



Peoria Police Department

Policy Manual

Officer Response to Calls

316.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides for the safe and appropriate response to all emergency and non-emergency situations.

316.2 RESPONSE TO CALLS

Officers responding to an emergency call shall proceed immediately. Officers responding to an emergency call shall continuously operate emergency lighting equipment and shall sound the siren as reasonably necessary (ARS § 28-624(B)).

Responding with emergency lights and siren does not relieve the operator of an authorized emergency vehicle of the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and does not protect the driver from the consequences of his/her reckless disregard for the safety of others (ARS § 28-624(B)). The use of any other warning equipment without emergency lights and siren does not provide any exemption from the Arizona motor vehicle laws.

Officers should only respond as an emergency call response when so dispatched or when circumstances reasonably indicate an emergency response is required. Officers not responding as an emergency call response shall observe all traffic laws and proceed without the use of emergency lights and siren.

A priority one call is any life-threatening call which involves the possibility of death or serious injury, any confrontation between two or more people that could threaten the life or safety of any person; or any call in which the delay in dispatch may compromise the immediate apprehension of a suspect who may have been involved in a serious crime that was violent or is a danger to the public (domestic violence, robbery, homicide, burglary, home invasion etc).

A priority two call is defined as an in-progress or just occurred call for service that does not pose an immediate threat to a person's life, safety, or property and where immediate apprehension of a suspect(s) is unlikely or a delay in dispatch may compromise the immediate apprehension on a non-violent minor crime (shoplifting, minor theft, trespassing, etc) . Also includes non-injury traffic accidents or those accidents that create a traffic hazard.

Priority three calls are defined as calls in which there is little or no likelihood of apprehending a suspect, or where life or property is not subject to threat. A delay in response of an officer will not decrease the quality of police service but will provide time management of patrol operations. It is the responsibility of the on-duty Patrol supervisor to ensure the calls for service are addressed within the established time frame.

Priority four calls are defined as non-emergency calls for service and may be assigned to a call-back officer or police services officer. Generally, these calls will be handled by telephone; however, they may also include lobby walk-ins, online reports, or counter reports.

316.2.1 NON-EMERGENCY (907) BACK-UP REQUEST

A back-up request is to be used on those occasions where the requesting officer is in no immediate danger, but there is potential for the situation to escalate into a more serious matter or there is another need for another unit(s) (i.e. transport, etc.).

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316.3 REQUESTING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Requests for emergency assistance should be limited to those situations where the involved personnel reasonably believe there is an imminent threat to the safety of officers, or assistance is needed to prevent imminent serious harm to a citizen. Where a situation has stabilized and emergency response is not required, the requesting officer shall promptly notify Communications Section.

If circumstances permit, the requesting officer should give the following information:

- The unit number
- The location
- The reason for the request and type of emergency
- The number of units required

316.3.1 NUMBER OF UNITS PARTICIPATING

Normally, only those units reasonably necessary should respond to an emergency as an emergency call response. The field supervisor should monitor all emergency responses and reduce or enhance the response as warranted.

316.4 INITIATING EMERGENCY CALL RESPONSE

If an officer believes an emergency call response to any call is appropriate, the officer shall immediately notify Communications Section. Emergency responses of more than one unit should include, if circumstances reasonably permit, coordination of the response of the second responding unit by Communications Section to avoid unanticipated intersecting of response routes.

An emergency call response of more than one unit should initiate notification by Communications Section to the field supervisor. The field supervisor will make a determination regarding the appropriateness of the response and reduce or enhance the response as warranted.

316.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPONDING OFFICER

Officers shall exercise sound judgment and care with due regard for life and property when responding to an emergency call. During a response to an emergency call officers may (ARS § 28-624(B)):

- Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
- Exceed the prima facie speed limits if the driver does not endanger life or property.
- Disregard laws or rules governing the direction of movement or turning in specified directions.
- Disregard regulations governing parking or standing when using a warning lamp.

Continuing an emergency call response is at the discretion of the officer. If, in the officer's judgment, the roadway conditions or traffic congestion does not permit such a response without unreasonable risk, the officer may elect to respond to the call without the use of red lights and siren at the legal speed limit. In such an event, the officer should immediately notify Communications Section. An officer shall also discontinue an emergency call response when directed by a supervisor or as otherwise appropriate.

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Upon determining that an emergency call response is appropriate, an officer shall immediately give the location from which he/she is responding.

316.6 COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

A dispatcher shall ensure acknowledgment and response of assisting units when an officer request emergency assistance or when the available information reasonably indicates that the public is threatened with serious injury or death and an immediate law enforcement response is needed. In all other circumstances, the dispatcher shall obtain authorization from the Patrol Lieutenant or a field supervisor prior to assigning an emergency response. The dispatcher shall:

- Attempt to assign the closest available unit to the location requiring assistance.
- Confirm the location from which the unit is responding.
- Notify and coordinate outside emergency services (e.g., fire and ambulance).
- Continue to obtain and broadcast information as necessary concerning the response, and monitor the situation until it is stabilized or terminated.
- Control all radio communications during the emergency and coordinate assistance under the direction of the field supervisor.

316.7 SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being notified that an emergency response has been initiated, the field supervisor shall verify the following:

- The proper response has been initiated.
- No more than those units reasonably necessary under the circumstances are involved in the response.
- Affected outside jurisdictions are being notified as practicable.

The field supervisor shall, whenever practicable, monitor the response until it has been stabilized or terminated, and assert control by directing units into or out of the response if necessary. If, in the supervisor's judgment, the circumstances require additional units to be assigned an emergency response, the supervisor may do so.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to terminate an emergency response that, in his/her judgment, is inappropriate due to the circumstances.

When making the decision to authorize an emergency call response, the field supervisor should consider the following:

- The type of call or crime involved
- The necessity of a timely response
- Traffic and roadway conditions
- The location of the responding units

316.8 FAILURE OF EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

If the emergency equipment on the vehicle should fail to operate, the officer must terminate the emergency call response and respond accordingly (ARS § 28-624(C)).

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The officer shall notify the field supervisor or Communications Section of the equipment failure so that another unit may be assigned to the emergency response.