
Officer Response to Calls

401.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides for the safe and appropriate response to emergency and non-emergency situations whether dispatched or self-initiated.

401.2 RESPONSE TO CALLS

Officers dispatched using emergency lights and siren (Code 3) shall consider the call an emergency response and proceed immediately. Officers responding using emergency lights and siren shall continuously operate emergency lighting equipment, and shall sound the siren as reasonably necessary.

The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may (625 ILCS 5/11-205):

- (a) Park or stand, irrespective of the provisions of the Illinois Vehicle Code (625 ILCS).
- (b) Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be required and necessary for safe operation.
- (c) Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as he/she does not endanger life or property.
- (d) Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle is not relieved from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of his/her reckless disregard for the safety of others (625 ILCS 5/11-205(e)).

Officers should only respond using emergency lights and siren when so dispatched or when circumstances reasonably indicate an emergency response is required.

401.3 REQUESTING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Requests for emergency assistance should be limited to those situations where the involved personnel reasonably believe that there is an immediate threat to the safety of officers, or assistance is needed to prevent imminent serious harm to a citizen. In any event, where a situation has stabilized and emergency response is not required, the requesting officer shall immediately notify the Dispatch Center.

If circumstances permit, the requesting officer should give the following information:

- The unit number
- The location
- The reason for the request and type of emergency
- The number of units required

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401.3.1 NUMBER OF UNITS ASSIGNED

Normally, only the primary unit should respond to an emergency call Code-3 unless the Patrol Sergeant or the field supervisor authorizes an additional unit(s).

401.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPONDING OFFICER(S)

Officers shall exercise sound judgment and care with due regard for life and property when responding to an emergency call. Officers shall reduce speed at all street intersections to such a degree that they shall have complete control of the vehicle.

The decision to continue a Code-3 response is at the discretion of the officer. If, in the officer's judgment, the roadway conditions or traffic congestion does not permit such a response without unreasonable risk, the officer may elect to respond to the call without the use of lights and siren at the legal speed limit. In such an event, the officer should immediately notify the Dispatch Center. An officer shall also discontinue the Code-3 response when directed by a supervisor.

Upon receiving authorization or determining a Code-3 response is appropriate, an officer shall immediately give the location from which he/she is responding.

401.5 SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being notified that a Code-3 response has been initiated, the Patrol Sergeant or the field supervisor shall verify the following:

- (a) The proper response has been initiated.
- (b) No more than those units reasonably necessary under the circumstances are involved in the response.
- (c) Affected outside jurisdictions are being notified as practical.

The field supervisor shall monitor the response until it has been stabilized or terminated and assert control by directing units into or out of the response if necessary. If, in the supervisor's judgment, the circumstances require additional units to be assigned a Code-3 response, the supervisor may do so.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to terminate a Code-3 response that, in his/her judgment is inappropriate due to the circumstances.

When making the decision to authorize a Code-3 response, the Patrol Sergeant or the field supervisor should consider the following:

- The type of call
- The necessity of a timely response
- Traffic and roadway conditions
- The location of the responding units

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401.6 FAILURE OF EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

If the emergency equipment on the vehicle should fail to operate, the officer must terminate the Code-3 response and respond accordingly. In all cases, the officer shall notify the Patrol Sergeant, field supervisor, or the Dispatch Center of the equipment failure so that another unit may be assigned to the emergency response.