EMERGENCY DRIVING POLICY

FIRE

Prepared for:

(INSERT YOUR AGENCY HERE)

Reviewed by (print name): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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*This program can be developed for a municipality, a utility or housing authority, or a department. NJPEOSH does not specify how the program must be organized. It is the employer’s decision how to best organize the Program: city-wide, for the authority as a whole, or by department.*

*The United States Fire Administration (USFA) cites motor vehicle crashes as the second highest cause of death for firefighters, accounting for between 20–25% of the annual line-of-duty fatalities. Fire truck crashes, which occur at a rate of approximately 30,000 crashes per year, have potentially dire consequences for the department, vehicle occupants and for the community. The reasons for these alarming statistics are many and varied. They include:*

* *Less fire alarms means less experience behind the wheel for apparatus*
* *Roads are more congested*
* *Civilian drivers are more distracted and lack experience encountering emergency apparatus*
* *Civilian vehicles are more sound proof*

*The fire service cannot change any of the above. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the fire service focus their efforts on factors they can affect. It must be recognized that operating a passenger vehicle does not, and can not, relate to operating large apparatus under emergency conditions. The differences in vehicle size, weight, center of gravity, stopping distance, along with the emotional stress on the driver of an emergency situation involving others is fundamentally different than operating a passenger vehicle. Fire service leaders should train and prepare their drivers from the ground up and assume nothing in this process.*

*The attached document represents recommended best practices for the selection and training of vehicle drivers, routine and emergency operation of apparatus, and investigating motor vehicle crashes and near-misses (near-hits). Under most circumstances, the document cannot simply be adopted in any department. Fire agency leaders will need to review the document, strike items that do not apply and add items to better reflect their operations. Much of the document is derived from national or state regulations and best practices. Fire agencies can demand more stringent standards than suggested here. However, they should be extremely careful when prescribing a level below those recommended.*

*At several points in the document, we have provided shaded areas which require the fire agency to consider specific questions or issues and develop verbiage that reflects their operations.*

*The importance of firefighters being seated in a designated seat and wearing their seat belt cannot be overstated. Apparatus crashes are the second-leading cause of firefighter deaths. Many of the fatalities resulted when the firefighter was ejected from the apparatus when they WERE NOT WEARING their seat belts. We encourage every fire agency participate in the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation’s Everyone Goes Home program and take the Seatbelt Pledge. Visit their homepage at* [*https://www.everyonegoeshome.com/seatbelts/*](https://www.everyonegoeshome.com/seatbelts/) *.*

*An Implementation Checklist is provided at the end of the document to assist with reviewing, amending, and implementing the document for individual fire agencies.*

----------REMOVE ABOVE PARAGRAPH----------

# INTRODUCTION

While responding to any emergency and non-emergency call, the INSERT AGENCY’S NAME places a great deal of responsibility on the drivers of our vehicles. Our drivers have in their care and control most of the agency’s major assets (the vehicles, portable equipment, and personnel). Our vehicle drivers also have a higher standard of care to the general motoring public and must make every attempt to act with due regard for the safety of others. Drivers must constantly monitor and reduce the amount of risk and exposure to potential losses during each and every response. Safe arrival at all scenes shall be, and must always remain, the first priority of all drivers. In order to accomplish this task, all vehicles drivers shall become familiar and constantly abide by the following policies and procedures:

# DRIVER QUALIFICATION AND TRAINING

For the purpose of this policy, DRIVER or OPERATOR is defined as volunteer firefighter, career firefighter, fire officers and fire administrators, administrative support staff, elected Fire Commissioners, and any other individual who may be requested to operate a INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicle or a personal vehicle to conduct agency business. The terms DRIVER and OPERATOR are used interchangeably.

a) Levels of Drivers of INSERT AGENCY’S NAME Vehicles

The INSERT AGENCY’S NAME considers 4 levels of drivers:

