

Deputy Response to Calls

300.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides deputies with guidelines for the safe and appropriate vehicular response to emergency and non-emergency incidents or requests for assistance, whether these are dispatched or self-initiated.

300.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this office to appropriately respond to emergency and non-emergency calls for service or requests for assistance, whether these are dispatched or self-initiated.

300.3 RESPONSE TO CALLS

Deputies responding to non-emergency calls shall proceed accordingly, unless they are sent or redirected to a higher priority call, and shall obey all traffic laws.

300.3.1 EMERGENCY CALLS

Deputies responding to an emergency call shall proceed immediately and shall continuously operate the emergency vehicle lighting and siren as required by law.

Deputies should only respond to a call as an emergency response when so dispatched or when circumstances reasonably indicate an emergency response is required. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) When in pursuit or apprehending a violator or suspected violator.
- (b) When responding to a reported emergency involving possible personal injury, death or significant property damage.
- (c) When immediate assistance is requested by a deputy or other law enforcement agency.

If a deputy believes an emergency response to any call is appropriate, the deputy shall immediately notify the telecommunicator and activate emergency lights and siren.

Deputies not responding to a call as an emergency response shall observe all traffic laws and proceed without the use of emergency lights and siren.

300.4 REQUESTING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

When requesting emergency assistance, the involved deputy should reasonably believe there is an imminent threat to the safety of him/herself or another person, or that assistance is needed to prevent imminent serious harm to the public.

If circumstances permit, the requesting member should provide the following information:

- Identifying call sign
- Location of the emergency situation
- Suspect information, including weapons, vehicles and description

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- Reason for the request and type of emergency
- The number of deputies or resources required
- Hazards and any known or potential dangers for responding deputies

In any event where a situation has stabilized and emergency response is not required, the requesting member shall immediately notify the telecommunicator.

300.5 SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Deputies responding to an emergency call shall proceed immediately as appropriate and shall continuously operate the emergency vehicle lighting and siren as required by law.

Responding with emergency lights and siren does not relieve the operator of an emergency vehicle of the duty to continue to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property, and does not protect the operator from the consequences of reckless disregard for the safety of others. However the deputy may, when responding to a call with an emergency response, and provided there is no endangerment or unnecessary risk to persons and property:

- Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
- Exceed the speed limit.
- Disregard regulations or traffic control devices governing turning in specified directions.
- Disregard local ordinances or traffic control devices governing direction of movement or traffic.

But should always consider conditions of the highway, traffic volume and should never disregard safety to themselves or others.

300.5.1 NUMBER OF DEPUTIES ASSIGNED

Only the number of deputies that are reasonably necessary should be assigned to respond to an emergency call or request for assistance.

An emergency response involving more than one sheriff's vehicle should be coordinated by Dispatch to avoid any unanticipated intersecting of response routes. The Telecommunicator shall notify the shift supervisor, who will make a determination regarding the appropriateness of the response and reduce or enhance the response as warranted.

300.6 EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

Vehicles not equipped with emergency lights and sirens are prohibited from initiating or joining in an emergency response or vehicle pursuit. Deputies in such vehicles may provide support to pursuing vehicles as long as the vehicles are operated in compliance with all traffic laws. Those deputies should terminate their involvement in any emergency response immediately upon arrival of a sufficient number of emergency law enforcement vehicles.

If the emergency equipment on the vehicle should fail to operate, the deputy must terminate the emergency response and continue accordingly. The deputy shall notify the shift Supervisor or

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the Telecommunicator of the equipment failure so that another deputy may be assigned to the emergency response.

300.7 DEPUTY RESPONSIBILITIES

The decision to initiate or continue an emergency response is at the discretion of the deputy. If, in the deputy's judgment, the weather, traffic and road conditions do not permit such a response without unreasonable risk, the deputy may elect to respond to the call without the use of emergency lights and siren at the legal speed limit. A deputy shall also discontinue an emergency response when directed by a supervisor or as otherwise appropriate.

Upon receiving authorization or determining that an emergency response is appropriate, whenever practicable, a deputy shall immediately give the location from which he/she is responding.

The first deputy arriving at the emergency call should determine whether to increase or reduce the level of the response of additional deputies and shall notify the Telecommunicator of his/her determination. Any subsequent change in the appropriate response level should be communicated to the Telecommunicator by the deputy in charge of the scene unless a supervisor assumes this responsibility.

300.8 DISPATCH

When information reasonably indicates that the public is threatened with serious injury or death or a deputy requests emergency assistance and immediate law enforcement response is needed, the Telecommunicator shall assign an emergency response and ensure acknowledgement and response of handling and assisting deputies. In all other circumstances, the Telecommunicator shall obtain authorization from the Sergeant or a shift supervisor prior to assigning an emergency response.

300.9 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being notified that an emergency response has been initiated or requested, the shift supervisor shall verify that:

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

The shift supervisor shall monitor the response until it has been stabilized or terminated and assert control by directing deputies into or out of the response, if necessary. If, in the supervisor's judgment, the circumstances require additional deputies to be assigned an emergency response, the supervisor may do so.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to terminate an emergency response that, in his/her judgment is inappropriate due to the circumstances.

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When making the decision to authorize an emergency response, the shift supervisor should consider the following:

- The type of call or crime involved
- The type and circumstances of the request
- The necessity of a timely response
- Weather, traffic and road conditions
- The location of the responding deputies and the location of the incident

