

AURORA POLICE DEPARTMENT

DIRECTIVES MANUAL

04.02 EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLE OPERATION

Approved By:	Todd Chamberlain, Chief of Police
Effective:	Oct-14-2024
Revised:	Oct-14-2024
Associated Policy:	DM 04.01, DM 04.15
References:	C.R.S. § 42-4-108
Review Authority:	Professional Standards and Training Division Chief and APD Legal Advisor(s)

4.2.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide guidance to sworn members in using department vehicles for emergency responses. A sworn member's primary responsibility during an emergency response is the safety and welfare of the public, themselves, and other members of the Aurora Police Department (APD).

4.2.02 SCOPE

This directive applies to all sworn members of APD.

4.2.03 POLICY

Sworn members will conduct safe emergency vehicle operations as specified by this directive. Members shall use sound judgment and discretion while focusing on the safety and welfare of all persons during every emergency response situation.

4.2.04 DEFINITIONS

Emergency Response/Operation: Driving a marked or unmarked police vehicle with the emergency lights and/or siren in operation and in accordance with the Colorado Revised Statutes and applicable municipal ordinances.

4.2.05 CORE PRINCIPLES

Duty to Drive with Due Regard: While operating during an emergency response, members shall comply with Colorado State Law governing emergency vehicle operations. Members shall weigh the risks of driving in emergency operation against the nature of the emergency.

Sanctity and Dignity of All Individuals: Sworn members shall make every effort to respect and preserve human life and always uphold the value and dignity of all persons. The life, safety, and welfare of all persons are paramount when carrying out the duties of a peace officer.

Continuous Assessment: Members shall continuously assess each situation and change the member's response as the circumstances change.

4.2.06 AUTHORIZED EMERGENCY RESPONSE

A sworn member may operate a department vehicle using emergency response under the following conditions:

1. The department vehicle is equipped with emergency lights and siren.
2. When responding to a priority one or two call, as defined in [DM 08.04 - Call Priority Designations](#). If the sworn member has reasonable, articulable justification for choosing a more appropriate level of response, members may alter their response accordingly and will advise Aurora911 as soon as practical. Supervisors will maintain the authority to alter response modes.
3. When attempting to conduct a traffic stop.
4. When involved in a police vehicle pursuit, as directed by [DM 04.15 - Police Vehicle Pursuits](#).
5. When providing police escorts for motorcades, funerals, etc., and with a supervisor's approval.

4.2.07 EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDELINES

Factors in deciding to drive a department vehicle in emergency response include, but are not limited to:

1. The nature and seriousness of the offense or the call for service.
2. Current road or environmental conditions.
3. Familiarity with the route and destination.
4. Pedestrian and vehicular density.

Adherence to law during an emergency response:

A sworn member operating a department vehicle under emergency response conditions will use emergency equipment (emergency lights and/or siren) to give adequate warning to motorists and pedestrians of their approach. A sworn member operating a department vehicle under emergency response conditions will do so according to the provisions of Colorado Revised Statutes, specifically C.R.S. § 42-4-108, in its entirety. The State law suspends compliance with some traffic laws. Still, it does not relieve the sworn member of the responsibility of safe vehicle operation or justify actions that imperil the lives of others. Members, when responding to an emergency call, may:

1. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
2. Exceed the lawful speed limits so long as the member does not endanger life or property.
3. Disregard regulations governing directions of movement or turning in specified directions.

Requirements for emergency response operations:

1. Sworn members shall notify Aurora911 in accordance with [DM 08.04 - Call Priority Designations](#).
2. During an emergency response, any make/model of a vehicle equipped with an Electronic Stability Control System (ESC) will be operated in the manufacturer's default setting.
3. Sworn members operating a vehicle in an emergency response manner should pass to the left of vehicles traveling in the same direction if possible.

4. When operating department vehicles in an emergency response manner, sworn members shall slow to allow safe passage through intersections.
5. Sworn members making sudden turns across moving traffic, U-turns, or other direction changes should only do so after ensuring such movement can be completed safely.
6. Sworn members on the scene of an incident shall continually assess whether an emergency response is required and, when practical, advise other responding units to alter their response accordingly.