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Division 13 **Public Affairs**

Chapter 01 – Assisting Displaced Families

January 2010

POLICY

This General Order shall establish the procedure for assisting displaced families. The Incident Commander (IC) shall establish a Citizen Services Group on any incident where a need is identified to provide support or extended services to citizens during or after incident mitigation. Additionally, the guidelines herein shall also be utilized in situations that are not an emergency incident or event, but does result in displacement

DEFINITIONS

N/A

PROCEDURES

1. Emergency Incidents

When it has been determined that an emergency incident has displaced citizens from their place of residence, the Incident Commander will notify the Citizens Services Unit (CSU) and the Red Cross, via Public Safety Communications (PSC). When making this request, the following information shall be provided:

- Number of adults requiring shelter/assistance
- Number of children (under age 18)
- Exact location (rental office, a neighbor's home, etc.) where they can be found upon the arrival of the CSU/Red Cross representative

Under normal conditions, it will take approximately 45 minutes for the Red Cross

representative to arrive on the scene. Therefore, the notification is to be made as early as possible to prevent an additional delay in the delivery of these services to the citizens.

It may be necessary for the representative of the CSU/Red Cross to complete a walk through of the emergency scene to assess the damage and resulting needs of the displaced residents. Every attempt is to be made to accommodate this need in a timely, with the safety of all concerned being the foremost consideration.

It may be necessary to assign groups within the incident command system to coordinate/assist CSU/Red Cross representatives in organizing and tracking residents who are in need of assistance.

The responsibilities of this group will include:

- Overall coordination of the relocation effort
- Provide blankets and a shelter where practical to do so (e.g., apparatus cab, neighbor's home, rental office, etc.) to get occupants out of the weather and gathered at a single location
- Provide an explanation of what is happening (e.g., what we are doing and why and how long we expect to take until the incident is under control)
- Obtain from occupant/responsible party any significant information regarding the structure and/or its contents that might assist the IC



tactically with the operation and inform the IC of this information

- Encourage displaced citizens to contact their insurance carrier, restoration company, etc., ASAP
- Encourage displaced citizens to seek short term assistance from neighbors and family
- At multifamily structures, work with management to provide shelter to displaced citizens
- Notify the Red Cross or other necessary agencies and/or individuals as needed
- When necessary, identify an evacuation site and notify the IC of its establishment and location; this information shall be provided to Fire Inspection personnel, the Public Information Officer, other appropriate agency representative, and relatives
- Identify any special needs of citizens
- Facilitate reasonable related citizen requests via the IC
- Provide reasonable on-going service and support until the customer indicates our services are no longer needed

Each career and volunteer command officer in the Department is responsible to maintain a supply of Victim Assistance Information Packages (VAIP). These packages contain information concerning all services available, and are to be given to the affected occupants as soon as feasible in the incident recovery process. VAIPs are available from the Operations Center.

2. Non-Emergency Situations

In the event that non-emergency assistance/shelter is requested by a citizen, personnel shall contact CSU, or the Operations Center, to identify the current

resources that are available through the County's Department of Social Services.

The County operates two shelters (one for men and one for women), as well as transitional housing units for displaced families. Additionally, during winter months (December - March) shelter is available each night through the "A Warm Nights Program," where area churches open their facilities to assist citizens in times of severe weather.

Access to all of the resources listed above may be obtained by calling the Prince George's County Homeless Hotline at 888-731-0999. All non-emergency assistance requests will be coordinated with the appropriate Duty Chief, Battalion Chief, CSU, or the Operations Center.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Assisting Displaced Families Phone List (English)

Assisting Displaced Families Phone List (Spanish)

**Prince George's County Government
Telephone Numbers**

American Red Cross	301-559-8500
Animal Management Division	301-499-8300
Birth and Death Records	301-324-2940
Board of Education	301-952-6000
Elections Office	301-952-3270
Family Services	301-699-2672
Fire/EMS Department, Office of Emergency Management	301-583-1899
Fire/EMS Department, Fire Investigations	301-306-5685
Fire/EMS Department, Information Management (to obtain a fire report)	301-883-7183
Health Department	301-883-7800
Housing	301-883-5531
Medical Assistance Information	301-856-9606
Prince George's County Crisis Response System - Hotline	301-429-2185
Prince George's County Crisis Response System - Administrative Office	301-429-2182
Prince George's County Police Department (to obtain a police report)	301-985-3638
Social Services	301-909-7010



Division 13 **Public Affairs**

Chapter 02 – Ride-Along Observer Program

January 2010

POLICY

A uniform procedure will be followed by persons wishing to be ride-along observers with operational units of the Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department. Adherence to this policy will ensure the safety of all personnel and the public, and is the shared responsibility of the Incident Commander, the unit officer-in-charge, and the participant.

