



FIELD ORDERS

Chapter
TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT and ENFORCEMENT

Subject
Emergency (Code 3) Driving

DEFINITION

Emergency Driving or Code 3 Driving: Continued operation of an authorized emergency vehicle by a sworn law enforcement officer, with emergency lights and siren operating in compliance with Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) [28-624](#)/Authorized Emergency Vehicles, in response to an emergency.

PRIMARY CONCERN

The primary concern in all emergency (code 3) driving situations is safety and protecting the lives of citizens and officers. Officers must always balance the necessity for emergency driving with the potential risks to fellow officers and citizens based on the totality of the circumstances.

OVERVIEW

CALLS for SERVICE are dispatched based on a priority system that designates the call as Routine, Expedite, Urgent, or Emergency.

1. Routine or Expedite Calls
 - a. Emergency (code 3) driving is not authorized when responding to calls designated as Routine or Expedite.
 - b. Routine or Expedite calls may be upgraded to Urgent or Emergency if additional information is learned. If upgraded, emergency (code 3) driving is permissible **if** the call **also** threatens the life of another officer, employee, or citizen.
2. Urgent or Emergency Calls – Emergency (code 3) driving is authorized for officers when the call has been designated as Urgent or Emergency **and** when a threat to the life of an officer or citizen exists.
 - a. Examples of justified emergency (code 3) driving calls include, but are not limited to:
 - In-progress violent crimes.
 - Assisting another officer in an emergency situation.
 - Other situations where information is known that identifies a threat to life.
 - b. When responding to injury collisions, only drive code 3 if you know you will arrive before emergency medical personnel or when the collision creates a threat to public safety.

OFFICERS

1. Use appropriate discretion when determining the need for emergency driving.
2. When deciding to initiate or continue driving under emergency (code 3) conditions, consider factors such as:
 - Traffic volume.
 - Time of day.
 - Type of incident involved and potential hazards to yourself, other employees, and/or the public.
3. Announce emergency driving on the radio, including code 3 driving to assist an officer involved in a pursuit.
4. Intermittent use of lights and siren to clear an intersection does not require announcing emergency response on the air, but continually reevaluate your decision for intermittent use throughout the incident.
5. Ensure you have sufficient facts and information to justify your decision to drive under emergency conditions.

NON-SWORN PERSONNEL

1. Are not authorized to drive code 3.
2. Using emergency lights at a collision scene or motorist assist is permitted to warn motorists of the hazard.

POLICY

- A. When a call for service is dispatched justifying code 3 driving:
 1. Only the closest officers respond code 3.
 2. No more than three units and a supervisor respond to an emergency unless directed to do so by the concerned supervisor.
 3. Officers not driving code 3 will expedite their response but will not jeopardize their safety or the safety of the public.
 4. If circumstances require additional units to respond code 3, officers added to the call must notify Communications following procedure listed in B. below.
- B. Initiating Emergency (Code 3) Driving
 1. Announce your call sign, "code 3", current location, and your destination if Communications does not know it. The dispatcher need only respond with the call sign and a "10-4".

2. Activate your emergency lights and siren, using them at all times, except when the emergency warning devices may increase the potential for a collision or may unreasonably extend the duration of operating as an emergency vehicle.
 - a. Use standard warning lights, spotlights, or the public address system as warning devices when appropriate and while operating as an emergency vehicle.
 - b. Take necessary steps to ensure the dispatcher understands your transmission, such as rolling up the windows or operating the siren manually.
- C. Supervisors:
1. Have the final authority to determine the need for a code 3 response.
 2. Are responsible for minimizing the risk of conflict between responding officers by predetermining routes and arrival locations when reasonable to do so.

POSTED SPEED LIMIT

1. When exceeding the speed limit during emergency (code 3) driving or when in pursuit, consider the time of day and traffic conditions. Ensure you can articulate the necessity for exceeding the posted speed limit, drive with due care, and proceed with due regard for public safety.
2. Do not exceed the posted speed limit by more than 25 miles per hour (MPH) unless you can articulate specific facts or circumstances that would lead a reasonable police officer to believe a threat to human life is imminent and driving at increased speeds would mitigate that threat.
 - Exception: If you are engaged in traffic enforcement and are pacing or catching up to a vehicle from a stationary position, you may exceed the posted speed limit by more than 25 MPH for a limited time as long as you drive with due care and proceed with due regard for public safety.

