|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** | | |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** | |
| **SOG Number:** | |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** | | |

**Seat Belt Policy**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Policy:**

All personnel must be seated and belted whenever the vehicle {either department or personal) is in motion for department business. The driver and/or officer shall ensure by voice and personnel reply that seatbelts are properly fastened. The driver will only proceed when it can be confirmed that all members are seated and belted. The only exception to the use of seatbelts while a vehicle

Is In motion is a situation where a person is providing direct patient care {EMS) and there Is no reasonable restraint system available. Utilize progressive discipline system holding the violator and the supervisor responsible to ensure compliance with the seat belt policy, reflecting the serious and potential life-threatening consequences of failure to comply.

**Purpose:**

To establish a seat belt usage policy with effective disciplinary guidance that applies to all vehicles on department business, including personally owned vehicles.

**Scope:**

This operational guideline shall be utilized for the safety of all firefighters riding in fire department vehicles.

**Procedure:**

Motor vehicle accidents are responsible for nearly a quarter of firefighter injuries each year. Firefighters are being injured and killed in vehicle accidents because they were not wearing seat belts. To manage this exposure in our organization:

The driver of any fire department vehicle or apparatus shall be directly responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle.

Drivers shall not move fire department vehicles or apparatus until all persons are seated and secured with seat belts in approved riding positions.

The company officer/driver of the vehicle shall confirm that all personnel and riders are on-board, with seat belts on, before the vehicle is placed in motion.

An officer or acting officer shall assume responsibility for the actions of the driver.

State Motor Vehicle Laws re quire the use of seat belts in all motor vehicles.

All persons riding in fire department vehicles or apparatus shall be seated and secured by seat belts or safety harnesses at any time the vehicle is in motion.

Riding on tailboards, side steps, running boards, or in any other exposed positions or standing while riding shall be prohibited.

Authorized exceptions to the seat belt requirement:

1. Department members are exempt from wearing seat belts while actively performing emergency medical care while the vehicle is in motion
2. When requirements to be seated and restrained with seat belts would jeopardize patient care
3. The driver shall take extraordinary precaution in recognition of the additional danger that exists while driving with unrestrained member(s)
4. All persons in the vehicle shall be seated and restrained with seat belts in approved riding positions while the vehicle is in motion

These shall apply to traveling/operating personally owned/operated vehicles as well.

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**

VFIS Firefighter Seat Belt Safety

VCOS Seat Belt Pledge Efforts