**Section 400 – Emergency Operations**

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| General Emergency Operations – 401.00  |
| S.O.P # 401.01 | **Emergency Vehicle Operations** | Page: 1 of 5 |
| EFFECTIVE: 10/14/2019 | Authorized: Board of Directors |
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**401.01.01 Purpose**

The purpose of this SOP is to provide employees of the District general procedures and policies for the safe driving, riding and operation of emergency vehicles; for the prevention and reduction of accidents and injuries of public safety personnel and the public. It is the responsibility of every employee of the District to respond safely, rapidly and efficiently to requests for services.

**401.01.02 General**

These policies and procedures are designed to conform to the motor vehicle laws as set forth by the State Oregon and United States Department of Transportation (DOT). Employees should review and comply with all policies and protocols as set forth.

**401.01.03 Applicability**

This SOP applies to all personnel.

**401.01.04 Definitions**

1. **CEVO3**: Coaching the Emergency Vehicle Operator 3, Ambulance Online Course.
2. **Clean Driving Record**: A clean driving record shows no infractions, to include traffic tickets or points.
3. **Due Regard**: All employees must drive with “due regard” for the safety of others using the highways. State vehicle codes provide and give special privileges to the operators or emergency vehicles; however, this does not relieve the operator from the duty and responsibility to drive with “due regard” for the safety of others.
4. **DOT**: Department of Transportation, the United States federal department that institutes and coordinates national transportation programs; created in 1966.
5. **EVOC:** Emergency Vehicle Operations Course
6. **Negligence**: An individual’s failure to exercise reasonable care under the circumstances.
7. **NFPA**: National Fire Protection Association.
8. **Officer in Charge** – The senior ranking officer or most senior patient care provider on a scene or piece of apparatus.
9. **OSHA**: Occupational Safety and Health Administration,
10. **POV**: Personally Owned Vehicle
11. **Spotter**: A human backer/spotter is an easy way to reduce and possibly eliminate accidents while backing up. Whenever a piece of apparatus needs to back up — whether it's 2 feet or 20 — a spotter will stand behind the apparatus and guide the driver with hand signals to prevent it from striking anything. By using a backer/spotter, the driver of the apparatus gains a whole new set of eyes that he or she can utilize to help him maneuver safely.
	1. The use of a flashlight at night is also very beneficial.
	2. Anytime the driver loses sight of the spotter they should stop backing up.

**401.01.05 Minimum Driving and Training Requirements**

Employees must satisfy the minimum driving requirements to be considered an “Authorized Driver” and operate an emergency vehicle owned and operated by the District. The minimum driving requirements are:

1. Must be a minimum of eighteen (18) years of age,
2. Must possess a valid OR Class “C” Driver’s License;
3. Must possess a clean driving record;
4. Must have completed a CEVO3 course, EVOC Course, NFPA “Ambulance Operator’s Course” or equivalent;
5. Must complete the Emergency Vehicle Orientation.

**401.01.06 Emergency Response Modes**

Upon arrival of the first assigned unit, the person in charge of that unit has the authority to change the initial response level of additional responding units as the incident or patient’s condition dictates. The senior patient care provider of the transporting apparatus shall designate the appropriate level of transport response based upon the level of care required by the patient as stated in the District’s Medical Protocols.

1. **Emergent Responses**: Emergent responses and/or transports shall consist of an emergency response with visual and audible warning signals and devices. During Emergent responses and/or transports:
	1. Units will proceed with due regard for personal and public safety, adhering to the applicable federal, state and local traffic laws.
	2. The maximum speed for Emergent responses will be governed in accordance with federal, state and local traffic laws, proper and safe handling of the vehicle given traffic and road conditions as well as with absolute public safety in mind at all times.
	3. Drivers will proceed through intersections only when the driver can account for all lanes of traffic and has full control of the intersection.
	4. During response or transport, drivers of emergency vehicles will bring the vehicle to a full and complete stop for any of the following reasons:
		1. When so directed by law enforcement,
		2. At blind intersections;
		3. When the driver cannot account for all lanes of traffic;
		4. When other intersection hazards are present;
		5. When encountering a stopped school bus with flashing warning lights.
	5. Units responding or transporting in a emergent response mode will proceed with caution at reduced speeds when driving through school zones and residential streets.
2. **Non-Emergent Response**: Non-Emergent responses and/or transports will consist of nonemergency responses or transports, complying with all federal, state and local traffic laws. If personnel from another unit are needed to assist during an EMS transport, remaining personnel proceeding to the hospital shall proceed in a non-emergent mode unless emergency response is requested by the Duty Officer.