1. passenger vehicles in non-emergency mode (taking utility van to training class);
2. emergency passenger vehicles (chief’s vehicles, utility vans and pickup trucks up to F350 class);
3. emergency apparatus (pumpers, rescue trucks, aerials, ambulances);
   1. Driver / Operator – Apparatus Equipped with a Fire Pump
   2. Driver / Operator – Apparatus Equipped with an Aerial Device
   3. Driver / Operator – Apparatus Equipped with a Tiller
   4. Driver Operator – Wildland Fire Apparatus
   5. Driver / Operator – Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Apparatus
   6. Driver / Operator – Mobile Water Supply Apparatus
4. special vehicles (trailers, ATV, snow plows).
5. Drivers of passenger vehicles in non-emergency mode (such as taking utility van to training class) must have a valid driver’s license and a satisfactory motor vehicle driving record. Drivers of this level may not operate the vehicle with emergency light and siren, and shall follow all motor vehicle rules.
6. Drivers of passenger vehicles in emergency response mode shall 1) be educated on New Jersey Title 39 Section and Department policies for the operation of emergency lights and sirens, 2) have a satisfactory motor vehicle driving record, and 3) demonstrate proper use of all equipment associated with the vehicle and its contents.
7. Emergency Fire Apparatus / Ambulance Drivers shall:
8. Have a satisfactory motor vehicle driving record and demonstrated level of emotional maturity.
9. Have a) a minimum of three years driving experience, b) three years of firefighting / EMS experience, with c) at least one year experience with the [AGENCY], to become familiar with local roads and operations.
10. Pass CEVO-Fire, or equivalent course, for fire apparatus and
11. Successfully complete Pump Operation at an approved fire academy for pumpers, and Aerial Operations for apparatus with aerial devices.
12. [PENDING] Successfully complete the Division of Fire Safety certification written and practical examinations for certification for each type of apparatus
13. Pass annual departmental physical evaluations performed by a physician or licensed healthcare provider.
14. Successful completion of the department’s driver / operator training and qualification program which is based on NFPA 1001. Demonstrated skill and required knowledge sheets for each apparatus are provided in Appendices A and B.
15. Drivers with less than 10 emergency responses operating a vehicle in the past calendar year shall requalify by demonstrating the skills components only for the vehicle(s) in Appendix \_\_\_.
16. Drivers shall requalify every xx years by demonstrating the skills components only for the vehicle(s) in Appendix \_\_\_.
17. Operators of specialized vehicles *(specify applicable department’s vehicles such as ATVs and articulated tankers)* shall:
18. Have a satisfactory motor vehicle driving record and demonstrated level of emotional maturity.
19. Have a minimum of three years driving experience and three years of EMS / firefighting experience, with at least one year experience with the [AGENCY], to become familiar with specifics of the local roads and operations.
20. Successful completion of the department’s driver / operator training and qualification program. Demonstrated skill and required knowledge sheets for each apparatus are provided in Appendix \_\_\_.
21. Operators shall requalify by demonstrating the skills components for the vehicle operations in Appendix \_\_\_.

b) Annual Review of Driving History for All Drivers

All firefighters and other members authorized to drive vehicles owned, leased, or controlled by the agency or use their personal vehicles to conduct business on behalf of the agency should have their Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) reviewed annually and prior to entrustment of a [AGENCY] vehicle.

This includes MVR of volunteers who respond in their personal vehicle, with or without blue lights.

Drivers who use their personal vehicles for [AGENCY] business, shall provide the [AGENCY] with a copy of a valid insurance coverage on their personal vehicle during the month of January of each year. Minimum insurance coverage shall be: INSERT MINIMUM LEVELS OF COVERAGE

*New Jersey insurance regulations tie primary insurance coverage to the vehicle, not the driver or driver’s organization. It is good fiscal policy to ensure individuals who drive personal vehicles on company business, especially the personal vehicles of volunteers, are properly insured.*

*INSERT MINIMAL LEVEL OF COVERAGE – this can be state minimums, check with your Risk Manger*

The INSERT AGENCY’S NAME has established the following standard for the evaluation of motor vehicle records. Standards will be applied consistently among all drivers.

Acceptable: No moving violations and/or preventable accidents over the last 36 months.

Marginal: Up to 2 moving violations and/or preventable accidents in the last 36 months.

Probation: Up to 3 moving violations and/or preventable accidents within the last 36 months.

