



Jackson Hole Fire/EMS Operations Manual

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Title: **Apparatus Ops,
Driving**
Division: 9
Article: 5
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PURPOSE

The purpose is to establish Jackson Hole Fire/EMS policy relative to driving Fire/EMS apparatus, other Fire/EMS vehicles and Personally Owned Vehicles (POV's). See Division 9, Article 2 Member Requirements for Driving Fire/EMS Vehicles for definition of license requirements.

SCOPE

The General Policy applies to all Jackson Hole Fire/EMS Members. Section I and Section II apply to Fire/EMS Operational members (Firefighters/EMT's/Ambulance Drivers) driving emergency vehicles.

GENERAL POLICY

1. Members shall operate vehicles with due regard for the safety of all persons.
2. The chock blocks provided with various pieces of apparatus shall be utilized whenever the apparatus is parked, except within the stations.
3. Driver shall perform a safety walkaround the vehicle prior to driving. Driver should start the vehicle and then perform a 360 around the vehicle looking for open compartment doors, loose equipment, or any hazards with the vehicle or surroundings.
4. When backing apparatus, a designated backer shall serve as a guide to assist the driver and ensure a safe backing operation. (See Division 9, Article 1).
5. Members shall utilize defensive driving techniques.
6. Members shall utilize extreme caution when approaching and traversing street intersections.
7. Seat belts shall be worn by all members when vehicles are in motion.

SECTION I – RESPONSE URGENCY

Emergent Driving – Follows all Laws and Policy described in Section II – Emergency Response.

Non-Emergent (Urgent) Driving – Follows all non-emergency vehicle traffic laws.

Emergent Driving (code response) increases the risk to Fire/EMS Operational members and to the public in the route to the emergency call. Response urgency decision-making should be based upon risk/benefit (e.g. nature of call, traffic, etc.).

It is the responsibility of the Officer or the most senior Fire/EMS Operational member to determine response urgency. Deciding factors in response urgency will include, but not be limited to Nature of the Call, Traffic, Time of Day. Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) coding provides guidance for medical calls. Alpha/Bravo meet the urgent driving requirements. Charlie/Delta/Echo meet the Emergent Driving requirements.

The Incident Commander will make it a priority to notify responding units of any change in response urgency. The Driver is responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle.

Response in a Water Tender:

- a. Emergency response in a Water Tender is generally not recommended.
- b. Tender operators will follow the Basic Speed Rule and will not exceed the speed limit.
- c. First and Second due Water Tenders: Emergency Response with lights and sirens shall be at the discretion of the member in the Officer's Seat for the sole purpose of navigating through traffic congestion.
- d. Third, Fourth, and Fifth due Water Tenders: Emergency Response with lights and sirens will be at the discretion of the member in the Officer's Seat and the Water Group Supervisor via radio communication.

SECTION II – EMERGENCY RESPONSE

State laws and general principles guide the Fire/EMS policy. These state laws include, but are not limited to the following; Basic Speed Rule and WY Stat § 31-5-106.

1. Basic Speed Rule - Never exceed a speed which is safe, reasonable and proper for existing conditions.
2. WY Stat § 31-5-106 – Applies to authorized emergency vehicles responding to an emergency.
 - a. Park or stand, irrespective of other applicable state laws.
 - b. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
 - c. Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as he does not endanger life or property.
 - d. Disregard regulations governing direction of movement, high occupancy vehicle lanes or turning in specified directions.

Where Fire/EMS policy is stricter than the Basic Speed Rule or WY Stat § 31-5-106, Fire/EMS members will be held to the Fire/EMS policy. Laws regarding emergency vehicles do not relieve the driver from their obligation for due regard.

All Fire/EMS Operational members will participate in an annual Emergency Vehicle Operations training. Annual training will be documented and placed in each Member's personnel file.

POV Response

All Personally Owned Vehicles (POV's) responding to station or emergency scene:

- All POV's used in responding to an emergency and/or operated en route to station following a page are considered Emergency Vehicles per state statute.
- Turn headlights on and emergency 4-way flashers.
- Non-Emergent Driving will be required in all POV response.

Apparatus Emergent Driving Operations

All JHF/EMS apparatus, when responding to an emergent call or response to the Hospital with an emergent patient:

- Emergent driving includes the use of emergency lights and sirens or emergency lights only. Emergency lights only can be utilized in the following:
 - Highway driving when sirens are considered ineffective due to speed "outrunning sirens" at approximately 50 mph.
 - Time of day (night/early morning hours) where sirens are deemed not necessary and a

- nuisance in population centers.
 - A safety issue due to the nature of emergency (e.g. law enforcement incident).
- Turn headlights on.
- Observe the Basic Speed Rule regarding conditions and speed shall not exceed 10 MPH over the speed limit.
- Intersections – Approach all intersections with caution.
 - Slow on approach to the intersection and cover the brake.
 - On approach, change siren tone to warn traffic.
 - Stop at all stop signs and stop lights and control the intersection prior to proceeding.
 - Proceed with caution when all other traffic in the intersection has stopped.
 - Be aware of other emergency vehicles approaching the intersection.
- Stay left of vehicles in the same direction of travel where possible. This is to predict vehicles pulling suddenly to the right when they recognize your emergency lights and/or sirens.
- If a move to the opposite direction of travel is necessary, approach same as the intersection steps above.
- Expect the unexpected with the general public. Always leave an escape route.
- When 2 emergency vehicles are traveling together in tandem, travel close to avoid the wake effect of traffic merging back after the first emergency vehicle passes. If emergency vehicles in tandem cannot stay close, increase the distance between emergency vehicles.