

**ISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

BULLETIN NO. 90

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Bulletin No. 90 revises Old Bulletin No. 32 issued June 2003.

DRIVER TRAINING AND TESTING GUIDELINES

Section 1. Initial Driver Training Guideline (Non-Emergency)

Initial instruction of all personnel (uniformed and civilian) in driving D.C. Fire and EMS Department vehicles shall be given only on the grounds of the Training Academy, under the supervision of the Deputy Fire Chief-TD or his / her designee. Personnel shall not be instructed in driving or tillering at any other location until the member has an approved initial (non-emergency) F&EMSD Form 140 on file.

Company officers will schedule with the Training Divisions Driving instructor the use of the driving course and receive approval for same by the Fire Fighting Deputy for out of service drill.

Section 2. Driver Training Instructions at the Training Academy

1. Each practice run will be supervised by the company officer or ACIC. Course description, guidelines, and evaluation sheets will be provided to the company officer or ACIC to provide initial instruction to the member and record any discrepancies to assist in the instructional process, such as obstacles struck and /or violations, during each run. After each completed exercise, company members shall return any displaced cone(s) to their original position.
2. Once the member is ready to participate in the test process, the driving instructor will be responsible for the supervision of the test run. The test run is to begin with the serpentine exercise and the course is to be negotiated exactly according to the route prescribed (see course map) without hitting any traffic cones, running stop signs or striking the curb with sufficient force to raise any wheel off the ground.
 - A. Deviation from the prescribed course route during testing will result in failure.
 - B. Excessive speed or reckless driving will result in failure, and if deemed necessary, will result in disciplinary action.
 - C. Evidence of hitting a cone, which could have been avoided, will result in failure. Any other incidents of striking a cone will result in a retest.
 - D. Striking a curb will result in a retest.
 - E. Failure to stop at any stop sign or designated stop area will result in failure.
 - F. Retesting for the initial FD 140 can be done the same day, with a total of 2 attempts.

- G. Failure of any portion of the exam after all allowed attempts, the member will have to return to the Training Academy on a different day to be retested.
 - H. The exam can be stopped at any time when, in the opinion of the instructor, the vehicle is being operated in an unsafe manner. Also, the exam will be stopped when, in the opinion of the instructor, the member will need additional training in any area of the operation of the apparatus.
 - I. Any evidence of the driver's inability to skillfully back-up with the use of mirrors will result in a retest.
3. Completing the course in less than the minimum time limit will be considered speeding, and cause for failure.

Exceeding the maximum time limit will result in one retest. Compliance requires an average speed of ten to fifteen mph. Below are the time limits on the testing portion of the course:

| TYPE OF APPARATUS | MINIMUM TIME LIMIT | MAXIMUM TIME LIMIT |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Engine | Nine Minutes | Fifteen Minutes |
| Rescue Squad | Nine Minutes | Fifteen Minutes |
| Ambulance | Nine Minutes | Fifteen Minutes |
| Aerial Ladder Trucks Straight Chassis | Thirteen Minutes | Twenty-Five Minutes |
| Aerial Ladder Trucks Tractor – Drawn | Thirteen Minutes | Twenty-Five Minutes |

4. Repositioning the apparatus during a run, such as backing up and pulling forward when turning, is permitted in order to prevent hitting an obstacle. However, altering the route or setup of the course is not allowed, and will result in failure. During the Opposite Alley and Circle Maneuvers, stopping is prohibited.
5. In an effort to increase drivers' proficiency in the use of mirrors, drivers shall keep their heads inside the vehicle cab when backing up.
6. For the purpose of improving the backing skills of drivers while on the course, other company members shall not direct or assist in backing, except in the event of preventing an accident. Company members not participating shall be utilized as spotters. The serpentine exercise is considered the most dangerous evolution, and a member should be positioned behind the apparatus to prevent a collision.

7. The driver will be supervised at all times by the company officer or ACIC, seated in the cab, for assistance in appropriate operations, including speed, negotiating directions of the course, etc. The company officer or ACIC will be responsible for the instruction in the safe operation of the apparatus at all times as well as the safety of all personnel involved.
8. Upon completion of each run, the company being evaluated shall insure that all traffic cones are placed upright and in their proper position.
9. Company officers and driving instructors shall insure that when instructions are being provided for tiller persons, the member giving the instruction shall be secured to the apparatus by means of an NFPA 1983 Class 1 approved life belt. This member shall also wear an approved helmet. This exercise shall only be conducted on the grounds of the Training Academy.