Unacceptable: More than 3 moving violations and/or preventable accidents within the last 36 months, or more than 2 moving violations and/or preventable accidents within the most recent year, or any of the violations listed below:

* Driving while under the influence (DWI or DUI)
* Leaving the scene of an accident
* Reckless driving violations
* Homicide or assault through the use of a motor vehicle
* Drivers who currently have a revoked or suspended license
* Attempting to elude a police officer

Drivers with acceptable, marginal or probation grading may be allowed to operate agency vehicles or their personal vehicles to conduct business on behalf of the agency.

Drivers with marginal or probation grading should have their MVRs reviewed HOW OFTEN. *Semi­annual or quarterly reports are recommended.* Additional violations or accidents may result in suspension of driving privileges.

Drivers with unacceptable driving records will not be permitted to operate agency vehicles or their personal vehicle to conduct business on behalf of the agency.

If an accident is shown on an MVR, it will be assumed to be an “at-fault” accident. Any change to such a classification will be made only upon receipt of a police report or ruling from the Accident Review Panel showing that the driver in question was not at fault.

Unusual circumstances with individual cases would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Operators of all levels, who are involved in a motor vehicle crash of any type, will have their driving privileges suspended until the incident has been investigated in accordance with Section 12) Vehicle Crash Reporting and Investigation and completed any remedial actions recommended by the Review Committee.

# DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY

The INSERT AGENCY’S NAME recognizes that the possession or use of unlawful drugs and the abuse of alcohol pose a threat to the health and safety of all members. It shall be the policy of the fire department to adhere to a “ZERO TOLERANCE” level for being under the influence of drugs or alcohol of all fire department personnel, including medical marijuana.

Any INSERT AGENCY’S NAME member who is observed by a department official to be possibly intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or drugs shall be immediately tested and is subject to discipline as provided in the Agency Policy and Procedure Handbook.

*A Model Employment Practices Policy and Procedure Manual is provided on the MEL website,* [*www.njmel.org*](http://www.njmel.org)*, under the Insurance and Claims menu*.

Drivers and non-drivers must notify their supervisor within five (5) days of conviction for a drug or alcohol related violation, whether or not the violation occurred while performing an Agency function.

Apparatus shall not be operated by members using prescription or over-the-counter medications that could affect their ability to operate motor vehicles.

Any member driving a fire department vehicle, including a personal vehicle while on INSERT AGENCY’S NAME business, that is involved in a motor vehicle accident shall submit to be tested for alcohol and drugs.

# OPERATING & RESPONDING IN PERSONAL VEHICLES

a) Response to the station in personal vehicles

While responding to the station, all New Jersey motor vehicle laws and rules shall be followed.

Any member who is cited for a traffic violation under these circumstances should be suspended from agency activities. The chief or his designate should determine the duration of the suspension.

An active member in good standing of [AGENCY] may display on a motor vehicle owned by him or by a member of his household a blue warning light or lights as provided in N.J. Title 39:3-54.7 et. seq.. Application for blue light permits may be obtained through WHO (fire chief, commissioner, or borough/township official). The application shall be forwarded to the mayor or chief executive officer, to be countersigned after consultation with the local Police Chief, and issued by said mayor or chief executive officer to the members in good standing of [AGENCY]. Warning lights shall not be mounted or displayed prior to the issuance of such identification cards.

Chief Officers are permitted to display a red light with the proper permits issued by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

Warning lights may be operated only while the vehicle is being used in answering a fire or emergency call.

At no time shall children be in the vehicle when using blue or red lights on their personal vehicle.

Warning lights on personal vehicles shall be installed in accordance with Title 39:3-54.10.

Nothing contained herein is intended to grant to any member of a volunteer fire company or volunteer first aid or rescue squad any privileges or exemptions denied to the drivers of other vehicles, and such members displaying emergency warning lights shall drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and shall obey all the traffic laws of New Jersey.

Any member performing agency work which requires the operation of a [AGENCY] vehicle, or their personal vehicle, must notify the immediate supervisor in those cases where a license is expired, suspended or revoked and/or who is unable to obtain an occupational permit from the State Department of Licensing. A member that fails to report such an instance is subject to disciplinary action.

b) INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicles assigned to individuals

Insert language on the use of chief officer vehicles assigned to a specific individual for their use during a term of office. Questions to consider include:

* Will the vehicle be permitted to be used within a specified distance, on or off Agency business
* Will the vehicle be permitted to used by other members of household
* How will the vehicle be transferred to other users such as newly-elected officers, or during leaves of absences

Agencies should consult with their Risk Manager if the assigned [INSERT AGENCY’S NAME] vehicle is the only vehicle for the member’s household.

