

**Municipality of Anchorage  
Anchorage Fire Department  
Memorandum**

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**DATE:** March 31, 2020 **ADM 20-07**

**TO:** Operations Personnel  
Girdwood Volunteer Fire & Rescue  
Chugiak Volunteer Fire

**THRU:** Jodie Hettrick, Fire Chief

**FROM:** Brian Keene, Deputy Chief of Operations

**SUBJECT:** Non-COVID response plan and call Dispatching

During this period of COVID response management the Anchorage Fire Department will institute the process of call stacking. All calls to the AFD Communications center will continue to be processed following all methods of priority dispatch policy for call processing. However, calls processed with a low risk of property or life threat will be placed on hold (stacked) once processed by the Dispatcher.

These calls are generally Fire/Rescue in nature and only constitute *Code Yellow* response profiles being placed on a hold status (stacked).

The Lead Dispatchers will determine how these calls will be resourced. Dispatchers will ensure a phone number and name of a contact person is entered in the call comments (call notes). This will allow the assigned company the option to contact the caller and determine the best approach to mitigate the call. In some cases, this may result in no AFD response to the location.

The decision on how to best address the situation shall be determined by the Company Officer of the assigned company, not the Dispatcher(s). In some circumstances, it may be necessary for the Lead Dispatcher or Company Officer to consult with the Duty Officer or a Battalion Chief to clarify how the call will be managed.

In all circumstances needing clarification of how to process, all current AFD Operational Policies, Procedures and SOGs apply. In other words, if you are in doubt on how to resolve the call, respond to the location of the caller and address the call.

## Directives on the department's response to these specific call types:

- **Fire Alarms - Commercial Building** – Occupied: no AFD response will be required if the building is occupied. A Fire Company will be assigned, and the Company Officer will contact the business to determine if an AFD response to the location is necessary.
- **Fire Alarms – Commercial Building** – Unoccupied: Single Fire Company response. RO contact information will be provided when possible to Company Officer who will determine if access to the structure is necessary.
- **Fire Alarms – Residential** -- No AFD response will be required if the residence is occupied with a competent adult who has authority for the property on location. The assigned Company Officer may elect to make contact and determine if any further assistance is needed. If the residence is unoccupied the Fire Company will respond and determine further actions as appropriate.
- **CO Alarms** – Without medical complaint, CO Alarm calls will be assigned to the appropriate Fire Company with contact information in the call. The Company Officer will determine if an AFD response to the location is required.
- **Citizen Assist**—Nearly every situation will require evaluation of the need for a response. The resolution may come from the call taking Dispatcher deferring the call, or the Lead Dispatcher, BC, CO decision on how to manage resolution of the call. In some cases, a Fire Company may need to respond to the location to mitigate the event.
  - Water problems may be deferred to private companies.
  - Lift assists will be determined based on the facility and/or circumstances.
  - Lockouts will be assessed on a case-by-case basis
  - Animal rescues may be deferred to Animal Control or as directed by a BC. Essentially, all citizen assist calls will be placed in a Hold Status until AFD resourcing is determined.
- **Electrical Hazards**--With no life safety concerns will be deferred to the appropriate utility. These calls may be deferred to a Fire Company Officer to determine AFD response.
- **Elevator/Escalator**—Incidents with no medical concerns will be deferred to an appropriate private agency or the buildings proprietor to mitigate.
- **Investigation call types**—Any other calls which are the investigation, Fire Company will be assigned. The Company Officer will determine the AFD response.
- **Priority 1 ASP**—AFD has maintained responding to ASP calls for service that are on hold for greater than 20 minute that, failed to acquire ASP or APD. This time has been adjusted to 60 minutes.

**Guidance on resolving low acuity requests for service for Leads and Company Officers in response to these specific call types:**

- Limitations in unit apparatus response is not intended to diminish services to the community rather, an attempt to leverage all possible means to connect to the community while using a practical and measured means of connecting Company Officers to the public through the use of callback ahead of unit response.
- Company Officers shall use a customer service approach if choosing to call back on requests for service.
  - When choosing to execute a response through a call back, approach the caller as an opportunity to inform and resolve the issue.
  - In an instance the caller lacks the capacity to demonstrate an understanding of resolution to their request for service, the Company Officer may default to responding to the location of the caller.
  - The community is our priority.
  - As a Company Officer you need assistance contact you Battalion Chief.
- Lead Dispatchers shall triage stacked calls for service and balance these against call volume and available resource types and IDCs resulting for the request of the caller.
- In all circumstances needing clarification of process all current AFD Operational Policies, Procedures and SOGs apply. In other words, if you are in doubt on how to resolve the call, respond to the location of the caller and address the call.

**Guidance on Documenting in VISICAD and FireRMS response to these specific call types:**

- Caller information and call back must be placed in all calls.
  - Call taker shall inform the caller that an AFD representative may be calling back in known instances of all stacked calls or may alternately respond to the location.
  - Callers unwilling to provide call back information shall be advised units may not be dispatched, depending on incident type. These calls should be strongly considered for transferred to a Lead Dispatcher to resolve or cancel.
- Company Officers and RMS
  - The disposition of how calls for service are resolved shall be detailed in the RMS Report.

After providing training and direction to our Dispatchers and Officers, this will go in effect on Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 1500 hrs.