

# BURLINGTON TWP. FIRE DEPARTMENT

## STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE #6

### **DRIVING AND OPERATING FIRE DEPARTMENT VEHICLES**

**Purpose:** This policy establishes the department requirements for the drivers training and certification program, as well as the requirements for safe operation of Fire Department apparatus.

**Scope:** To serve as a guide to Burlington Twp. Fire Department personnel when driving or operating a Fire Department apparatus. This Department recognizes the basic need for emergency driving as a required duty. This policy is written to educate personnel regarding their responsibilities while driving Fire Department apparatus. It also alerts our personnel to the possible consequences of driving negligence. Personnel are reminded that emergency driving is one of the most dangerous activities in which they will engage.

#### **License Requirements:**

1. Each member is responsible for knowing the status of their license.
2. No personnel shall receive driver certification unless they hold a valid Michigan Operator's, Chauffer's, or Commercial Driver's License.
3. The Burlington Twp. Fire Department shall conduct an annual review of each member's driving record to identify any new crashes or violations.
4. Any personnel who become aware of their license status becoming restricted, suspended, or revoked is immediately prohibited from operating any municipal vehicle or a personal vehicle as an emergency vehicle and shall immediately notify the Fire Chief.
5. Any member of the Department convicted of a misdemeanor violation shall be automatically suspended from driving municipal vehicles and personal vehicles, for department business, until the violation is reviewed by the insurance company and/or Fire Chief and Burlington Township Board. The Fire Chief and the Burlington Township Board shall make a final determination on your driving status.
6. "Misdemeanor Violations" referred to in this policy include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Operating While Intoxicated or Impaired.
  - b. Operating under the influence of a controlled substance or other intoxicating substance.
  - c. Driving while license suspended or revoked.
  - d. Violation of a Restricted License.
  - e. Operating without Insurance
  - f. Reckless Driving.
  - g. Leaving the scene of an accident.

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7. Any member who receives a moving violation civil infraction on their driving record will be prohibited from driving municipal vehicles and personal vehicles, for department business, until the violation is reviewed by the insurance company and/or Fire Chief and Burlington Township Board. The Fire Chief and Burlington Township Board shall make a final determination on your driving status.
8. Any member who receives a driving exclusion by the Burlington Township insurance company and/or Fire Chief and Burlington Township Board will be required to sign a driving exclusion form (attachment 1).
9. The Fire Chief may change the driving status of department personnel based on driving complaints, driving ability, or upon recommendation of an officer.
10. A driving complaint received by the Burlington Twp. Fire Department shall be investigated and become a part of the member's personnel file using the driving complaint form (attachment 2). The member shall also be notified of the complaint.
11. A second driving complaint found to be valid against a member of the Burlington Twp. Fire Department may invoke a restriction on driving municipal owned vehicles or personal vehicles as an emergency vehicle and/or may result in suspension from the department for a period of time set by the Fire Chief.
12. The Burlington Twp. Fire Department will utilize the Burlington Township insurance companies' driver qualification criteria (attachment 3).

**Training Requirements:**

1. All personnel who drive and operate Burlington Twp. Fire Department apparatus will be trained by certified apparatus operators.
2. All personnel will be tested by department officers utilizing the department driver certification checklist (attachment 4) or department operator certification checklist (attachment 5). Due to the size of the apparatus, 15-41 and 15-51 will conduct two of the four routes each.
3. Driver certification can only be granted by the Fire Chief. No other member shall grant approval to drive apparatus. In an emergency situation, only the Fire Chief shall grant approval to drive apparatus by non-certified personnel.
4. Driver certification shall be maintained in the driver's training binder with members and apparatus listed. The list will show what apparatus each member is certified to drive and/or operate, if any. A member may only drive or operate apparatus they are certified for, as shown on the posting.
5. You must attain your Michigan Office of Firefighter Training "Drivers Training Course" Certification within the first two years of your employment. Completion of the Drivers Training Course only allows for the driving of Fire Apparatus under Michigan Law.
6. Certified personnel shall complete the driver skills course "Rodeo" once every two years.
7. The department shall track training hours and/or mileage, which shall be maintained in the driver's training binder.

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**Requirements for Safe Operation:**

1. Fire Department personnel shall, at all times, operate motor vehicles in accordance with P.A. 300, 1949 as amended (attachment 6).
2. No Fire Department personnel shall, at any time, operate a motor vehicle at such a rate of speed, or in a manner, as to cause the person to lose control of the operation and/or direction of the vehicle, or endanger the public.
3. You must respond in a safe manner, taking into account weather conditions and the safety of other vehicles on the road.
4. At no time will Burlington Twp. Fire Department apparatus exceed 65 mph.
5. Apparatus will come to a complete stop at red lights and stop signs.
6. Drivers shall not move Fire Department apparatus until all personnel on the apparatus are seated and secured with seat belts.
7. All personnel riding on Fire Department apparatus shall be seated and secured to the vehicle by seat belts at any time the vehicle is in motion. Riding on tail steps or in any other exposed position is prohibited.
8. If you are approaching a school bus with warning signals activated, emergency lights and sirens shall be turned off and you will wait until all the children are off the school bus. Once the warning signals of the school bus are turned off you may proceed with lights and siren.
9. Apparatus will be parked in a safe manner. Apparatus shall park on the side of the road identified by the Incident Commander or a Fire Officer. Irregular parking on emergency calls may be utilized for protection of the scene and personnel.

**Response Modes:**

1. Emergency Response Mode will be with emergency lights and sirens activated traveling at speeds appropriate for roadway, traffic, and weather conditions.
2. Non-Emergency Response Mode (Slow Time) will be with no emergency lights or sirens activated traveling at posted speeds or at speeds appropriate for roadway, traffic, and weather conditions.

**Additional Actions:**

1. The Fire Chief, in the event of an accident or unsafe driving practice, may suspend or revoke a driver's certification. A recertification may be granted after a review of the incident has been completed.
2. In the event of a vehicle crash involving Burlington Twp. Fire Department Apparatus, the driver shall stop and render aid and call for advanced medical aid if required. The driver shall call the truck out of service and request a replacement apparatus be sent. The driver and apparatus shall remain at the crash location until the police complete their investigation and release the driver and apparatus.