# NON-EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS

Anytime an INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicle is out of the station on an assignment other than an emergency run, shall be considered to be a routine operation. All routine operations will be considered non-emergency and shall be made using headlights only; no light bars, forward or rear-facing emergency lights, or sirens shall be used.

Unless a member receives permission from WHO, INSERT AGENCY’S NAME owned vehicles shall be used only on official business.

Vehicles may be taken home only with the advance approval of WHO. When a member takes home a INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicle, it is to be used only for official INSERT AGENCY’S NAME business; any other use is not permitted. At no time shall children be in the INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicle when responding to an emergency.

# VEHICLE RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

INSERT AGENCY NAME VEHICLE ASSIGNMENTS HERE

*Fire agencies should have a matrix of vehicle assignments based on the type of call indicated by original dispatch. Box alarms, still alarms, structure / vehicle fires, mutual aid requests, fire / carbon monoxide / water flow alarms, motor vehicle extrication, hazardous material releases, downed electrical wires and more should be specified.*

The following responses shall be made in non-emergency mode (no emergency lights or sirens) unless there is a specific reason the officer directs otherwise:

* Carbon monoxide alarms with all occupants outside and asymptomatic
* Move up / cover neighboring fire station
* *Specify other types of dispatches*

# EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS

Fire and EMS personnel have a certain degree of immunity from liability while responding to an emergency, whether in their personal vehicle or an emergency vehicle. However, that immunity is not absolute. Maintaining immunity requires that the driver of a vehicle responding to an emergency act with due diligence. *DUE DILIGENCE is defined as appropriate carefulness which is the degree of care that a prudent person would exercise.* In most cases, this means the driver must obey speed limit and other traffic laws. Responding to an emergency is not a license to speed or break traffic laws.

The use of warning lights and sirens is an affirmative decision on the part of the vehicle operator and shall be determined by Dispatch Protocols above and information available to the driver and officer on the vehicle. Audible and visual warning devices shall only be activated for *True Emergencies*. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Vehicle Operators Course Instructor's Manual, "*a TRUE EMERGENCY is a situation in which there is a high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss, and action by (you) an emergency vehicle operator may reduce the seriousness of the situation.*"

When responding to a true emergency, all visual warning devices will be operated regardless of the time of day and / or traffic conditions. Audible warning devices should be operated as needed to alert and warn traffic and pedestrians. Emergency vehicle drivers must understand that warning devices are not always effective in making other vehicle operators aware of your presence. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) *Emergency Vehicle Operators Course Instructor's Manual*, "a TRUE EMERGENCY is a situation in which there is a high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss, and action by (you) an emergency vehicle operator may reduce the seriousness of the situation." According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) *Emergency Vehicle Operators Course Instructor's Manual*, "a TRUE EMERGENCY is a situation in which there is a high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss, and action by (you) an emergency vehicle operator may reduce the seriousness of the situation." Right-of-way can’t be forced or assumed; it must be given by the other driver(s). If not given, the emergency vehicle driver does not have the right-of-way.

1. Before leaving station

While crew is donning gear and entering apparatus, the operator shall perform the 4-Step Start-up Procedure:

* Circle of Safety Inspection - circle the emergency vehicle for open cabinets and other obstacles.
* Adjustment of Cab Features - upon entering the cab, ensure that the driver’s seat is properly adjusted, mirrors are positioned, and controls are in the proper operating position.
* Wearing of Occupant Restraints - the emergency vehicle driver shall secure his/her seatbelt and must ensure that all crew members are properly wearing their seatbelt. The vehicle should not be moved unless all occupants are seated and properly belted.
* Receive Signal Before Moving - The emergency vehicle driver should receive a signal from either the officer or one of the crew members prior to moving the vehicle.

Use both hands on the steering wheel. Exceptions include operating another device on the vehicle such as shifting or turning on the windshield wipers.

The use of cell phones by the driver during an emergency response in a INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicle is prohibited.

