

	SECTION:	OPERATIONS	OPR-252
	CHAPTER:	VEHICLES	
	DIRECTIVE:	VEHICLES – EMERGENCY OPERATION (High Risk)	

252.01 SUMMARY

This policy provides for the safe and appropriate response to all emergency and non-emergency situations.

252.02 RESPONSE TO CALLS

Officers responding to any call shall proceed with due regard for the safety of all persons and property.

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

Officers responding to a call as an emergency response shall continuously operate emergency lighting equipment and sirens except as outlined in OP252.07 regarding special conditions. (CRS § 42-4-108(3) and CRS § 42-4-213).

Responding with emergency lights and siren does not relieve an Officer of the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property and does not protect the Officer from the consequences of reckless disregard for the safety of others (CRS § 42-4-108(4)).

The use of any other warning equipment without emergency lights and siren does not generally provide an exemption from the vehicle laws (CRS § 42-4-108(3)).

Officers should only respond to a call as an emergency response when so dispatched or when responding to circumstances the Officer reasonably believes involves the potential for immediate danger to persons or property. Examples of such circumstances may include:

- An Officer who requires urgent assistance.
- A burglary in process that appears to involve a threat to any person's safety.
- A robbery in progress.
- A person brandishing a weapon.
- An apparent homicide.

**RESPONSE TO CALLS
(con't)**

- A suicide in progress.
- A fight, riot or other large disturbance involving injuries.
- An assault or other violence in progress.
- A domestic dispute where injury is reasonably believed to be imminent, or has just occurred and the suspect is present.
- A kidnapping in progress.
- A traffic collision or other event involving a serious injury or the possibility of injury that may reasonably require immediate medical aid.

**252.03 REQUESTING
EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE**

Officers may request emergency assistance when they reasonably believe that there is an imminent threat to the safety of Officers, or assistance is needed to prevent imminent serious harm to a citizen. 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

Where a situation has stabilized and emergency response is not required, the requesting Officer shall promptly notify the Communications Center.

**252.04 NUMBER OF UNITS
PARTICIPATING**

Normally, only those units reasonably necessary should respond to a call with an emergency response. The Shift Commander or the field supervisor should monitor all emergency responses and reduce or enhance the response as warranted.

**252.05 INITIATING
EMERGENCY
CALL RESPONSE**

If an Officer believes an emergency response to any call is appropriate, the Officer shall immediately notify the Communications Center.

An emergency response of more than one unit should initiate notification by the Communications Center to the Shift Commander or field supervisor. The Shift Commander or field supervisor will make a determination regarding the appropriateness of the response and reduce or enhance the response as warranted.

**INITIATING EMERGENCY
CALL RESPONSE (con't)**

Officers shall exercise sound judgment and care with due regard for life and property when responding to a call with an emergency response. During a call involving an emergency response Officers may (CRS § 42-4-108(2)):

- a. Disregard regulations governing parking or standing when using a warning lamp.
- 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 any speed limits provided this does not endanger life or property.
- d. Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

**252.06 RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE
RESPONDING
OFFICER**

The decision to continue as an emergency 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 red lights and siren at the legal speed limit. In such an event, the Officer should immediately notify the Communications Center. An Officer shall also discontinue an emergency response when directed by a supervisor or as otherwise appropriate.

Upon determining that an emergency response is appropriate, an Officer shall immediately give the location from which he/she is responding.

The first Officer arriving at an emergency response scene should determine whether to increase or reduce the level of the response and notify the Communications Center of their determination. Any subsequent change in the appropriate response level should be communicated to the Communications Center by the Officer in charge of the scene unless a supervisor assumes this responsibility.

While performing certain emergency response tasks, the use of emergency lights or sirens may increase the danger to the responding Officers or the public. In the following circumstances, Officers may consider the appropriateness of an emergency response without siren, emergency lights or both:

- a. An Officer is attempting to confirm his/her suspicion that a driver has violated the traffic code and there is no other reasonable suspicion or probable cause to stop the driver (CRS § 42-4-108(3)).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESPONDING OFFICER (con't)

- b. An emergency response requires an element of stealth that would be defeated by the use of emergency lighting or siren. This response should use a siren and emergency lights until a stealth response without lights and siren is required, and the response should then continue accordingly.

252.07 EMERGENCY RESPONSE SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Any emergency response without the use of emergency lights and siren shall be conducted with due regard for the safety of the public and property and the recognition that such a response may not provide an exemption from the vehicle laws (CRS § 42-4-108(3)).

252.08 COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

Any emergency response without the use of lights or siren shall cease if the circumstances no longer warrant such a response.

A dispatcher shall ensure acknowledgment and response of assisting units when an Officer requests emergency assistance or when the available information reasonably indicates that the public is threatened with serious injury or death and an immediate law enforcement response is needed. The dispatcher shall:

- a. Attempt to assign the closest available unit to the location requiring assistance.
- b. Immediately notify the Shift Commander.
- c. Confirm the location from which the unit is responding.
- d. Notify and coordinate outside emergency services (e.g., fire and ambulance).
- e. Continue to obtain and broadcast information as necessary concerning the response, and monitor the situation until it is stabilized or terminated.
- f. Control all radio communication during the emergency and coordinate assistance under the direction of the Shift Commander or field supervisor.

252.09 SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being notified that an emergency response has been initiated, the Shift Commander 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.

**SUPERVISORY
RESPONSIBILITIES (con't)**

- c. Affected outside jurisdictions are being notified as practicable.

The field supervisor shall, whenever practicable, 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 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.

When making the decision to authorize an emergency response, the Shift Commander or the field supervisor should consider the following:

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

**252.10 FAILURE OF
EMERGENCY
EQUIPMENT**

If the emergency equipment on the vehicle should fail to operate, the Officer must terminate the emergency response and continue accordingly. The Officer shall notify the Shift Commander, field supervisor or the Communications Center of the equipment failure so that another unit may be assigned to the emergency response.

