



HEMPFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT – OPERATIONS

200.4 – OPERATION OF APPARATUS

ISSUED:

January 25, 2021

REVISED:

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this standard operating policy is to state general guidelines for response of apparatus to both emergency and non-emergency calls.

SCOPE:

This standard operating policy shall apply to all Hempfield Fire Department Firefighters

ENFORCEMENT:

The Fire Chief and all Hempfield Fire Department Officers are ultimately responsible for ensuring the safety of firefighters in Hempfield Township. Any person deviating from this policy may be required within five days to submit in writing within the Fire Chief an explanation for the deviation from this policy.

GENERAL:

1. General
 - a. Prior to entering the cab, the driver shall circle the vehicle to ensure all compartment doors and equipment are secured and any physical obstructions are moved out of the way.
2. Response Speed
 - a. When responding in the emergency response mode, drivers shall operate as close to the posted speed limit as possible, but not to exceed ten (10) miles per hour over the posted speed limit in a safe and prudent manner, roadway and weather conditions permitting.
 - b. Conditions that may require slower response speeds include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Slippery road conditions
 - ii. Inclement weather
 - iii. Poor visibility

- iv. Heavy or congested traffic conditions
- v. Sharp curves

1. Intersection Practices

A. Uncontrolled intersections:

- i. When an emergency vehicle approaches any intersection that does not offer a control device (stop sign, yield or traffic signal) in the direction of travel of the emergency vehicle or where the traffic signal is green for the emergency vehicle, drivers shall do the following:
 - a. Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, fast moving vehicles, etc.).
 - b. Observe traffic in all 4 directions.
 - c. Slow down if any hazards are detected and cover the brake pedal with driver's foot.
 - d. Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from intersection.
 - e. Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible.
- ii. Drivers should not force or assume that the emergency vehicle driver has the right of way, and drivers should be prepared to stop.

B. Controlled intersections:

- i. When an emergency vehicle approaches any intersection controlled by a stop sign, yield sign, yellow or red traffic light, the driver shall come to a complete stop before proceeding through the intersection.
- ii. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, the following steps shall be performed:
 - a. Do not rely on warning devices to clear traffic.
 - b. Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, fast moving vehicles, etc.).
 - c. Observe traffic in all 4 directions.
 - d. Begin to slow down well before the intersection and cover the brake pedal with driver's foot.
 - e. Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from intersection.

- f. Scan intersection for possible passing options; avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible.
- g. Establish eye contact with other drivers; have officer communicate all is clear reconfirming all other vehicles have stopped.
- h. Proceed one lane at a time treating each lane as a separate intersection.

C. Railroad intersections:

- i. When an emergency vehicle approaches an unguarded rail crossing, the driver shall bring the apparatus to a complete stop before entering the crossing.
- ii. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, the following steps shall be performed:
 - a. Turn off all sirens and air horns.
 - b. Operate the vehicle's engine at idle speed.
 - c. Turn off any other sound producing equipment or accessories.
 - d. Open the window and listen for a train's horn.

D. School Bus with Red Lights Activated:

- i. When an emergency vehicle approaches a school bus with activated red lights, the driver shall bring the apparatus to a complete stop.
- ii. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, the following steps shall be performed:
 - a. Reduce speeds when approaching a school bus that is stopped for loading or unloading.
 - b. Be observant of any students who may be at bus stops or crossing the street near the bus.
 - c. Come to a complete stop a safe distance from the stopped school bus.
 - d. If the school bus driver signals the driver to proceed:
 - 1. Look right, left, right, and left to ensure that no children are in the roadway.
 - 2. Proceed at a rate of no more than five miles per hour past the bus.
 - 3. Scan the area to make sure that no students are in the street in the area of the rear of the bus.

4. Continue to respond in a safe and prudent manner.

E. School Zone:

- i. When an emergency vehicle approaches a school zone, the driver shall operate the vehicle at the posted school zone speed limit.

F. Crosswalk:

- i. When approaching a crosswalk, the vehicle operator shall operate the vehicle at the posted speed limit and be prepared to stop if a pedestrian is located in the crosswalk. Fire apparatus will stop in order to allow pedestrians located in the crosswalk to cross the street.