

Safe Driving Program

1718.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Santa Clara County Fire Department Safe Driving Program is to reduce vehicle accidents, and act on the vehicle accidents that do occur in a fair and consistent manner. Employees are expected to operate Department-owned vehicles safely, and provide timely reports of all accidents.

The Safe Driving Program is required for all personnel who drive Department vehicles. Training for the program, as a minimum, will include review of appropriate vehicle codes, safe driving practices and vehicle accident procedures, and vehicle operation on a road course. Personnel must demonstrate driving proficiency to complete the program. A qualified driving trainer shall instruct the Safe Driving Program.

1718.2 ACCIDENT REVIEW BOARD

An Accident Review Board will be convened to review all vehicle accidents that involve initial recommendations of a Point Accident Rating of 1 (PAR 1) or greater, and any accident involving injuries to a person or animal. The sole purpose of the review board is to determine the PAR for accidents involving department vehicles. The review board will not review or recommend disciplinary actions associated with driving or accidents. The findings of the review board, however, may be used as documentation in a disciplinary process.

The Accident Review Board will consist of:

- One (1) Department Health and Safety Officer (Deputy Chief–Training)
- One (1) Safety Committee member
- One (1) Union Shift Representative
- One (1) Assigned Deputy Chief (or alternate as assigned by Assistant Fire Chief)

1718.3 ACCIDENT REVIEW PROCESS

Note: A verbal report of an accident is required to be made (1) to the Battalion Chief/Manager prior to going off duty, and (2) to the Director of Business Services during regular business hours or the following business day.

- A. A written incident report is required prior to going off duty or leaving work, (unless the driver is injured/hospitalized) for any accident involving a Department vehicle that results in: (1) property/vehicle damage of any kind, and/or (2) any injury to a person or animal.
 - The incident report shall include completion of all appropriate accident report forms (Form #38) carried in each Department vehicle, and a brief narrative describing the incident. A narrative report is required from the driver and the immediate supervisor if a supervisor is assigned to the vehicle at the time of the accident. Written narratives from other witnesses to the accident are

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recommended. Photographs of the accident scene should also accompany written incident reports, if possible.

- B. The documentation, including a copy of the police report of the accident, shall be forwarded to (a) the next level of supervision for review and (b) the Director of Business Services with shop estimate included for cost of repair. The reviewing officer will act as Accident Investigation Officer (AIO). The AIO will contact the Department Health and Safety Officer within seven (7) calendar days for review of all vehicle accidents that involve initial recommendation of PAR-1 or greater, and any accident involving injuries to a person or animal.
- C. The Accident Review Board will convene at the request of the Department Health and Safety Officer. The board will review the initial recommendation of the AIO and all relevant accident documentation. The Accident Review Board must render a finding within fourteen (14) calendar days of meeting. The Accident Review Board may sustain the AIO's initial recommendation or modify the AIO's recommendation. Any Accident Review Board modifications to the recommendation of the AIO will be based on specific criteria as listed in Appendix-1.
- D. The written findings of the Accident Review Board will be copied to the driver, the driver's immediate supervisor, and the AIO for documentation and further appropriate action.

[See attachment: Safe Driving Program APPENDIX 1.pdf](#)

1718.4 POINT ACCIDENT RATING (PAR)

- A. Appendix 1 is a guide to classify the relative degree of severity assigned to an accident.
- B. The criteria listed in Appendix 1 are to be used to determine a cumulative PAR by the AIO as a basis to formulate the actions necessary to improve performance after receiving the findings of the Accident Review Board. In addition to the PAR, the AIO will take into consideration the following circumstances:
 - Amount of Damage: minor (\$ <1K); moderate (\$1-5K); severe (\$5-10K); Total Loss
 - Previous three (3) year driving record
 - Impact to the delivery of service by the Department
 - Period of time since last coaching or corrective action, if any
 - Previous actions taken for similar offenses, if any

Enrollment in a refresher course (Safe Driving Program) will be required for drivers involved in all vehicle accidents resulting in a PAR-3 or greater (Appendix 2).

[See attachment: Safe Driving Program APPENDIX 2.pdf](#)

1718.5 REFERENCES

- Santa Clara County Fire Department Policy 346 "Driver License Requirements"

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- Santa Clara County Fire Department Policy 1007 "Emergency Driving"
- Santa Clara County Fire Department Policy 1044 "Department Involved Traffic Collisions"
- Santa Clara County Fire Department Policy 1211 "Fire Equipment Driver/Operator Training"

Attachments

Safe Driving Program APPENDIX 1.pdf

APPENDIX 1

PAR	PROBABLE CAUSE
0	Responsibility cannot be determined
0	Damage caused by striking birds, rocks or debris thrown by other vehicle, road tar or paint spray
0	Damaged while legally parked and attended
0	Mechanical failure (without Driver's previous knowledge of the problem)
0	Damaged while properly performing in line of duty (CODE 3)
1	Failure to observe
1	Lack of forethought
1	Leaving vehicle improperly parked
1	Lack of control due to inattention to driving
1	Lack of care or judgment in entering or leaving tight area
1	Improper loading
1	Failure to allow for weather conditions
2	Disregard of safety orders or rules
2	Driving too fast for conditions
2	Usurping right of way
2	Turning from wrong lane of traffic
2	Failure to signal
2	Following too closely
2	Cutting in on moving vehicles
2	Failure to wait until move can be made safely
2	Illegal, unsafe, or ill-advised backing
2	Lack of care or judgment while operating a vehicle in a four wheel drive
2	FD policies/procedures were violated
3	Excessive or unsafe speed
3	Failure to stop at stop signs, red lights, or railroad crossings
3	Unsafe passing
3	Driving on wrong side of street or highway
4	Asleep at the wheel
4	Reckless driving
5	Intoxication or under influence of drugs

Safe Driving Program APPENDIX 2.pdf

APPENDIX 2

The Point Accident Rating (PAR) system is a guide to performance evaluation for supervisors dealing with personnel involved in vehicle accidents. The PAR is applied based on an individual's cumulative driving record during the previous three (3) year period. The PAR system is designed to help supervisors develop *corrective actions with more consistent and appropriate consequences.

PAR	Initial Consequence	Additional Action
PAR-1	Verbal Counseling	
PAR-2	Documented Counseling	
PAR-3	Letter of Reprimand	Safe Driving Program
PAR-4	Reduction in Pay Grade	Safe Driving Program
PAR-5 +	**Suspension	Safe Driving Program

*Administering corrective action is not restricted to situations involving accidents or driver-related incidents. The PAR system does not recommend or restrict corrective action related to combinations of performance and/or behavior problems.

**PAR 5+ does not limit potential corrective action if a pattern of behavior or extraordinary incident can be demonstrated. Individuals may be subject to the full range of disciplinary action in accordance with Department Rules and Regulations Section 12.