

Hamden Police Department General Orders

Policy Number: 024-007

Effective Date: August 01, 2005

Section: Patrol

Rescinds:

Title: Cruiser Response Codes

Approved By:

Approval Date:

PURPOSE

To establish response codes for police vehicle responding to calls for police assistance.

POLICY

Police vehicles responding to calls for assistance will respond according to the guidelines set forth in this General Order.

General

Police officers responding to calls for assistance are expected to arrive promptly and safely. The situation itself may dictate the type of response required, based on information provided by the dispatcher, or previous experience with the persons or location involved. Emergency lights and siren are tools used by law enforcement officers to expedite their response to calls for assistance. However, police officers responding to calls, regardless of the seriousness, must exercise due caution in their response and their actions must meet the test of reasonableness. Officers must also comply with Connecticut General Statute 14-283, Rights of Emergency Vehicles.

Sec. 14-283. Rights of Emergency Vehicles

- A. Emergency vehicle, as used in this section, means any ambulance responding to an emergency call, any vehicle used by a fire department or by an officer of a fire department while on the way to a fire or while responding to an emergency call but not while returning from a fire or emergency call, or any state or local police vehicle operated by a police officer answering an emergency call or in the pursuit of fleeing law violators.

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- B. The operator of any emergency vehicle may:
1. Park or stand such vehicle, irrespective of the provisions of this chapter.
 2. Proceed past any red light or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down or stopping to the extent necessary for the safe operation of such vehicle;
 3. Exceed the posted speed limits or other speed limits imposed by or pursuant to Section 14-218a or 14-219 so long as he does not endanger life or property by so doing; and
 4. Disregarding statutes, ordinances or regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specific directions.
- C. The exemptions herein granted shall apply only when an emergency vehicle is making use of an audible warning signal device, including but not limited to a siren, whistle, or bell which meets the requirements of subsection (f) of section 14-80, and visible flashing or revolving lights which meet the requirements of sections 14-96p and 14-96q and to any state or local police vehicle properly and lawfully making use of an audible warning signal device only.
- D. The provisions of the section shall not relieve the operator of an emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property.

Procedures

- A. Central Communications Responsibilities.
1. Upon receiving calls for service, Central Communications will obtain sufficient information to:
 - a. Determine the nature of the call.
 - b. In cases where Central Communications needs assistance in determining the proper response code, they will contact a field supervisor.

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B. Types of Responses.

In general, the following are examples of incidents and the recommended response codes. However, nothing shall prevent an officer from upgrading his or her response to an incident providing it is reasonable and based on information regarding that particular incident.

1. Code 7 Response (No light or sirens activated).

a. A Code Seven Response will be utilized in responding to non-emergency calls including, but not limited to:

- i. Routine calls for assistance.
- ii. Crimes reported after the fact.
- iii. Property damage accidents that do not create:

- 1. A serious traffic problem or
- 2. An immediate hazard to the public.

If (a) or (b) are present, the call may be upgraded to a higher response if needed.

- iv. Routine domestics.
- v. Shoplifters in custody.
- vi. Minor offenses which do not prove a potential life threatening or physically dangerous situation.
- vii. Any other call, not immediately known to require a Code Five Response.

b. Upon receiving a Code Seven dispatch, the assigned officer will:

- i. Proceed to the scene, obeying all traffic rules and regulations.
- ii. Upon arrival, park his vehicle legally, unless otherwise required in the performance of his duties.

2. Code Five Response (Lights and siren activated).

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- a. The following list of incident type in which responding officers are authorized to utilize their own discretion on responding on a signal 5 (lights and siren activated).
 - i. Personal injury accidents.
 - ii. Violent crimes.
 - iii. Active violent domestics or assaults.
 - iv. Calls involving life threatening or physically dangerous situations.
 - v. Serious medical calls (i.e., heart attacks, choking, serious bleeding, severed limbs, etc)
 - vi. Burglary or robbery in progress.
 - vii. Officers sent as back up units where the primary responding Officers have encountered unexpected circumstances and require urgent assistance.
 - viii. Any officer responding to a signal 100.

- b. All other Code 5 responses require supervisory approval.

- c. Upon receipt of a Code Five dispatch, the assigned officer will:
 - i. Activate audible warning device and emergency lights and keep them on.
 - ii. Proceed to the scene, disobeying traffic rules and regulations only to the extent necessary for the performance of their duties.
 - iii. Drive at a reasonable speed consistent with existing weather, road and traffic conditions, as well as the area concerned.
 - iv. Keep in mind that no violation of state traffic is permitted without lights and an audible warning device.