

# ***Augusta County Emergency Services Officers Association***

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## ***Fire-EMS Standard Operating Guideline***

<b>Section:</b>	2 General
<b>Title:</b>	Driver Responsibilities
<b>Date:</b>	August 2008

### **DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **The Civil Responsibilities of the Driver**

Every driver of emergency vehicles should remember that there is no type of emergency that justifies the risking of the lives of those on the apparatus that he is operating or the other users of the highway. In fact, the driver's very first and most important responsibility is to protect those who are riding with him.

**REMEMBER:** *Civil suits are most common where carelessness, recklessness, and negligence are found to have contributed to an accident and injuries. Being a "volunteer" does not exempt anyone from these responsibilities.*

#### **The Legal Responsibilities of the Driver**

***Refer to state code found in Section 12, Appendix.***

These exemptions, granted to emergency vehicle shall apply only when the operator of such vehicle displays a flashing, blinking, or alternating red light and sounds a siren, exhaust whistle, or air horn designed to give automatically intermittent signals, as may be reasonably necessary.

"Such exemptions, however, shall NOT protect the operator of such vehicle from criminal prosecution for conduct constituting reckless disregard of the safety of persons and property. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED to release the operator of any such vehicle from "civil liability" for failure to use reasonable care in such operation.

All operators of emergency vehicles should be certified in the vehicle operation by a company's officers and should be certified in (EVOC) Emergency Vehicle Operators Course.

### **Seat Belts**

The driver shall not move the apparatus until all personnel have boarded the vehicle and are seated and belted.

### **Warning Devices**

All audible and visual warning devices shall be in operation when making an emergency response.

### **Radio**

The two-way radio shall be checked for proper operation.

### **Passing Emergency Vehicles**

Passing other emergency vehicles on an emergency response is dangerous, unnecessary and shall only be done in extreme emergencies and only when the slower vehicle is aware and has given consent and the road is clean and safe.

### **Driver Attention**

The driver shall focus full attention on the safe operation of the vehicle. The sole responsibility of the driver during an emergency response is to drive. The driver shall not operate the radio, lights, sirens or other equipment. This shall be the responsibility of an officer or personnel acting in that capacity. Drivers are exempt from this if they are the only person in the vehicle, such as a rescue vehicle. Rescue in route to medical facilities may operate a silent response due to the nature of the patient. The attendant in charge (AIC) will determine the type of emergency response.

### **Reduced Response**

The first officer on the scene shall evaluate the need for other responding apparatus to continue on an emergency response. Whenever possible other responding apparatus shall be advised to continue in a reduced response (i.e. continue to the scene with moderate speed using warning lights and siren only when necessary).

### **Non-Emergency Response**

Apparatus to respond with flow of traffic with no emergency lights and siren and to obey all posted traffic laws.

### **Approach Safety**

On approaching the emergency scene all drivers shall watch for emergency vehicles approaching from other directions. They shall drive with extreme caution and be constantly on the alert for emergency personnel and civilians who may be distracted by the emergency and may step in front of the approaching apparatus.

### **Station Fill-ins**

Apparatus to respond with flow of traffic, at a non-emergency response.