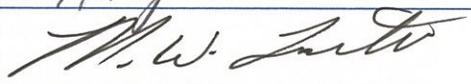
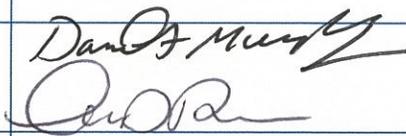


	Standard Operating Guideline: OPS 18	
	Subject:	POV Use and Driver Eligibility Policy
	Effective Date:	May 18, 2015
	Revision Date:	May 15, 2017
	Approval:	
	EMS Representative:	
	Fire Representative:	
	Career Representative:	
Director:		

I. Introduction

- A. The United States Fire Administration (USFA) *United States Firefighter Fatality Retrospective Study 1990 – 2000* showed that since 1984, between 20 and 25 percent of all fire fighter fatalities are related to motor vehicle collisions, and one-quarter of those involved privately owned vehicles.
- B. It is recognized that most volunteer fire and EMS agencies do not require personnel to stand by in the station, and in fact, many members are permitted to respond directly to an incident from somewhere other than the station in their POVs. The work situation in which an employer has the least control over motor vehicle operation is one where a worker drives a personal vehicle for work purposes. Similarly, when an emergency responder drives a personal vehicle to respond to the station or the emergency scene, the agency has little or no control.
- C. Franklin County recognizes the importance of standards for Privately Owned Vehicles (POV's) utilized for volunteer Fire Department and EMS agency activities. These activities include but are not limited to attendance at alarms, drills, meetings or work details.
- D. Safety of fire and EMS personnel and the general public are the primary consideration any time a member reports to an emergency in a POV.
- E. In accordance with NFPA 1500, section 6.2.3 "fire departments shall enact specific rules and regulations pertaining to the use of privately-owned vehicles for emergency response." In addition to following the NFPA 1500 standard, it is necessary for fire departments to ensure that department SOGs and state and local speed limit laws for safe driving and operating a POV are followed while responding to an alarm.

- F. Violations of this guideline may subject members to disciplinary action.
- G. The District Chief, EMS agency Captain, or the Director of Public Safety have the right to request a member's driver's license, registration, or insurance card to ensure compliance with this guideline. In addition it is understood that the Department of Public Safety administration office may conduct a driver's license check of a Fire or EMS agency member at any time.

II. Responsibilities of Fire and/or EMS agency Members

- A. All members operating a POV while engaged in a Fire Department or EMS activity must have a valid driver's license.
- B. Any POV utilized for Fire Department or EMS agency activities must be properly insured, possess a current vehicle safety inspection certificate, and be properly registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- C. Any unsafe vehicle condition which could jeopardize the safety of the member or the general public must be corrected prior to being used for Fire Department or EMS agency activities.

III. Driver Training and Eligibility

- A. All members of any Franklin County Public Safety agency who desire to drive county owned apparatus or a Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) to respond to alarms or conduct agency business shall comply with the driving eligibility requirements:
 - 1. All drivers shall complete an Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) before responding to any alarm or conduct agency business in any county owned apparatus.
 - 2. Personnel with a conviction of driving under the influence may not operate county owned apparatus within 5 years of their conviction date.
 - 3. Personnel that have had a suspended driver's permit within the past 12 months may not operate county owned apparatus.
 - 4. Personnel with a medical condition that may impair their driving abilities and are under the care of a licensed physician must submit a physician's statement of approval to operate any county owned apparatus.
 - 5. Prior to operating any county owned apparatus, personnel that have reached the age of 70, must submit an annual physicians release that certifies the person is able to operate the vehicle in a safe manner.
 - 6. Personnel less than 18 years of age may not operate county owned apparatus and are prohibited from using warning devices on any POV when responding to alarms.
 - 7. Personnel suspended from operating any agency owned apparatus due to violations of any of the above policies, shall not be eligible to operate any agency owned apparatus for a period of 12 months from the effective date.

