

POLICY #306 EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS/LIGHTING EXEMPTION

306.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The State of Minnesota finds that emergency vehicle operations are an integral part of law enforcement's commitment to public safety. This policy provides for the safe and appropriate response to all emergency and nonemergency situations (Minn. Stat. 626.8458 Subd 1).

306.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Vehicle: Means a motor vehicle or watercraft owned, leased or otherwise the property of the State of Minnesota or a political subdivision.

Lights: refers to headlights, taillights and marine navigational lighting as referenced in MN STAT 84.87, 84.928, 169.48 to 169.65 and 86B.511 or emergency lights/flashers or strobe lights

306.2 RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY CALLS

Deputies responding to an emergency call shall proceed immediately as appropriate. Drivers of Law Enforcement vehicles responding to an emergency call shall sound an audible signal by siren or display at least one red light to the front. (Minn. Stat. 169.17 et seq.).

306.3 LIGHTING EXEMPTION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES (POST REQUIRED)

A peace officer may not operate a vehicle without light contrary to MN STAT 169.541. LIGHTING EXEMPTION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT; STANDARDS. under conditions of limited or reduced visibility as defined in MN STAT 84.87, 84.928, 169.48 to 169.65 and 86B.511:

- on an interstate highway
- at speeds greater than what is reasonable and prudent under existing weather, road and traffic conditions.
- faster than the posted speed limit
- in situations where the peace officer is an active participant in the pursuit of a motor vehicle in violation of MN STAT 609.487.

306.4 REQUESTING OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Requests for emergency assistance should be limited to those situations where the involved personnel reasonably believe that there is an imminent threat to the safety of deputies, 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 deputy shall promptly notify Dispatch.

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

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

306.5 NUMBER OF UNITS PARTICIPATING

Normally, only those units reasonably necessary should respond to an emergency as an emergency call response.

306.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPONDING DEPUTY(S)

Deputies 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 deputies may (Minn. Stat. 169.03):

- Proceed cautiously past a red or stop signal or stop sign but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
- Exceed any speed limits, provided this does not endanger life or property.
- Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions as authorized by law.
- Disregard regulations governing parking or standing when using a warning lamp.

During a response to an emergency call deputies will.

- use all emergency lights and siren
- During day light hours and conducting accident investigations, assisting with traffic investigations or conducting traffic control at any scene all emergency lights will be used.
- During the night time hours all emergency lighting and siren will be used when responding to any emergencies, or while in pursuit. Once the patrol vehicle is stopped deputies may extinguish forward facing emergency lighting to prevent flash blindness to conduct investigations while outside of the squad car; otherwise all emergency lights should be activated.

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

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

When emergency vehicles are on the scene of an emergency and pose any hazard, or when the vehicle operators seek exemption to park, stop or stand contrary to any law or ordinance pursuant to MINN. STAT. 169.541, adequate warning lights shall be operated.