DEFINITIONS

Observers – persons who are not members of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department; this definition specifically includes members of other fire/rescue departments outside of Prince George's County.

Minimum staffing – three persons (engine company) or four persons (truck/squad) certified to engage in structural firefighting; two persons (ambulance) certified at the appropriate level for basic ambulance medical care.

PROCEDURES

Observers shall be at least 18 years of age. This shall be confirmed with a review of a driver's license and or picture identification card.

Observers shall sign the release form prior to riding any Fire/EMS Department vehicle. Signature shall be witnessed by the appropriate Battalion Chief or highest ranking Volunteer Chief officer. No one may sign for the chief officers.

Observers shall review the rules governing this procedure, which will be acknowledged on the release form.

The Advanced Emergency Medical Services (AEMS) office has specific procedures for allied medical professionals and students to participate/observe on Medic Units. Please refer to General Order 14-09.

The Ride-Along Program is designed to benefit the Department with various avenues of recognition and information exchange. The additional benefit is the ability to recruit personnel. The program is not designed for participants to bypass the application process and background review.

Ride-Along participation will be limited to 72-hour blocks.

Observers will be limited to four (4) opportunities per calendar year. Participants who exceed this limit will be required to apply for membership and their privileges revoked until the process is completed.

Requests for special exemptions must be submitted in writing to the Lieutenant Colonel of Emergency Operations for approval. The applicant's participation beyond the parameters that are set is prohibited until approval is received in writing.

Stations that violate this procedure will not be permitted to participate in this program for a period of time specified by the Lieutenant Colonel of Emergency Operations.



Observers shall not engage in actual firefighting or rescue operations, and will not count toward minimum staffing.

No more than two (2) observers per station may participate in the Ride-Along Observer Program. In addition, no more than one observer may ride on a single piece of apparatus at a time.

Observers shall remain seated and belted when riding fire and rescue apparatus and follow all applicable safety rules.

Observers shall remain outside the perimeter of the operational area of the scene. Observers shall stay outside of and away from the building on fire calls and shall remain a safe distance away from accident vehicles on rescue calls.

Under no circumstances will an observer be permitted to enter an IDLH atmosphere or a building that is on fire until such time as the incident has been placed under control by the Incident Commander, the IDLH atmosphere has been cleared, the building or area has been determined to be safe for entry by non-operational personnel, and specific approval is granted by the Incident Commander. The assigned unit officer, division supervisor or designated command officer will escort and supervise the observer.

Observers shall wear an orange fire helmet and/or a safety vest clearly marked "OBSERVER." The helmet and/or vest shall be worn at all times while on the emergency scene, and no other structural firefighting equipment is to be worn.

Observers shall wear clothing that is comfortable and does not bring discredit to the Fire/EMS Department.

Observers shall remain under the control of the officer-in-charge. Failure to follow the directions of the officer-in-charge will result in the removal of the privilege to participate as an observer. The officer-in-charge must document cases where the observer failed to follow direction and their privilege was revoked. This documentation will be forwarded to the Emergency Operations Command (EOC) office, where a list will be maintained of those persons not eligible to participate. The Duty Chief will refer to this list when notification is made about a ride-along.

The officer-in-charge shall ensure that the Observer complies with all of his/her responsibilities and rules specific to the Ride-Along Observer Program.

