

12.105 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE, PANIC/DURESS ALARMS, 911 DISCONNECT CALLS, 911 SILENT CALLS, AND FORCED ENTRIES

References:

Mincey v. Arizona, 437 US 391, 98 (1978)
State v. Nields, 93 Ohio St. 3d 6 (2001)
Procedure 12.135 - Reporting False Alarms on a Form 315

Policy:

The Cincinnati Fire Department will evaluate a citizen's request for emergency medical service. They will also administer first aid and transport all persons in need of hospitalization.

Emergency Communications Center (ECC) will not dispatch officers on medical runs unless requested by the Fire Department. ECC will dispatch police and fire units simultaneously on some select calls.

Because of the circumstances involved in a 911 silent/disconnect call and panic/duress alarms, every effort should be made to determine the cause of the call. When unable, further investigation is necessary. The Supreme Court has held that police may make warrantless, and presumably, forcible entry into a home where they reasonably believe a person within is in need of immediate aid.

To reduce the threat of civil claims, forcible entry will be done with reasonable care and with as little damage as possible.

Procedure:

- A. Emergency Medical Request for Service
 1. Fire Department personnel will not transport:
 - a. Dead on arrivals (DOAs).
 - b. Ambulatory crime victims with no injuries.
 - c. Rape victims with no injuries.
 - d. Dog bite victims with no injuries.
 - e. Any violent or potentially violent victim.

2. When Fire Department transportation is not available:
 - a. The Fire dispatcher will request police response. Fire Department personnel at the scene will determine if a beat car or a scout car is necessary.
 - 1) At the time of dispatch, ECC will advise the officer a Fire Department ambulance is unavailable.
 - b. When requested by the ranking Fire Department officer or EMT at the scene, a police officer will provide transportation services.
 - 1) If the police officer believes transporting a victim will risk serious injury or loss of life, he will request an EMT to accompany the victim and provide patient care.
 - 2) After providing the transportation service, if the police officer feels the request was unreasonable, he will bring the incident to the attention of his supervisor.
3. If the police are needed at the scene:
 - a. The fire dispatcher will notify ECC of fire runs only when police are needed at the scene.
 - 1) ECC will dispatch the appropriate police unit, which will respond without delay.
 - 2) The fire dispatcher will advise ECC if an emergency response is needed. Unless advised of an emergency, the police unit will **not** respond with emergency lights and siren.
 - 3) Fire Department personnel will remain on the scene until police arrive.
 - a) Fire Department personnel will request police response in the following cases:
 - 1] Any death
 - 2] Suicide attempt
 - 3] Shooting or cutting
 - 4] Violent mental
 - 5] Any injury where death may occur
 - 6] Any criminal offense
 - 7] A threat to fire personnel

- b. Fire personnel will make every effort to keep witnesses at the scene and to protect evidence.
- c. Officers will complete the appropriate report when transporting a victim of an accident or crime, or any person for a medical reason.
- d. Police vehicles will not escort other transporting vehicles.

4. Requests for Escort

- a. When the ECC operator receives a call from a civilian requesting a police escort during a medical emergency, the operator will determine the nature of the emergency and location of the caller.
- b. ECC will contact fire dispatch who will dispatch the appropriate emergency units.
- c. ECC will advise the caller:
 - 1) The Department will not provide an escort
 - 2) Stay at their location and await the emergency vehicles
- d. Any officer encountering a civilian requesting a medical escort will remain at that location and notify ECC of the situation.

B. Panic/Duress Alarms

- 1. When panic/duress alarms are received from various alarm companies, the operator will dispatch two field units to the location.

C. 911 Disconnect Calls

- 1. When the ECC operator answers an emergency 911 call and the caller is disconnected from the operator, the dispatcher will:
 - a. Attempt to recall the phone number supplied by the automatic number identifier (ANI) in the CAD system.
 - 1) If the attempt to recall is successful and no emergency exists, no units will be dispatched.
 - 2) If the attempt to recall is unsuccessful, ECC will dispatch two units to the location supplied by the automatic location identifier (ALI).
 - a) If the location is identified as a pay phone, ECC will dispatch one unit.

D. 911 Silent Calls

- 1. When the ECC operator answers an emergency 911 call and the caller fails to give a voice response and the line remains open the operator will:

- a. Dispatch two officers to the location supplied by the ALI in the CAD system.
 - 1) If the location is a pay phone, ECC will dispatch one unit.
2. The ECC operator will attempt to keep the line open until the officer on scene hangs up the phone. The ECC supervisor may give permission to hang up the line if the call originates from a pay phone and no activity is heard.

E. Forced Entries

1. Officers responding to 911 silent/disconnect calls or panic/duress alarms which may require a forced entry will:
 - a. Attempt to get a response at the location.
 - b. If no response, request a computer generated history from ECC of runs at the location to determine if other 911 silent/disconnect calls or panic/duress alarms have occurred at the location.
 - c. Evaluate the current situation
 - 1) Are there any neighbors who may have a key to the premises (landlord, etc.)?
 - 2) Have ECC check for further information from the alarm company or monitoring station.
 - d. If unable to determine the cause of the 911 silent/disconnect call or panic/duress alarm, request a supervisor respond to the scene.
 - 1) If an on-scene officer believes an emergency situation exists, with supervisory approval, a forced entry may be made prior to the supervisor's arrival.
2. Any other situation requiring a forcible entry will necessitate prior approval of a supervisor.

F. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. If a forced entry is necessary, the supervisor will:
 - a. Announce at the door a forced entry will be made if no one answers.
 - 1) The Fire Department has entry devices and can gain access to upper floors when a forced entry is necessary.
 - b. Ensure the entrance is secured before leaving the scene.
 - c. Process a Form 17 through channels to the Police Chief explaining the circumstances of the forced entry. Complete a Form 317, Cincinnati Police General Conditions Report, if any damage was done to property during the forced entry.