Section 4. Company-Level Driver Guidelines

Prior to participating in driving practice, officers shall ensure that the member who is to receive the instruction has read the following driving guidelines and has viewed the driver training video. The video may be obtained from the appropriate battalion commander.

1. Members who possess an approved initial (non-emergency) F&EMSD Form 140 shall be permitted to drive during routine travel. Members requiring additional practice shall utilize isolated streets, alleys and large vacant parking lots in their local alarm districts.
2. The company officer shall ensure that all members who are to drive have a valid and current operator's permit on their person.
3. The member shall be instructed to comply with all pertinent traffic laws and regulations governing the Department (pursuant to DCMR Title 18, and the F&EMSD Order Book).
4. A qualified driver shall ride next to the driver-trainee in all apparatus (Driver-trainee is defined as a person only possessing the initial FD Form 140). Whenever a member is instructed to drive or tiller an aerial ladder truck, a qualified driver or tillerman shall drive the opposite end. The qualified driver shall have a current and valid Form 140 on file for the apparatus used for training.
5. The member shall be familiar with the apparatus inspection procedure prior to driving. A F&EMSD Form 54.2 may be utilized for this purpose. In addition, the member shall be instructed on how to make a visual inspection of the apparatus to check for defects (leaks, loose bolts, springs, etc.).
6. All members riding on apparatus shall wear seatbelts at all times.

7. When possible, the member shall practice maneuvering skills, to prepare for the driving test administered at the Training Academy.
8. Prior to scheduling an appointment for the member to drive at the Training Academy, the company officer shall familiarize the member with the layout of the driving course.
9. When a member, whose FD Form 140 only allows him / her to drive in a non-response mode and the need arises for driving a vehicle without supervision, (i.e., driving a vehicle alone to Fleet Maintenance for repairs) it shall be the responsibility of the platoon commander to ensure that said member has received prior adequate instruction to safely accomplish this task.

Section 4. Driver Training Other than the Training Academy

For additional instruction periods at other locations, companies may go on routine travel (non-response) within their local alarm districts with permission through the Battalion Commander.

Any member who has an initial FD Form 140 on file for the type (wagon, tiller truck, straight truck, rescue squad, ambulance, etc.) of vehicle being used, and who, in the opinion of the company officer is particularly qualified to serve in such capacity, may give this instruction to firefighters. Whenever a member is being instructed to drive or tiller an aerial ladder truck, a qualified driver or tillerman, as the case may be, shall be operating the opposite end.

Members assigned to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division will receive their additional instruction periods during routine travel, only if the other crew member has a FD Form 140 on file for the type of vehicle being used.

Section 5. Emergency Response Training

Once a member has an approved FD Form 140 on file (both initial and response portions completed), they may drive any vehicle of the same type (wagon, tiller truck, straight truck, rescue squad, ambulance, etc.) The member must have the knowledge necessary to operate the vehicle for which they will respond. Once the member demonstrates the proper skills needed to operate an individual vehicle of the same type, the officer will add this new vehicle to the applicable section of the FD Form 140 titled "Proficient Operation of Additional Vehicles of the same type". (Example: Member has a FD Form 140 on a his/her company wagon and need to "change-over" to using a reserve wagon. The officer shall ensure the driver can efficiently operate (pump, etc.) the reserve wagon and then add the information on the reserve wagon to the section "Proficient Operation of Additional Vehicles of the same type" to the members FD Form 140.)

The "Emergency Response Qualification to Drive and / or Tiller and Operate" section of the FD Form 140 shall be endorsed by the member's platoon commander and battalion commander or chief supervisor (EMS), only after the member has been thoroughly trained and demonstrates the capability and skill level necessary to drive, tiller and operate on emergency responses the

apparatus listed on the Form 140. An appropriate entry shall be made on the member's F&EMS Form 119 by the member's regularly assigned platoon commander or supervisor. Only those members who have an approved Form 140 on file for the apparatus / vehicle concerned will be allowed to drive or tiller when responding to incident.