The Battalion Chief/Volunteer Division Chief/Volunteer Major shall witness the Observer's signature on the release form prior to the Observer riding any Fire/EMS Department vehicle and make notification to the Battalion Chief, if not the approving signature. The Battalion Chief will make immediate notification to the Duty Chief. A copy of the completed waiver and a copy of the Observer's driver's license/ID shall be faxed to the Emergency Operations Command office for recordkeeping purposes.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Ride-Along Observer Program Release Form



RIDE-ALONG OBSERVER PROGRAM RELEASE

In consideration of my receiving permission from the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department to enter upon the premises of any fire station or related entity, any other premises owned and/or operated and/or used by any fire station within Prince George's County, and in further consideration of receiving permission from said Fire/EMS Department to participate in a Ride-Along Observer Program, wherein I will be riding in, on, or upon Fire/EMS Department vehicles or using other apparatus, the undersigned hereby releases the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department, Prince George's County Police Department, and any and all agents, officers, servants, employees, attorneys, or other representatives of the foregoing from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions and causes of actions, whatsoever, arising out of or related to any loss, property damage, physical injury, contagious disease, or death that may be sustained by me while in, on, or upon any premises, vehicles, or apparatus owned, occupied, or used by the foregoing, or which may be sustained by me while at the scene of any real or apparent emergency situation requiring a response of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department, or while commuting to and from the fire station(s) and other points.

I hereby certify that I am duly aware of the risks and hazards, including serious physical injury or death, inherent upon participating in the Ride-Along Observer Program, that such risks and hazards may exist even in non-emergency situations, and being duly aware of such risks and hazards, I hereby elect, voluntarily, to participate in the Ride-Along Observer Program. I hereby assume all risks of loss, damage, and/or injury, including death that may be sustained by me or by any of my property while participating in the Ride-Along Observer Program.

This release shall be binding upon my relatives, spouse, heirs, distributees, next of kin, executors, administrators, and any other interested parties.

In signing this release, I hereby acknowledge and represent:

1. I have read the rules and regulations outlined in General Order 1-3, Ride-Along Observer Program.
2. I have read the release, understand it, and signed it voluntarily.
3. I am over eighteen (18) years of age and I am of sound mind and of sound physical health.
4. I am not an agent, servant, or other employee of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.
5. Any injuries or other damage suffered by me will not be compensable by Worker's Compensation or any other insurance program maintained by the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.



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I also agree to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. I will abide by any and all applicable rules and regulations of the Fire/EMS Department.
2. I will not ride or attempt to ride or use or attempt to use, any vehicle or apparatus utilized within the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department until such time as a duly authorized officer has reviewed with me the procedures for riding or using same.
3. I also agree that I have no physical or mental handicaps that may affect me during my participation in this program or which may be aggravated by my participation in this program, except for the following:

Despite the Fire/EMS Department's knowledge of this disability or defect, I agree that their continuing grant of permission for me to participate in this program shall not subject them to any liability.

4. I also authorize and instruct the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department or their authorized representatives to notify the following person in case of any accident in which I am involved while participating in this program or while I am commuting to and from the fire station(s) or other points.

Name & Relationship

Address

Telephone Number(s)



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FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

Release
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- 5. Have you been denied membership or career status in the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department for criminal record, background investigation, or medical reasons? Yes ____ No ____

If so, explain _____

- 6. Do you have any pending criminal charges against you? Yes ____ No ____

If so, explain _____

- 7. Do you have any Felony convictions? Yes ____ No ____

If so, explain _____

- 8. If you have been denied membership in another fire/rescue organization outside of Prince George's County, said reason(s) is to be disclosed to the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.

- 9. Should I be a bona fide member of a fire/rescue association or department, I will disclose the name of such organization:

Name of Organization

Address

Telephone Number

President/Chief Officer



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- 10. Upon request, a medical waiver statement from a physician shall be submitted to substantiate fitness to perform in a ride-along observer status on-the-scene of emergency operations.

This release form shall become a permanent record of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.

Expected "Ride-Along Observer" dates and station:

_____ to _____ **Station** _____

At the end of this period, a new release form shall be obtained.

