

CHAPTER 112
EMERGENCY CALLS

DISCUSSION: Responding to calls for immediate police assistance and service is one of the most important functions of the Police Officer. To carry out this urgent responsibility, it is necessary that the responding officers arrive at the scene where they are needed as quickly, and at the same time as safely, as possible. A speedy response can be the means of saving a life, reducing the extent of serious injury or apprehending a felon. In order to be of any assistance, however, the officers must first arrive safely.

An emergency call should not be a signal for a Police Officer to jeopardize his own safety or the safety of others by failing to use good judgment and all due caution in proceeding to the scene. The desire to be of immediate assistance is commendable, but a serious collision could prevent the officer from ever completing his emergency assignment.

An emergency call can be described as a request for immediate police assistance in a situation where there is actual danger of serious injury or death and includes the following:

- A. A robbery or other felony in progress where deadly force has been used or threatened.
- B. A Police Officer in trouble whose safety is directly threatened.
- C. A bombing or explosion of any kind.
- D. A major fire, a building collapse or any serious accident.
- E. Any incident in which a person is in danger of drowning, suffocation, asphyxiation or electrocution.
- F. An attempted suicide.
- G. A shooting or stabbing.
- H. A violent felony in progress or just occurred.
- I. A burglary in progress.
- J. An auto theft in progress.
- K. Auto mobile accidents involving injuries.
- L. Alarms with known information that indicates a crime in progress or one where information is not available to make a reasonable determination.

- M. Any other situation in which human life is endangered. Persons receiving the initial call for police assistance have a most important role to play in the processing of emergency calls. It is their responsibility to obtain as much information as possible from the caller and to clearly, carefully and correctly pass this information on to responding Police Officers. Great care must be taken to obtain information regarding use or threatened use of firearms and to so inform officers in order that they may take all necessary precautions on arriving at the scene. An emergency call for immediate police assistance must always be clearly communicated to officers in the field in order to assist them in differentiating between emergency calls and calls for routine police service.

112.1.1 Call Intake

- A. An emergency call is a request for immediate police assistance where there is a clear and present danger of actual physical injury or death.
- B. It will be the responsibility of the telecommunicator to obtain the exact location and all the necessary facts for the information and guidance of the responding officers.
- C. The telecommunicator will use the alert tone:
1. For violent felony crimes in progress.
 2. For an officer in need of emergency assistance.
 3. At the request of an officer on the scene.

112.1.2 Emergency Response

- A. It will be the responsibility of the assigned officers to immediately proceed to the scene of the emergency.
- B. Officers responding to the scene of an emergency shall use all due care and good judgment to minimize the danger to themselves or others.
- C. While proceeding to the scene, responding officers shall maintain radio contact in order to clarify initial information or to receive additional instructions. They should also be on the alert for any vehicles, pedestrians or etc. that may be involved in the incident or otherwise connected to the suspected crime scene.
- D. Officers responding to the scene of an emergency shall use appropriate emergency lights and siren IAW AOM 100 (Operation of Department Vehicles).
- E. In responding to an emergency where firearms have been reported, used or threatened, officers should

take all necessary precautions and prepare to take appropriate defensive action.

- F. In order to have the capability to respond effectively to call for emergency service, officers are expected to be familiar with patrol areas including the streets, principal street intersections and the various public and private buildings in that area. Officers should be familiar with places that might be vulnerable to criminal activities such as banks, liquor stores, drug stores, gas stations, etc. and the best routes to those locations if an emergency arises. Officers should review area locations in advance concerning action to be taken, methods of approach, entry and escape routes or traffic hazards that might be encountered.

112.1.3 On-Scene Responsibilities

- A. The scene of a fire, explosion or other emergency where the primary responsibility belongs to the Fire Department, a Police Officer will not enter the building unless it is absolutely necessary to save a life or to perform a proper police function at the request of the fire official in charge of the scene.
- B. Upon arriving at the emergency scene, the first Police Officer present will make a quick assessment of the situation and notify the telecommunicator and/or patrol supervisor, who shall then insure required notifications, are made. If, in his judgment additional assistance is needed, he will so inform the telecommunicator.
- C. The initial officer on the scene should survey the scene for safety, secure the area, check for any medical needs, interview witnesses, collect/preserve evidence, advise other units/telecommunications of pertinent up-dates and begin a preliminary report.

112.1.4 Supervisor Responsibilities

Supervisors shall monitor Emergency Radio Traffic and keep abreast of the development of each situation. It would be impractical for a supervisor to respond to every Emergency Call. There are calls which would be classified as "true" emergencies. These calls often require supervisors to be present to ensure legal concerns are met and there is adherence to Departmental Policy.