

Officer Response To Calls

308.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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

308.2 RESPONSE TO CALLS

It is the responsibility of each officer to determine the appropriate driving response to the calls-for-service or other requests for police assistance they are assigned to or those they self-initiate. Officers shall determine the appropriate driving response, including when to utilize any emergency lights, siren, or other warning devices, based on the information available and known to the officer at the time of the officer's response, not on a presumptive or assumed set of circumstances.

308.2.1 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Officers responding to an emergency call shall proceed immediately. Officers shall continuously operate emergency lighting equipment and, if appropriate, sound the siren (N.D.C.C. § 39-10-03).

When responding emergent to any call, assignment or to render aid or assistance, officers shall notify dispatch of their emergent response mode via police radio. If responding to a call for assistance, officers shall identify themselves by unit number and notify dispatch that they are responding.

Responding with emergency lights and siren does not relieve the 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.

Officers should only respond to a call as an emergency response when (N.D.C.C. § 39-10-03(2)):

- (a) In pursuit or apprehension of a violator or suspected violator.
- (b) Dispatched or otherwise in response to a reported emergency involving a possible personal injury, death, or damage to property.
- (c) The Chief of Police or authorized designee deems it advisable for the protection of a person or 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.

308.2.2 DISPATCHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Dispatchers should track officers responding to all calls for service, but should give special attention to officers responding emergent to a call for service or to render aid or assistance. If an officer who is on another call for service, traffic stop or other proactive assignment advises dispatch they are responding to an assistance call emergent, the dispatcher shall place the current call or traffic stop in holding. Thus, relieving the officer from additional radio traffic.

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When an officer calls for assistance the dispatcher shall acknowledge and broadcast the need for assistance and provide the requesting officer's location. This allows other officers to better judge whether they are in proximity and should respond.

308.2.3 NON-EMERGENCY RESPONSE

All calls for service (CFS) shall be received and acknowledged via the radio with the Red River Regional Dispatch Center (RRRDC). Department members shall not self dispatch themselves remotely to a CFS without first notifying the RRRDC of the call type and address of the location they are responding to.

308.3 REQUESTING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Officers may request emergency assistance when they reasonably believe 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:

- (a) The unit number
- (b) The location
- (c) The reason for the request and type of emergency
- (d) The number of units required

Where a situation has stabilized and emergency response is not required, the requesting officer or other member on scene shall promptly notify Dispatch to slow down or cancel any other responding units.

308.3.1 NUMBER OF UNITS PARTICIPATING

Only those units which are reasonably necessary and in proximity to assist should respond to a call with an emergency response. The Neighborhood Services Division supervisor should monitor all emergency responses to reduce or enhance the response as warranted.

Officers on a priority call for service should evaluate their proximity and circumstances, as well as the response of other officers, before making a decision to leave their priority assignment in response to a call for assistance.

308.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESPONDING OFFICER

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 (N.D.C.C. § 39-10-03(1)):

- (a) Disregard regulations governing parking or standing when using emergency lighting equipment.
- (b) Proceed past a red light, stop signal, or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.

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- (c) Exceed any speed limits providing the speeds are reasonable, and do not endanger life or property.
- (d) Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

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 emergency lights and siren at the legal speed limit. An officer shall also discontinue an emergency response when directed by a supervisor or as otherwise appropriate.

The first officer arriving at an emergency response scene should determine whether to increase or reduce the level of the response of other officers and notify Dispatch of his/her determination. Any subsequent change in the appropriate response level should be communicated to Dispatch by the officer in charge of the scene unless a supervisor assumes this responsibility.

308.5 SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

A Neighborhood Services Division supervisor shall monitor any emergent 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. Likewise, the supervisor is responsible to cancel any unit response that is not needed based on the circumstances.

When making the decision to authorize an emergency response, the Neighborhood Services Division 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 and/or their current assignment

It is the Neighborhood Services Division supervisor's responsibility to terminate or lessen an emergency response that, in his/her judgment, is inappropriate due to the circumstances. The supervisor or Shift Commander may alter an officers response mode at any time based on the information available to the supervisor or Shift Commander, to include information received via dispatch.

308.6 FAILURE OF EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

If the emergency equipment on the vehicle should fail to operate, the officer shall terminate the emergency response.

The officer shall notify Dispatch of the equipment failure so another unit may be assigned to the emergency response. A supervisor shall also be notified and shall ensure appropriate notifications are made to ensure the equipment is repaired and the officer obtains a replacement vehicle.

Fargo Police Department

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308.7 REVISION DATE 01/16/2024