For experience and training, all members of a company who, in the opinion of the regularly assigned platoon commander, have received sufficient training and have an initial FD Form 140 on file for the apparatus / vehicle concerned, may be directed to drive or tiller apparatus / vehicles when returning to quarters under the appropriate supervision.

Section 6. Technician Examination Guidelines

The candidate and the Training Academy Driving Instructor prior to the testing process will walk the course to insure they agree on the proper set up of the course.

1. The candidate shall be tested on the driving course as outlined in Section 7 of this Bulletin. Deviation from the prescribed course route during testing will result in failure.
2. No retest is allowed for a candidate who fails any component of the technician examination. The candidate will fail the driving practical if any of the following violations are committed:
 - A. Evidence of hitting a cone.
 - B. Striking a curb.
 - C. Failure to stop at any stop sign or designated stop area.
 - D. Excessive Speed or Reckless Driving will result in failure, and, if deemed necessary, will result in disciplinary action.
 - E. Exceeding the time limit:

The maximum time limit for aerial ladder trucks (straight chassis and tractor drawn) tower ladders is 25 minutes. The maximum time limit for all other vehicles is 20 minutes. Refer to chart in Section 2 of this Bulletin.

- F. Repositioning the apparatus during a run, such as backing up and pulling forward when turning, is allowed to prevent hitting an obstacle. However; altering the route or setup of the course is not allowed, and will result in failure. During the Opposite Alley and Circle Maneuver evolutions, stopping is prohibited and will result in failure.

- G. Test candidates shall use mirrors when backing up, and shall keep their heads inside the vehicle cab when backing up. Violation of this requirement shall result in failure
3. The Captain or A/Captain or regularly assigned Lieutenant of the company, test candidate, and test administrator shall be the only personnel on the driving course during the administration. The driving course consists of the designated paved areas of the Training Academy used for drivers training and not the grassy areas used for other training evolutions.

Section 7. Description of Driver Training Course Exercises

1. Serpentine maneuver - This exercise measures a driver's ability to steer apparatus in restricted areas. The operator is required to drive the apparatus along the left side of the cones in a straight line and stop just beyond the last cone. The operator must then back the apparatus between the cones and pull forward between the cones.
Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.4.
2. Opposite Alley Maneuver - This exercise measures the driver's ability to steer apparatus within close limits. Operators will proceed through opposite alleys without stopping.
Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.
3. Alley Dock (right side) - This exercise measures the driver's ability to back the apparatus using mirrors, primarily the right side mirror. Operators shall back into the space provide, as diagramed,. stopping within 24 inches of the rear barrier.
Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.1; 2-3.2 and 2-3.3.
4. 90 degree Turn - This exercise measures the driver's ability to negotiate a tight turn and improves judgment in recognizing impossible or time consuming turns where alternate means might be employed.
Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.4
5. Alley Dock (left side) - This exercise is similar to the right side alley dock although the left side mirror will be used primarily. Operators shall back into the space provided. as diagramed. stopping within 24 inches of the rear barrier.
Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.1; 2-3.2 and 2-3.3.
6. Circle Maneuver - This exercise measures the driver's ability to negotiate a circular driving area. Operators shall proceed around the circle without stopping.
Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.5.
7. Parallel Parking - This exercise further measures the driver's backing skills. All right wheels must be within 18 inches of the curb before the driver is allowed to proceed to the next exercise. Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.4.

8. Lane Change - This exercise measures the driver's ability to change lanes while moving at a constant speed. Choice of lane change will be determined as the operator drives through the first set of cones. Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.4.
9. Straight line - This exercise measures the driver's ability to travel continuously in one direction without weaving. Reference: NFPA 1002 2-3.6
10. Backing - This exercise measures the driver's ability to back apparatus through right and left turns utilizing all mirrors. Reference: 1002 2-3.1, 2-3.2, 2-3.3.
11. Diminishing Clearance - This exercise measures the driver's ability to steer apparatus in a straight line, to judge distances from wheel to object, and to stop smoothly at a finish line with the front bumper within 18 inches of the finish line. Reference: NFPA 1002 2.3 - 6.