

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

FCGO: 19-10

December 5, 2019

Page 1 of 1

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Scott E. Goldstein 

SUBJECT: Routine BLS Responses and Transports

The practice of indiscriminate use of emergency lights and sirens for the response to routine or non-emergency incidents puts the public and MCFRS personnel at increased risk for injury. Therefore, **effective January 1, 2020**, MCFRS will begin dispatching certain Alpha and Omega-level EMS call types as BLS Routine Responses.

The ECC will dispatch units in the normal manner, and will add the call type grouping **"BLS Routine Response"** and verbalize the units to **"Proceed"** to incidents that involve a non-emergency response.

Example: *"1200 Atlantic Avenue, Cross Street Saint James Place, Sick Person, BLS Routine Response. Ambulance 799 proceed on 7 Bravo. Box area 99-32."*

Station alerting will vocalize **"BLS Routine Response"** and the incident type will contain the text **"BLS Routine Response."**

All units dispatched on these incidents will drive to the scene without the use of emergency lights and sirens in a safe, but prompt manner, following all applicable Maryland motor vehicle laws. Once the units are on the scene and status as such, emergency lights may be activated as needed to provide for safety and/or scene lighting.

When engaged in patient transport, EMS units are only authorized to use emergency lights and sirens for the transport of Priority 1 patients, or Priority 2 patients with unresolved symptoms or pain. EMS units must transport all stable Priority 2 and Priority 3 patients in the routine mode, without the use of emergency lights and sirens. Any decision to deviate from this direction must weigh the clinical benefit of doing so against the increased risk to the patient, the public, and MCFRS personnel and must be made in a deliberate, defensible, and communicated manner. Any time that emergency lights or sirens are used during the transport of a patient, the reasons for doing so must be documented in the electronic patient care report.

For further questions or clarification, contact the EMS Section Chief or Emergency Communications Section Chief.