**401.01.07 Policy**

When operating District owned emergency vehicles, personnel shall comply with this policy at all times.

1. Only authorized drivers are permitted to drive and operate emergency vehicles.
2. Vehicles shall be operated in compliance with all federal, state and local traffic laws and regulations.
3. Drivers of emergency response vehicles shall be directly responsible for the safe and prudent operation of the vehicle under all conditions.
4. Drivers shall not operate emergency response vehicles until all persons in the vehicle are seated and secured with proper safety restraints.
5. All persons riding in emergency response vehicles shall be properly seated and restrained in the vehicle with seat belts at any time the vehicle is in motion.
6. Approved riding positions are designated by the manufacturer of the vehicle and must contain a seat belt restraint.
7. All gear, equipment, tools and bags shall be properly secured and/or stowed in the crew and patient compartments while the vehicle/apparatus is in motion.
8. The only exception to this SOP is for personnel performing or assisting in critical lifesaving care on patients in the back of an ambulance. Personnel should properly secure themselves whenever possible.
9. During non-emergency travel, drivers of emergency response vehicles shall obey all traffic control signals and signs; conforming to any and all federal, state and local laws and regulations.
10. Regardless if a ambulance is equipped with electronic backing enhancements and/or aids, a spotter will be used during the backing of an ambulance.
11. When backing an ambulance, the driver should roll down his/her window in order to have a clear line of communication with the designated spotter.
12. The spotter should be sure to remain in the clear sight of the vehicle operator through the rear-view mirrors.
13. The spotter should be located on the driver’s side of the vehicle in direct visual sight of the driver and shall survey the area of hazards such as traffic, pedestrians, parked vehicles and or other obstructions.
14. The spotter shall assist the driver in backing of the vehicle using visual signals and or audible communications as is most appropriate.
15. All personnel should maintain awareness of hazards such as traffic that may endanger the spotter.
16. When in doubt, personal safety should be placed above any risk or damage to the ambulance.
17. The spotter is responsible for notifying the driver when to STOP.
18. The spotter shall utilize these standardized visual hand signals when assisting a vehicle operator in the backing process:
	1. STOP- both arms raised above head with fists closed. Be sure to yell the stop loud enough so the driver can hear the warning.
	2. BACKUP- One hand above the head with palm toward face, waving back. Other hand at your side (left or right hand optional).
	3. LEFT or RIGHT- Both arms pointing the same direction with index fingers extended. (Driver will advise the spotter which way the turn will be made. The spotter then assists the driver in backing ambulance. The driver’s intentions must be verbally communicated to the spotter.)

**401.01.08 Ambulance Positioning**

1. Drivers shall position their vehicle in a way that affords the crew the best possible tactical advantage and safety. This is determined by the Officer in Charge or Incident Commander and is based upon the nature of the emergency.
2. Special considerations for EMS and Rescue incidents should be made to position vehicles in a way that allow for access and egress to and from the scene by other emergency vehicles.
3. Care should be taken to ensure the safety of all personnel by positioning apparatus to protect responders working at the scene of an emergency.
4. The ambulance should only be driven or parked on level, hard-packed surfaces.
5. The usage of the vehicle parking brake is mandatory prior to the driver exiting the vehicle.
6. Unless otherwise specified, the use of visual warning devices should be used when parking apparatus on the scene of an emergency incident.