Passengers on a fire apparatus should not perform any function that requires them to move from the seated and belted position.

Keep the windows up in your apparatus while responding, wear a sound-attenuating headset in the cab, and turn off the siren when you don't need it.

Effective braking is essential to safe operation of an emergency vehicle.

* In a vehicle with hydraulic brakes, this involves firmly pumping the brake pedal and releasing it prior to the locking of wheels.
* Air brakes require firm and steady pressure without pumping.
* Anti-lock braking systems (ABS), whether installed in conjunction with a hydraulic or air system, should be used in accordance with vehicle’s owners manual.

When turning, signal 300 feet before turning and, whenever possible, turn from one proper lane into another proper lane.

When changing lanes on multi-lane roads: *plan ahead, signal your intention, practice* *space management and make the change of lanes* *smoothly.* These principles should also be applied when merging onto a high-speed highway (entrance ramp) or leaving the highway (exit ramp).

Apparatus shall never pass a stopped school bus with loading / unloading lights activated.

b) Speed and Space Considerations

There are two primary rules regarding speed management. The rules are:

* + 1. Emergency vehicles should not be driven in excess of the posted speed limits
    2. Emergency vehicles must not exceed cautionary speeds, such as on / off ramps and curves.

Establishing and maintaining a cushion of safety on all sides of an emergency vehicle is essential to safe operation. The following areas of concern should be considered by drivers:

* Following Distance — A four-second following distance for speeds of 40 mph or less, and 5 seconds for speeds 40 mph or greater should be maintained to the extent possible.
* Blind Spots Alongside — Because of the size and configuration of most emergency vehicles, blind spots along both sides are to be expected. An emergency vehicle driver must be aware of these areas and recognize that side-view mirrors will not allow full visibility. Leaning forward will help mitigate some blind spots.
* Traffic Closure From Behind — It is important to regularly watch vehicles behind the emergency vehicle. Often drivers will follow the emergency vehicle or use it to “break” traffic in an effort to move more quickly. Signaling any intent to turn, pass or stop is extremely important so as to keep the civilian driver(s) from following too closely or colliding with the emergency vehicle.

School zone related considerations:

1. Observe the posted speed limit for school zones when children are present or when speed warning lights are flashing
2. Fire apparatus, both emergency and non-emergency traffic shall stop for school buses loading or unloading as indicated by their flashing lights and/or stop sign.

c) Intersection Navigation

Intersection procedures are extremely important. Many accidents involving emergency vehicles occur at intersections.

Uncontrolled intersections:

Any intersection that does not have a control device (stop sign, yield sign, or traffic signal) in the direction of travel of the emergency vehicle is an uncontrolled intersection. Any intersection where the traffic signal is green for the emergency vehicle should also use the guidelines listed below. In these cases, emergency vehicle drivers should:

* Scan the intersection for possible hazards. Observe traffic in all four directions — left, right, front, and rear.
* Slow down and cover the brake pedal with the driver’s foot.
* Activate or change the siren cadence not less than 200 feet from the intersection under most circumstances
* Drivers should never solely rely on warning devices to alert and clear traffic.
* Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic, if at all possible.

Controlled intersections:

Controlled intersections require emergency vehicle drivers to do the following:

* Scan the intersection for possible hazards as well as driver options.
* Begin to slow down well before the intersection and cover the brake pedal with the driver’s foot.
* Activate or change the siren cadence not less than 200 feet from the intersection.
* Drivers should never solely rely on warning devices to alert and clear traffic.
* Scan the intersection for possible passing options.
* Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic, if at all possible.
* Come to a complete stop.
* Establish eye contact with other vehicle drivers, have partner communicate all is clear and reconfirm all other vehicles are stopped.
* Proceed through one lane of traffic at a time. Treat each lane as a separate intersection and only proceed as each lane is controlled.

