

Standard Operating Procedures Manual
City of Poquoson Fire and Rescue



**City of Poquoson
Fire and Rescue**

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GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

SOP#: GA 16.00

Title: Driving Emergency Vehicles

Effective Date: 04/01/2009

Revised Date: 07/01/2016



Fire Chief's Signature



City Manager's Signature

DRIVING EMERGENCY VEHICLES

I. PURPOSE

To establish requirements, responsibilities and use of Fire and EMS vehicles (emergency and non-emergency) by any member of the Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department.

The driver/operator is responsible for the safe operation of the fire/EMS vehicle and the safe transportation of the crew to and from the scene. The driver/operator is also responsible for the operation of all associated equipment, such as fire pump or aerial device, at the emergency scene. The driver/operator maintains the apparatus, and all the equipment on the apparatus, in a state of readiness at all times.

This SOP is not all-inclusive and cannot encompass all situations that may be encountered.

II. APPLICATION

All career and volunteer personnel

IV. PROCEDURES

Minimum Requirements

Ambulance Operators: Valid Virginia State Driver's License; Completion of a Virginia State recognized EVOC S-2; Successful completion of the Ambulance Driver's Task Book; Successful completion of supervised emergency responses; Final approval by the Fire Chief or his designee. Completion of the above training will allow a member to be designated as a Probationary Driver. A Probationary Driver may be used by the Shift Officer at his or her discretion. To be completely released as an Ambulance Operator, the member must also have completed the ALS or BLS Preceptor Program.

Engine Operators: Valid Virginia State Driver's License; One (1) year of service with Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department; Completion of a Virginia State recognized EVOC S-3; Written recommendation from Shift Supervisor; Certification as a NFPA and/or Virginia DFP Driver/Pump Operator and Firefighter II; Completion of Training Officer's Fire Engine Driver/Pump Operator Preceptorship Program; Successful completion of supervised emergency responses; Final approval by the Fire Chief or his designee. Prior experience may be applied to the time of service restriction at the Fire Chief's discretion. ****Effective July 1, 2016 any member applying to become an Engine Operator must possess NFPA and/or Virginia DFP Driver/Pump Operator prior to beginning their preceptorship****

Aerial Operators: Valid Virginia State Driver's License; Three (3) years of service with Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department; Completion of a Virginia State recognized EVOC S-3; Written recommendation from Shift Supervisor; Certification as a NFPA and or Virginia DFP Driver/Aerial Operator and Firefighter II; Completion of Training Officer's Aerial Operator Preceptorship Program; Successful completion of supervised emergency responses; Final approval by the Fire Chief or his designee. Prior experience may be applied to the time of service restriction at the Fire Chief's discretion.

General Guidelines

The driving of department apparatus is not a duty to be taken lightly and demands total concentration. At any time the assigned driver feels that he/she cannot fulfill the requirements (medication, injury, personal problems, etc.), the company officer must be made aware of the reason so that arrangements can be made for a replacement driver.

Personnel must possess and maintain a valid Virginia State Driver's License at all times when driving a Poquoson Fire/Rescue vehicle. An Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) certification must be obtained to drive any Fire/Rescue vehicle. It is each individual's responsibility to report any traffic ticket and/or loss of driving privilege. The City of Poquoson reserves the right to hold occasional driving record checks to assure compliance.

All City of Poquoson employees are required to use seat belts when operating a city vehicle equipped with seat belts. Anyone riding as a passenger in a city vehicle is required to use seat belts where provided. Members must ride in seats where provided. Personnel shall not ride in exposed positions such as the tailboard of any apparatus to or from emergency calls.

Turning signals are always to be utilized.

Except under emergency conditions where manpower is not available, all drivers will use a spotter for backing all fire/rescue apparatus. Where manpower is not available, the driver will dismount and walk completely around apparatus before backing. Anytime an apparatus must be backed, emergency lights and the back-up alarm will be on and only one crewmember should be utilized as a spotter. The spotter should always be in view of the driver (preferably the driver's side mirror). If the driver should lose sight of the spotter the vehicle is to be stopped until visual contact is again established. The spotter is to have a portable radio for use in an emergency. It is important to use exaggerated movement of the arms when signaling to the driver because slight gestures may go undetected. The driver should not rely on the spotter alone, the driver is responsible for continuing to check

mirrors and evaluate the position of the apparatus.

Regardless of the nature of the emergency, drivers shall not drive in such a manner as to endanger the life and property of others.

Drivers must set parking brake prior to exiting the driver's seat.

Drivers must be aware of the potential that exists for vehicle accidents on or near the incident scene due to the distractions caused by the emergency.

Cell phones must not be used for personal reasons while operating an Emergency Vehicle **at any time**. If a cell phone must be used for Department business while operating an Emergency Vehicle, safety must be considered. If the operator believes that using a cell phone at that time would be unsafe or inappropriate, the call should be returned after the vehicle has reached its destination.

Non-Emergency Response

During non-emergency travel, drivers of Fire/EMS vehicles shall obey all traffic control signals and signs, and all laws of the road for the operation of motor vehicles. Fire engines, ladder trucks and ambulances and other larger vehicles shall use headlights and marker lights at all times during travel.

Emergency Response

The driver/operator will ensure that all personnel are seated, secured and the apparatus is in a state of readiness (i.e. doors shut, nothing on tailboard, etc). All responding fire/rescue vehicles will use all audible devices, red flashing warning lights and headlights, unless otherwise instructed.

Drivers shall proceed through intersections only where all other traffic has stopped and the driver can account for all lanes of the traffic in the intersection. Excessive speeds will not be tolerated. Driver/operator will maintain a speed consistent with weather

conditions, road conditions, traffic and pedestrians. **At no time should emergency vehicles exceed 10 mph over the posted speed limit.** When more than one emergency vehicle is responding along the same route, units should travel at least 500 feet apart. During emergency responses, driver/operators will not pass another emergency vehicle without establishing passing arrangements via radio transmissions. If conditions mandate driving in opposing lanes, driver operators will proceed slowly and cautiously, stopping if uncertain.

Under wet, foggy or any other hazardous weather or road conditions, Fire/Rescue drivers should react more cautiously to the conditions encountered, and **in no case exceed the posted speed limit.**