8. An annual driving history report from the Department of Motor Vehicles shall be obtained by the Department of Public Safety for every person eligible to operate county owned apparatus.
9. Prior to operating county apparatus, the Director of Public Safety shall determine eligibility of the applicant.
10. A driver's history report shall be prepared for all applicants. Applicants shall sign a written release for Department of Public Safety personnel to obtain the drivers history transcript.
11. All EMS agency members that are authorized to operate county owned apparatus are required to report, in writing, any conviction for a traffic infraction to their EMS agency Captain and the Director of Public Safety within five (5) days of conviction as outlined in the Office of EMS regulations.

IV. Operation of Privately Owned Vehicles in Response to an Alarm

- A. Members responding to the station in their POV shall utilize due regard for the safety of themselves and others on the highway.
- B. Members who are under the influence of alcoholic beverages or medication which would impair his or her judgment are not permitted to respond to alarms. For the purpose of this section, under the influence of alcohol shall be defined as having a blood alcohol content greater than .02%. Illegal drugs shall be any substance that is not prescribed by a licensed physician and is present in the bloodstream upon testing.
- C. While it is recognized that timeliness in response to an emergency is important, it is imperative that all drivers understand that private vehicles are not emergency vehicles and therefore are not afforded any exemptions or special privileges under state law. Members responding to an alarm are not exempted from following the traffic laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- D. Members responding to an alarm or traveling on department related business in their POV must be secured inside the vehicle by a seatbelt in a riding position.
- E. Members responding to any alarm shall not exceed the posted speed limit and shall operate the POV at a safe speed relative to traffic conditions that allow the responder to maintain control of the vehicle at all times.

V. Use of Warning Devices on Privately Owned Vehicles (POV's)

- A. Members of a Fire Department or EMS agency are permitted to utilize red or red/white warning lights in response to an alarm as outlined in section § 46.2-1024 of the Code of Virginia.
- B. Probationary Members and Junior Members are **not** permitted to utilize any type of warning devices while responding to an alarm.
- C. The District Chief, EMS agency Captain, or the Director of Public Safety have the right to revoke the privilege to use warning devices on privately owned vehicles for any

member found operating their POV in a reckless manner or operating their POV in violation of these guidelines.

VI. Accidents involving privately owned vehicles (POV's)

- A. In the event a responder is involved in an accident while responding to an emergency call in a privately owned vehicle, the driver shall adhere to the guideline pertaining to accidents involving county owned apparatus. This guideline requires the following immediate measures to be taken:
1. The vehicle should be driven to the nearest safe location off the highway and out of traffic if possible.
 2. The driver shall assess their passengers, or passengers in any other vehicle involved for injuries.
 3. Provide any needed emergency assistance to injured victims.
 4. The driver shall immediately report the accident to Law Enforcement and request them to respond by notifying dispatch via phone or radio to conduct an investigation.
 5. The member shall immediately notify their District Chief or the Public Safety Captain.
 6. Locate any witnesses to the accident and obtain their contact information which will be included with the Public Safety Accident report.
 7. A Public Safety Accident report shall be completed and submitted to Public Safety office within 72 hours of the accident.
 8. The driver shall be tested for drugs/alcohol as required for post-incident testing.
 9. Franklin County will reimburse the driver for their insurance deductible up to \$500 per incident provided the vehicle was being operated within the department's response guidelines and in accordance with the Code of Virginia.
 10. To be eligible for reimbursement, the driver shall submit the following documentation to Public Safety:
 - a. Copy of the police accident report, if reportable. If unreportable, the name and contact information of the investigating law enforcement officer.
 - b. Public Safety Vehicle Accident report.
 - c. Copy of the member's driver's license.
 - d. Copy of the vehicle registration certificate.
 - e. Copy of the insurance policy declaration page for the vehicle involved in the accident that shows the policy deductible amount.
- B. Accidents involving privately owned vehicles shall be reviewed annually by the Driving Review Committee.