

## 204C POLICE RESPONSE TO FIRE / MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

### 1. Dispatching Priorities

- A. Dispatchers have been instructed to notify the primary service agency on 911 Emergency calls. This means that for a fire, they notify the fire department first and for medical help, they will notify the first responder unit(s) in the area or having jurisdiction as instructed. If the caller is for multiple response; i.e. “Send everything” or “send the fire department, ambulance and police”, they will dispatch ambulance first, fire department second and law enforcement third.
- B. This priority does not mean that law enforcement will not respond until specifically requested. In fact, it is very possible that police will be notified indirectly by monitoring the radio traffic directed at fire/medical units. Response of law enforcement will be automatic when these calls are being dispatched and overheard.
- C. It is of critical importance that communications between responding units be maintained. The one common frequency that is shared by all fire, ambulance and law enforcement units dispatched out of Breckenridge-Wilkin County Law Enforcement Center is the Breckenridge local government frequency, commonly referred to as the fire-street-utility-park and ambulance frequency. Breckenridge Police and Wilkin County Sheriff’s units also have this frequency. Offices are now instructed to switch their mobile and portable radios to this shared frequency when responding to fire/medical emergencies. Dispatches will also select this frequency as priority after the initial notifications of responding units are made and only for the time of the emergency. In this way, no emergency response unit will be uninformed. This can be of great value in instructing or advising late responding units of special needs or circumstances.

### 2. Fire-Police Response

- A. Police units in the city will respond to a fire as follows: Except as provided, the following procedure shall exist concerning the response of police personnel to a fire in the City of Breckenridge. In the interest of public safety, officers shall respond to all fires reported in the city limits. Such calls shall be considered an emergency and on-duty personnel as available, shall respond accordingly, with consideration given to the time of day, traffic, etc. Your primary purpose upon arrival is to assist victims of the fire, the protection of life by alerting others that may be in danger, administer first aid if necessary and assisting to their immediate needs. Your secondary purpose is for the protection of the victims property and others that may be affected. You are not responsible for fighting the fire unless you are satisfied that your primary purpose has been met and then only to the best

of your judgement, ability and training, will you attempt protection of property by fighting the fire. Your most common fire fighting incident will be the car fire.

- B. Since there are exceptions to every rule, these suggestions are made to reduce the conflict of duty. When personnel are on patrol and not on call, there should be no reason for one unit to not respond to the call. If you are on a call and working alone, you will have to use your judgement as to what has priority, and if you can courteously excuse yourself. After arriving at the fire and you are satisfied that the fire department has the situation under control and there appears to be no further need for your assistance, you may clear and return to your regular duties. Be alert to traffic control needs based on your knowledge of the area or duration of the fire emergency and to evidence of foul play at the fire scene. Advise the fire chief at the scene if something suspicious is noted. Remember he is in charge of the fire scene and you assist. Since police are on duty 24 hours a day and the fire department is volunteer, we will usually be the first on the scene; especially at night or the early morning hours. If we only locate the fire, as in the case of a small one, we may save the fire department considerable time and we will have provided a necessary service. Also, those officer(s) who are volunteer firemen must keep in mind they are police officers first and fireman second.
- C. If you use the extinguisher; make certain that it is brought in to the office and the day crew is notified to have it recharged.

3. Medical Police Response

- A. Police units in the city will respond to a medica/ambulance call as follows: Except as provided, the following policy shall exist concerning the response of police personnel to a call for emergency medical assistance or ambulance in the City of Breckenridge. In the interest of public safety, officers shall respond to 911 medical/ambulance calls in the city limits. Such calls shall be considered an emergency and on-duty personnel as available, shall respond accordingly. Consideration must be given to time of day, traffic and nature of call. (I.e. siren use when approaching heart attack victim, etc.)
- B. Your primary purpose upon arrival is to assist the victim/patient. This will include protection of person from more serious injury or death as well as administration of first aid with available equipment and to the best of your ability and training. On most 911 calls you will probably find yourself giving comfort and support to the victim/patient or family members until the ambulance arrives.

- C. Since there are exceptions to every rule, these suggestions are made to reduce a conflict of duty. When personnel are on patrol and not on a call, there should be no reason for one unit to not respond to the call. Dispatchers will have determined that this is in fact an emergency. If it is not an emergency; but the ambulance is needed you may not need to respond. It is possible, however, that the ambulance service may need assistance in such non-emergency situations and request your help. If you are working alone, you will have to use your judgment as to what has priority. If for example, you have a prisoner in custody you are not expected to release that person or take them along on such a call. If, however, you are unlocking a car door or after a dog you should respond to the call for medical assistance. If you know that an ambulance is immediately available or medical help is already at the scene, no response would be necessary. (i.e. certain sporting events, calls to medical clinics or St. Francis Home, the ambulance and crew is on the street and available for calls, etc.). When you are satisfied that the ambulance service has the situation in hand you may clear and return to regular duties. Keep in mind when responding to these calls any evidence of foul play or criminal activity. Since police are on duty 24 hours a day and the ambulance service is volunteer; you will usually be the first on the scene, especially at night or early morning. Many times we can expedite the transportation of victim/patient by providing accurate directions to ambulance personnel. Keep in mind to do what you would expect of your co-workers if it were your family member involved. Also, those officers who are volunteer ambulance attendants must keep in mind they are police officers first and ambulance attendants second. And on-duty police officers are not to be ambulance drivers or attendants.
- D. The use of a patrol car as an ambulance is unadvisable. The emergency transportation of injured to a medical facility is strongly discourage, except as a last resort. In most cases this policy would not apply to persons transported for detox or mental holds.
- E. Officers who use first aid supplies must leave a list of those items with the day crew for replacement. Also dirty blankets or broken equipment must be brought to the office for repair or cleaning.

- F. Officers are encouraged to use protective equipment such as disposable gloves and pocket resuscitation mask. Particular attention must be given to patient/victim body fluids. This equipment is now part of the first aid supplies for your protection.