

**East Lansing Police Department
Policy & Procedure**

Subject: Responding to Calls for Service & Occupant Seat belt & Safety Restraints	ELPD Policy #: 300-18
Effective Date: March 1, 2022 Revised Date:	Distribution: Departmental
MACP Accreditation Standard:	MACP Standard: 3.5.1, 3.5.8

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide members of the East Lansing Police Department with guidelines to follow when operating any Department vehicle, including emergency driving and high-speed pursuits. No task, call or incident justifies operating a department vehicle in a manner which jeopardizes the public or officer safety, except as provided in this policy.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the East Lansing Police Department that all police vehicles shall be operated in a safe and efficient manner while adhering to department established guidelines.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Definitions

1. **Authorized Emergency Vehicle:** Vehicles equipped with overhead oscillating top lights and siren.
2. **Emergency Equipment:** Overhead oscillating top lights and siren. When this policy refers to using "emergency equipment" the officer shall use the overhead oscillating top lights and the siren, unless the situation requires the officer to respond silently without giving warning to the suspect, as authorized under MCLA 257.632.
3. **Emergency Driving:** The driving of an authorized emergency vehicle with the emergency equipment activated. Officers are authorized to use emergency driving when pursuing a fleeing vehicle, responding to an emergency, or as authorized in this policy. Officers engaged in emergency driving shall use the overhead oscillating top lights and the siren unless the situation requires the officer to respond silently.

4. **Emergency:** An event, condition, or situation where there is a need for immediate medical attention due to a medical emergency, where a serious injury has occurred or there is a possibility that further serious injury or a death could occur. Information has been received of a “crime in progress” that could result in a serious injury, a fatality or the escape of a dangerous suspect who presents a significant threat to the life or to the safety of others.
5. **Department Vehicle:** Any vehicle owned by the City and operated by a member of the East Lansing Police Department (i.e. marked patrol vehicles, semi-marked patrol vehicles, P.A.C.E. vehicles, Detective vehicles and Administrative vehicles).

B. Accountability

1. Officers shall operate police vehicles with due regard for the safety of others. Officers shall discontinue emergency driving whenever factors or circumstances arise such that the danger to the public would outweigh the benefits of apprehending the suspect.
2. Officers shall drive in a manner that enables them to always keep their vehicles under control and to exercise due care and caution. Supervisors shall monitor vehicle emergency driving to ensure it is consistent with Department policy.

C. Emergency Runs (3.5.1)

1. If an officer of the East Lansing Police Department feels that an emergency exists based upon the definition contained in this policy, the officer is permitted to activate the emergency equipment.
2. MCLA 257.632 provides that an officer responding to an emergency, must activate lights and siren to obtain an exemption to violate speed laws unless the situation requires the officer to respond without giving warning to the suspected law violators. Even though the law allows for this exemption, the officer must still respond with due regard for the safety of others.

D. Responding to Accidents

1. **Personal Injury Accidents:**
 - a. Officers may respond to personal injury accidents using emergency equipment. Officers shall consider such factors as: the number of reported calls into dispatch, nature and

severity of injuries, other units responding, time of day, location, weather, and traffic conditions.

2. Property Damage Accidents:

- a. Officers shall not use emergency equipment. Officers are to respond following all traffic regulations.

3. Unknown Injury Accidents:

- a. Officers shall not use emergency equipment, unless the officer has reason to believe that there are extenuating circumstances where it is imperative that the police arrive as soon as possible. Officers shall consider such factors as: the time of day, weather conditions, location of accident, number of reported calls to dispatch, pedestrian traffic, etc.

E. Responding to Alarms

1. Officers may respond to an alarm using emergency equipment when they have reason to believe that a threat to life or a threat of physical harm may occur. The officer may respond silently to an alarm, as authorized under MCLA 257.632. When responding to alarms, officers shall consider factors such as: the time of day, type of alarm, number of previous alarms at same address, additional dispatch information, traffic conditions, pedestrian traffic, etc.

F. Responding to Fights/Domestic Assaults

1. Officers may respond to a fight call or a domestic assault call using emergency equipment when they have reason to believe that a threat to life or a threat of serious physical harm may occur. When responding to fight calls, officers shall consider factors such as: the time of day, number of officers on scene, dispatch information, pedestrian traffic, any weapons involved, etc.

G. Responding to Unknown Trouble Calls

1. Examples of an unknown trouble call are: 911 hang-up calls, open doors at a residence, trespassers, suspicious situations call, check subject calls, etc.
2. Officers shall not use emergency equipment unless the officer has reason to believe that a threat to life or a threat of serious physical harm may occur.

3. When responding to these types of calls, officers shall consider factors such as: the time of day, number of officers on scene, dispatch information, pedestrian traffic, etc.

H. Responding to a "Crime In Progress"

1. Officers may use emergency equipment when responding to a "crime in progress" in the following situations. The officer may respond silently when required, as authorized under MCLA 257.632.
 - a. There is an immediate threat to life or an immediate threat of serious physical harm.
 - b. A dangerous suspect who presents a significant threat to the life, or to the safety of others may escape.
 - c. The "crime in progress" could result in a serious injury, a fatality, or the escape of a dangerous suspect who presents a significant threat to the life or to the safety of others. Some examples would be Home Invasion, B&E, Arson, etc., where a victim's safety could be placed at risk. The responding officer does not have to know if a victim is physically present at the scene.
2. Officers shall not use emergency equipment when responding to crimes involving the theft of property or damage to property unless they receive authorization from the on-duty supervisor. Some examples would be, but not limited to, MDOP's, LFA's, larcenies, retail frauds, etc.
3. The on-duty supervisor may authorize an officer to respond with emergency equipment to a property type crime based upon, but not limited to, the following factors.
 - a. Based upon the information just received, the crime is likely to be a felony that would justify an emergency response.
 - b. Based upon the information just received, or upon prior information known to the officer or the supervisor, there have been recent thefts or damage in the area that would justify an emergency response in an attempt to apprehend the suspect.

4. If an officer is unsure how they should respond to a specific “crime in progress,” they should contact the on-duty supervisor for guidance.

I. Responding to ELPD / Medical Assists

1. Officers shall not use emergency equipment, unless the officer has reason to believe there are extenuating circumstances where it is imperative the police arrive as soon as possible. Examples would be victims of drowning, heart attack, choking, people in a burning building, etc.
2. When responding to a Medic Assist call, officers shall consider factors such as: where the officer is responding from, road and weather conditions, updated dispatch information, etc.
3. Considering the above factors, officers may respond to a medical assist call using emergency equipment when they have reason to believe a threat to life or a threat of serious physical harm may occur.

K. Seatbelt Requirement (3.5.8)

1. Department personnel are required to make sure that all occupants shall wear their seatbelt and/or shoulder harness while in a department vehicle is in motion unless it is unsafe for the officer and/or prisoner.

IV. CANCELLATIONS

Authorized By:



Kim Johnson, Chief of Police

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