utilize any available fire department personnel to act as spotters. Where no personnel are available to assist, the vehicle driver shall make a complete 360-degree survey of the area around his vehicle to determine if any obstructions are present, prior to backing the vehicle.

When backing, the spotter should be located off the left rear corner. The vehicle shall not be backed until the spotter is in position and communicates approval to start backing. Spotters will remain visible to the driver. Anytime the driver loses sight of the spotter, the vehicle shall be stopped immediately.

Backing will resume when the spotter is visible. Departmental policy prohibits tailboard riding at any time. When vehicles must be backed where other vehicle traffic exists, the vehicle's emergency lights (if equipped with such lights) shall be operating. Whenever necessary, personnel shall be assigned to traffic control. Under these conditions, spotters and traffic control personnel shall wear orange safety vests or turnout coats.



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Signals to be Utilized

Straight Back

One hand above the head with palm toward face, waving back with hand and arm.

Turn

Both arms pointing the same direction with index fingers extended. (Driver will advise the spotter which way the turn will be made. The spotter then assists the driver in backing apparatus. The driver's intentions must be verbally communicated to the spotter.)

Stop

Both arms crossed.

Cautions

Do not use confusing hand signals.

Do not shine flashlight in mirrors.

Backing Apparatus at Night

Signals will be the same. The spotter will assure that the spotlights on rear of the apparatus are turned on before allowing the apparatus to be backed. A flashlight may be carried, but at no time will it be directed toward the mirror.