


<b>HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL</b>		
<b>Issue Date</b> February 2021	<b>Review Date</b> February 2022	<b>Directive Number</b> <b>6.2.1</b>
<b>Accreditation Index:</b>		<b>Rescinds:</b> Directive 6.2.1 of November 2019
<b>Chapter:</b> Six – General Procedures		<b>Section:</b> Two – Law Enforcement Functions
<b>Chief of Police:</b> <i>John F. Viola</i>		

**SUBJECT: POLICE RESPONSE TO FIRE OR CRASH SCENES**

**I. PURPOSE**

This directive is issued to establish guidelines for the duties and responsibilities of police officers assigned to reports of fires and/or vehicle crashes.

**II. POLICY**

The very nature of fire and crash dispatches creates multiple concerns for responding police officers, such as, rendering first aid, establishing a secure perimeter around the scene, direction and control of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and coordination of police, fire and emergency medical services at the scene. Therefore the policy of the Department shall be that responding officers shall maintain order, establish secure perimeters around the scene, direct and control both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, expedite movement of emergency equipment into and out of the scene, and cooperate with fire department and emergency medical services in a common effort to protect life and property.

**III. DISPATCH TO FIRES**

- A. Miscellaneous Fires (trash, brush, poles, etc.) - Single engine company response, one patrol unit, supervisor may respond at his/her discretion.
- B. House/ Building Fires – More than one engine company response, two patrol units and the supervisor with geographical responsibility.

## **IV. POLICE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. First Responding Officer Responsibilities**

1. Respond at a safe and prudent speed.
2. First officer on scene, regardless of rank, may request additional police personnel or equipment, if necessary.
3. Shall determine if any life is in immediate danger, if so, every possible effort to affect a rescue shall be made. If a rescue cannot be made, immediately broadcast available information to the Communications Center which can be forwarded to responding fire department and emergency services personnel, to assist them in their initial operations.
4. When there is no immediate danger to life and rescue is not necessary, officers shall not enter the structure on fire. Officers shall assume traffic control positions to expedite the responding fire department equipment arriving on location, or secure a safe perimeter around the fire scene to prevent injury to bystanders or contamination of the scene.
5. Render first aid to injured persons until Emergency Services personnel arrive.

### **B. Supervisor Responsibilities**

1. Shall confer with the fire officer in charge and coordinate the deployment of police officers and police equipment at the scene.
2. Shall request additional manpower to handle traffic problems.
3. Shall contact the Communications Center to designate the best route for the arrival and departure of equipment.
4. Shall assign officers to prevent bystanders from entering within the established perimeter boundaries.
5. If necessary, establish a command post.
6. Assign police officers to assume responsibility of security of a fire scene when released by fire department personnel.
7. Shall request an investigator respond to the scene in the event the fire is determined to be of suspicious origin.
8. Shall request Special Operations Unit officers respond to the scene of severe or fatal injury crashes.

C. Investigation Unit Responsibilities

1. In cooperation with the Fire department, conduct a complete investigation into any fire determined to be of suspicious origin or arson.
2. Complete and submit reports pertaining to the fire investigation in a timely manner and in compliance with Department policies and procedures.

D. Special Operations Unit Responsibilities

1. Respond to the scene of severe or fatal injury crashes and conduct a complete investigation.
2. Complete and submit reports pertaining to the crash investigation in a timely manner and in compliance with Department policies and procedures.

**V. ESTABLISHING PERIMETERS**

A. The highest ranking officer at the scene shall establish perimeter boundaries, taking into consideration the following:

1. A safe working area for fire and emergency services personnel.
2. The safety of bystanders.
3. The safeguarding of nearby unoccupied, damaged, and/or evacuated premises from possible looting.
4. Make a decision as to when a perimeter boundary shall be reduced and removed.
5. Shall park emergency vehicles in such a manner as to not interfere with the flow of vehicular traffic, or block access to fire hydrants.

**BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**