Signature Printed Name of Participant

Address

Home Telephone Work Telephone Date of Birth

Approved and Witnessed by (Choose one):

Volunteer Chief Name (Please Print) Signature/Date

Departmental Duty Officer Name (Please Print) Signature/Date

Duty Chief Notified by: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Received By EOC:

Signature Date



Division 13 **Public Affairs**

**Chapter 03- Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center
Visitation Policy**

January 2010

POLICY

This order will establish the procedure to be followed by The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department upon entering The Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center at The National Harbor. While it is desirable and in fact encouraged to conduct walkthroughs for building familiarization, it is important to remember that The Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center is a unique facility within Prince George's County. Its size and complexity necessitate periodic reviews of the structure and grounds. However, representatives of the department should be mindful that The Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center is a resort complex and a uniformed presence is not desired by their guests or their management. Adherence to this policy will ensure the safety of all personnel and the public, as well as effectively make The Gaylord Hotel staff aware of any fire department presence at the facility.

DEFINITIONS

Non-Emergency – For the purposes of this order, a non emergency incident shall be defined as any Fire/EMS Department related business not initiated by Public Safety Communications (does not carry an incident number).

Emergency Incident – For the purposes of this order, an emergency incident shall be defined as any response initiated by Public Safety Communications (carries an incident number).

PROCEDURES

For non-emergency visits such as preplans, meetings with Gaylord staff or familiarization walkthroughs, all county vehicles or apparatus should be parked on National Harbor Blvd. near the employee's entrance at the Alpha/Delta corner of the convention center. Visiting personnel should check in with Gaylord Security and Safety Services staff at the entrance to notify them of the nature and duration of the visit. The staff will then relay the information or escort the fire department personnel to the Security and Safety Services Office. It should also be noted that time spent in public areas be kept as brief as possible.

Any emergency incident at the Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center shall be handled in accordance with General Orders 3-01 and 3-06. When a call for service is initiated by Gaylord Security and Safety Services, Fire/EMS Department personnel will be met by staff and directed to the location of the emergency. When a call does not go through Gaylord Security and Safety Services (a 3rd party call), effort should be made to notify Security and Safety Services staff as to the nature and location of the emergency as soon as is responsibly possible.

The Officer-in-Charge shall ensure that the all personnel comply with this policy.

REFERENCES

N/A



FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Site Map of Gaylord Hotel and Convention
Center Complex



Division 13 **Public Affairs**

Chapter 04 – Observer Program for Fireboat 858

January 2010

POLICY

A uniformed procedure will be followed to establish a standard operational procedure when dealing with dignitary's, delegations and special VIP's to the County and the National Harbor Project.

It is imperative that the crews assigned to Fireboat 858 recognize the importance of these groups and strive to forge a professional working relationship to promote a positive public image.

This procedure is in place to ensure the safety and well being of all personnel, as well as all guests that will visit and those that are provided an operational tour on the Fireboat. It is a shared responsibility of all involved to see to the adherence of this procedure.

DEFINITIONS

Observers – persons who are not members of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department; this definition specifically includes members of other fire/rescue departments outside of Prince George's County and dignitaries who represent special interest to the County and the National Harbor Project.

Minimum staffing – three persons (Boat Crew) trained and certified to operate in Emergency Operations dealing with Water Related Emergencies and Water Rescue Operations.

Underway – A nautical term describing the state of a vessel or boat. A vessel is said to be underway if it meets the following criteria:

- It is not aground
- It is not at anchor
- It has not been made fast to a dock, the shore, or other stationary object.

PROCEDURES

1. General Provisions

Observers shall be at least 18 years of age. This shall be confirmed with a review of a driver's license and or picture identification card.

Observers shall sign the release form prior to boarding any Fire/EMS Department marine vessel. Signature shall be witnessed by the appropriate Battalion Chief or highest ranking officer. No one may sign for the officers.

Observers shall review the rules governing this procedure, which will be acknowledged on the release form.

Unless the request is given through the appropriate command, it shall be the responsibility of the officer in charge to determine if the individual or group warrants a ride on the boat. Crews are to provide an informative interactive presentation of the fireboat and its operations.

2. Operational Guidelines

At no time are there to be more than 5 guests allowed to ride on the boat.

Operations of the boat are to be performed in a slow and extremely safe manner. At no time, while there are passengers on the vessel, shall the operator perform any high speed maneuvers to include High Speed Stops or



High Speed Turns unless it is necessary to avoid a collision or to ensure the safety of the crew, personnel on board and the vessel.

