
	GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT		
	Responding with Fire/Rescue		
	GENERAL ORDER 603.4	Related CALEA Standards: 1.2.3, 1.2.7, 41.2.1, 41.2.5, 42.1.4, 42.2.2, 82.2.1	
Effective Date 08/19/2015			
Authorized by: Mark P. Sroka CHIEF OF POLICE		SIGNATURE	DATE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish procedures specific to joint response with Fire/Rescue, rendering immediate aid or assistance, and outline the investigative and reporting responsibilities for these incidents.

II. POLICY

Patrol officers respond with Fire/Rescue personnel to various incidents where the need for a mutual response is expected. The Department provides its officers with certain equipment and training to assist persons who are injured or experiencing a medical emergency. This is to afford properly trained officers the ability to provide immediate assistance prior to the arrival of emergency medical services (EMS). Sworn personnel will assist and support Fire/Rescue for as long as required on any incident, and coordinate their efforts at the scene with Fire Rescue Incident Commanders.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Initial Response to Incidents

1. When arriving at calls where fire apparatus is en route, officers will not leave police vehicles in locations that would inhibit or block the proper deployment of Fire/Rescue equipment.
 - a) An alternate location, such as an adjacent street, should be used to allow clear access by Fire and EMS equipment.
 - b) Police vehicles that are used to block intersections and other access for traffic control reasons should be attended and able to be quickly moved if required.
2. The senior ranking police officer will be in charge of the scene until relieved by the Fire/Rescue Incident Commander.

3. Police officers are not trained or equipped to be firefighters. Officers will use their best judgment and discretion, and exercise the utmost care, if the decision is made to enter a burning building.
4. When arriving at a scene before Fire/Rescue, officers will communicate pertinent information, via the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC), describing the situation in as much detail as possible.
 - a) If Fire/Rescue is standing by at a secure location, such as with a call that involves a violent patient, officers will advise when the scene is clear for their response.
 - b) If it is determined by officers that Fire/Rescue is not needed, this should be communicated through the PSCC as soon as practical.
5. Many officers are trained to provide lifesaving aid, such as Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).
 - a) Officers will evaluate the scene to determine if it is reasonably safe to render aid.
 - b) When reasonably safe to do so, officers will render aid to persons in medical distress until relieved by Fire/Rescue personnel.
 - c) Officers will only utilize the lifesaving equipment or techniques for which they have been trained.
6. When Fire/Rescue is on scene, officers will assume their role in the Incident Command Structure (ICS), in accordance with General Order 1000.2, which may include:
 - a) Coordinating operational decisions with the Fire / Rescue Incident Commander;
 - b) Maintaining traffic and pedestrian control;
 - c) Evaluating the scene for the possibility of criminal activity and notifying the appropriate investigators;
 - d) Ensuring that traffic and safety hazards have been addressed before clearing the scene;
 - e) Notifying owners or tenants of their responsibility to secure

any premises; and

- f) Ensuring that any reporting requirements are met.

B. Investigation and Reporting

1. Cases involving fire or explosion are within the primary investigative responsibility of the Fire Investigator's Office.
 - a) This includes cases involving death by fire or explosion, pending guidance from the medical examiner (see General Order 607.2 - Notification of Investigators and 607.6 - Notification of Medical Examiner/Coroner).
 - b) Officers of this Department should check with the Fire/Rescue Incident Commander or the fire investigator, to ensure that all reporting requirements are met.
 - c) Inquiries concerning the value of a fire loss or extent of damage will be referred to the fire investigator assigned to the case.
 - d) Incidents involving small fires that are not criminal in nature and are extinguished by police, or discovered after burning itself out may be documented on a police report at the discretion of the on-duty patrol supervisor.
2. Generally, when a death is attributable to violence, bodies will not be removed without authorization of the medical examiner. If a body is in public view, it should be covered rather than moved.
3. Except in unusual circumstances, or when the body is creating a public spectacle, Fire/Rescue will not be requested for a routine transport to remove a body.
4. When an investigation reveals that a fire or explosion was perpetrated to conceal another crime, the investigating patrol officer will handle the "concealed crime" and write an event report. The report number will be provided to the fire investigator, so details of the fire investigation may be added through a supplement.
5. If no report is being written by Fire / Rescue personnel, the patrol officer will write an incident report (2935-2) for fires that result in injury or property damage exceeding the value of \$500.00.

C. Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

1. AEDs are maintained by the department in a manner that facilitates availability and rapid deployment. Any use of the AED will be in accordance with this policy and Department approved training.
2. An AED is assigned to each patrol shift, and it is expected to be a mobile resource.
3. The AED will be inspected by the assigned officer before each tour of duty.
4. The shift supervisor will assign the issued AED to an officer on the shift. The AED:
 - a) Is not to be left in the station while that shift is on duty.
 - b) Will only be assigned to officers who have successfully completed Department approved CPR/AED training.
5. The shift sergeant is responsible for ensuring that appropriate care and maintenance of the AED is accomplished through monthly AED inspections.
6. If the AED is used on a patient for any reason, even if a shock is not delivered, notification must be made to the Administrative Bureau Commander and the Operations Bureau Commander.

D. Pediatric Injury Calls

1. Officers will respond priority with Fire/Rescue to pediatric injury calls.
 - a) Secondary to rendering immediate medical aid, the purpose of police response is to identify cases of suspected abuse or neglect.
 - b) These cases may be serious medical emergencies involving infants or small children.
2. Upon arrival, officers will update Fire Rescue with patient condition, secure the scene, and render necessary immediate care until Fire/Rescue arrives.
3. Officers will control access to the scene and conduct a preliminary investigation to determine how the child was injured or became ill, and if a crime was committed.

4. If Fire/Rescue has transported the child before police arrival, at least one officer will continue to handle the scene, while another responds to the hospital.
5. Officers will consult with the patrol supervisor concerning the notification of command staff and investigators.
6. A pediatric injury call may be the first and only opportunity to identify an abuse or neglect situation, injuries, evidence and other conditions and circumstances that require intervention in the best interests of the child.
 - a) Officers will consult with the patrol supervisor concerning the need for writing an event report.
 - b) All information needed for a report will be collected, and photos of the scene and/or injuries will be taken, even if a report is not deemed necessary at the time.
 - c) If there is any doubt about the circumstances of the incident, a report shall be written.

E. Emergencies Involving Juveniles

1. When Fire/Rescue responds for an emergency involving a juvenile, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be contacted by the ambulance crew or police officer from the scene.
2. If a juvenile refuses necessary treatment for a non-life threatening condition, Fire/Rescue will stand by while the officer attempts to contact a parent or guardian.
3. If a juvenile requires immediate treatment and a parent or guardian cannot be immediately contacted, the officer may take the juvenile into custody for transport to the nearest hospital without delay.
 - a) The juvenile will not be handcuffed unless it is for the purposes of an emergency petition.
 - b) The juvenile will be transported by Fire/Rescue, and accompanied by an officer.
 - c) The officer will continue attempts to contact a parent or guardian until notification is made.

4. When a juvenile is taken into custody for emergency treatment, an event report will be completed and reviewed by a supervisor before the officer secures from duty. The event report will include:
 - a) The circumstances under which the juvenile was taken into custody;
 - b) Documentation of all efforts to contact a parent or guardian;
 - c) The date and time of parent or guardian notification; and
 - d) The name(s) of the person(s) notified.