

CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

PURPOSE

Distracted driving is a leading cause of major incidents producing catastrophic injuries and fatalities. As emergency responders, it is our duty to ensure the safety of the citizens and visitors of the City of Albuquerque to the best of our ability. This directive is intended to provide direction and accountability in the proper use of cell phones and other electronic media. This will assist in the safe and efficient response of AFD personnel to and from emergencies; while allowing the AFD to provide an effective example to those around us.

AFD PERSONNEL shall use cell phones and other electronic devices in accordance with AFD policies and procedures to include applicable Administrative instructions, City of Albuquerque Personnel Rules and Regulations (301.8), and City Ordinance (Cell phone ordinance F/S O0567).

PROCEDURE:

- At **no time** will any AFD member operating an Albuquerque Fire Department apparatus or vehicle initiate or receive cell phone calls or use any personal electronic devices such as PDAs, MP3 players or other potentially distracting devices. The exception to this rule is present in AFD sedans or vehicles with a parrot type device or hands free option. Cell phones and other devices must be turned off or placed in a status so as to avoid distraction i.e. vibrate or silent and safely stowed in the apparatus during all incident responses. Ensuring a safe and effective response is critical for the Driver. While providing for the safety of assigned personnel and the Citizens is the responsibility of all responders, specifically the Officer in charge; therefore, it is imperative that personnel not allow themselves to become distracted.
- Cellular phone communications while on a call will be limited to the following situations and **will not** interfere with patient care:
 - **Enroute:** Inability of Alarm/ dispatch to maintain reliable communications with the Apparatus over the 800 MHz system. In this circumstance, only the officer or other personnel, not driving, may use a cell phone.
 - **On Scene or During Transport/ Assist:** At times, Cell phone use on a scene may be necessary such as, contacting an MCEP, or locating parents or guardians.
- Personal use of cell phones or other devices during an incident response is inappropriate and Unprofessional. Cell phones and other devices will be kept turned off or placed in a status so as to avoid distraction i.e. vibrate or silent and safely stowed while on scene, and during transport/ assist so as not to interrupt patient assessments and care.
- Communications with the Alarm/ dispatch should occur on the 800 MHz system, not on cell phones. If cell phone calls to the Alarm/ dispatch are necessary, they will be professional. Phoning to complain about a call is not appropriate. Complaints will be handled through the chain of command and by filling out a QA form or alert on the EMS webpage located on SharePoint.

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- All electronic devices and/or other potentially distracting items will be turned off or placed in a status so as to avoid distraction i.e. vibrate or silent and safely stowed any time the apparatus is in motion.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.