3. Guidelines for all passengers

No guest will be allowed to operate or engage in any emergency operation while on the boat. Prior to getting underway all guest will be fitted for a Personal Flotation Device and instructed on the proper use of said device. The Personal Flotation Device shall be worn for the duration of the presentation.

All guests will be encouraged to sit in the cabin or stand while holding the handrail when the boat is underway for their safety.

Conditions acceptable to get underway:

- The Boat must be fully staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel.
- Prior to getting underway with a guest aboard, the crew shall check the marine weather channel 30 minutes prior to departure and ensure that none of the following conditions exist.
 - Small craft advisory prior to departure and for the duration of the ride.
 - Gail warnings
 - Thunder storm warnings for the immediate area.
 - Wind conditions in excess of 15 knots
 - Waves in excess of 1 to 2 feet
 - Flash flood warnings
 - Any condition that exist that would place guest in immediate danger

If any of the preceding conditions exist the vessel will not go underway.

It is preferable that all presentations are scheduled when the weather is clear and the wind is calm. If there is inclement weather or

winds are in excess of 20 knots all rides will be postponed and rescheduled to a mutually agreeable time.

4. Documentation

A list will be maintained and forwarded to the Major of the Special Operations Division weekly.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Ride-Along Guest Observer Program Release Form



Division 13 **Public Affairs**

Chapter 05 – Project Identification

January 2010

POLICY

This General Order shall establish a procedure that systematically allows the Fire Department to accept data from handicapped individuals, prioritize, and then enter the data into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System, utilizing the Premise History File.

DEFINITIONS

N/A

PROCEDURES

1. General Information

In the event of an emergency, special information will be immediately relayed to responding personnel to provide search and rescue crews to responding personnel to provide the presence and probable location of handicapped occupants.

Objectives

- Provide useful, accurate information to assist emergency response personnel.
- Provide a single updating system, on an annual basis, to keep information current.
- Coordinate other County agencies' input to increase efficiency of the system.
- Protect the privacy of the participants, while striving to enhance their safety.
- Minimize the administrative process of recording data, while providing

special emergency assistance to the public.

2. Guidelines for Forms/Data

The Premise History File will include the following:

- Age/Sex - This data will be transmitted to responding units to provide proper identification of those individuals requiring assistance.
- Nature of Specific Disability - The nature of the specific handicap will be relayed to the incident officer-in-charge (OIC) in the event he/she deems the additional information necessary to assure successful search and rescue or evacuation. This information-must be requested via radio.
- Project Identification Number (PID #) - Every individual in the Premise History File is assigned a PID # that is used exclusively for the Public Safety Communications (PSC) to track the individual.

3. Communication Procedures

Information Dissemination

PSC will give the age/sex of affected individual(s) to the responding apparatus by telephone or radio. If the OIC needs additional information, a request may be made for more descriptive details. Only then will the complete handicap data be transmitted by the Emergency Equipment Dispatcher.



Transmissions of Project Identification (Project ID) information will be determined by the nature and extent of the emergency and at the discretion of PSC.

EXAMPLE:

Communications: “Attention E833 – Our Project ID files indicate a 65-year-old male who may/will need evacuation assistance.”

Engine 833: “E-833 -okay.”

Special Housing Facilities

Facilities housing large numbers of elderly or handicapped persons will be registered as such, but PSC will not indicate each and every person requiring assistance on a routine basis unless conditions warrant (via Project ID).

It will be the responsibility of the prime responding station to preplan these types of facilities as necessary.

For purposes of radio communication, these facilities will be identified as “multi-handicap residence.” They will include:

- Hospitals
- Nursing Homes
- Senior Citizen Buildings
- Health Centers, etc.

4. Update Procedures

Administrative

Twelve months from the data entry, PSC will send an update card to the address listed on the file. Only the cards returned by the date indicated will be maintained in the system.

PSC will update the Project ID Premise History File accordingly upon written notification of the revisions.

Operational

Although steps are taken to ensure the accuracy of the data on file, information relayed to emergency responders is provided as a guide to enable search and rescue teams to quickly locate and remove victims in need of special assistance.

Emergency personnel must remain cognizant of the possibility that circumstances within the structure are subject to change and be prepared to react accordingly.

Questions and requests for Project ID forms should be directed to Station 819.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1- Project Identification Tip Sheet