*Agencies may consider requiring all visual and auditory warning devices be turned off for specific high-volume, multi-lane intersections. The time lost is minimal, but the safety afforded the crew is significant,*

Railroad intersections:

As an emergency vehicle driver approaches an unguarded railroad crossing, the operator shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop before entering the grade crossing. In addition, the emergency vehicle driver shall perform the following prior to proceeding:

* Turn off all sirens and air horns
* Operate the motor at idle speed
* Turn off any other sound producing equipment or accessories
* Open the windows and listen for a train’s horn

d) Operating under adverse weather & road conditions

* Whenever conditions have caused reduced traction, such as water or snow on the road, the emergency vehicle driver must reduce speed and steer, accelerate, or brake smoothly and evenly.
* Whenever conditions have limited vision, the emergency vehicle driver must reduce speed and steer, accelerate, or brake smoothly and evenly.
* Increase the following distance.

# BACKING VEHICLES

Backing of Fire Department apparatuses or vehicles should be avoided whenever possible. It is the preference of the INSERT AGENCY’S NAME for drivers of vehicles to proceed forward, even if not the most expedient manner, than to back the apparatus.

The INSERT AGENCY’S NAME will conduct a cost-benefit analysis for back-up cameras and other vehicle options with in the design phase of each new apparatus.

The INSERT AGENCY’S NAME will evaluate visual aids for backing apparatus at the station. Visual aids include extending lines onto aprons, exterior lighting, bay lighting, retroreflective markings, and similar improvements.

Backing of apparatus shall be done slowly. If a spotter is used, the spotter shall move to stay visible in the driver-side mirror as the vehicle is backing. Driver of the vehicle must immediately stop the vehicle if the spotter becomes not visible in the mirror.

Plan ahead and avoid backing whenever possible. Carefully survey the parking opportunities when you arrive at the site. If possible, choose an easy-to-exit parking space that does not crowd neighboring vehicles. Avoid the temptation of pulling into the most convenient location. Sometimes, choosing a poor parking space is a matter of necessity - but in many cases, a better defensive position is available.

Adjust mirrors for maximum visibility. Mirrors are a major key to any backing maneuver. Adjust your mirrors you are sitting in the driver’s seat in your normal comfortable sitting position. Get help adjusting the right side mirror, if possible. Get to know the vehicle’s blind spots. Mirrors can never give the whole picture while backing.

Situate your vehicle in the best possible position before starting to back up. Make the turn on the driver’s side, if possible, in order to better allow you to see the back of the vehicle swinging into position.

a) At the Station

A Spotter SHALL be used whenever a member is available on the apparatus or at the station. The Spotter shall be positioned at the rear driver-side of the apparatus, visible to the driver in the side mirror.

If there are no other members on the apparatus or fire station, the driver shall control traffic as the apparatus approaches the station. When traffic is stopped, the operator shall sound the horn and back the apparatus onto the apron. The driver shall perform a complete walk-around the vehicle to ensure there are no obstructions behind, to the sides, and above the apparatus, before proceeding into the bay. When you must spot for yourself without a guide, return to the vehicle quickly. Start backing within a few seconds after finishing the walk-around check. This will allow very little time for people and/or obstacles to move behind the vehicle.

b) At the scene or other location than station

Spotter(s) should be used whenever a member is available. If a single spotter is used, s/he shall be positioned at the rear driver-side of the apparatus, visible to the driver in the side mirror. If a second member is available to act as additional spotters, the second spotter should be positioned at the passenger-side front. Additional spotters may be needed for extremely tight maneuvering, such as at an active fire scene. Only the spotter at the rear driver-side should give directions to the driver, except in an imminent danger situation.

If there are no other members on the apparatus or at the scene or fire station, the driver shall control traffic as the apparatus approaches the location. When traffic is stopped, the operator shall sound the horn and back the apparatus to a safe location.

c) Hand Signals of the Spotter



It is safe to proceed backwards

Stop the vehicle

Move vehicle to the right Move vehicle to the left



Go slow. You’re close to an obstruction.

# OPERATING ON OR NEAR ROADWAYS

Members should not be permitted to operate on or near open roadway until  they complete *Responder Safety*, available at [http://learning.respondersafety.com/](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001QoPGbvjM9GK2T7xwE5Ducj8bcL_RogEyqZGYDDbOMTrOshF9zcBTCG7DbO432B-NVxc1Tpv_hgAjCcVKbtVS9rJm--ureiyJHrPHeMZVR2Zh-Y4rCIe2SmAznJr6XD5skhqF3D6hoZXuCVDMsflLBbeq32X-J0iHzAEyVP6bUXr6Z4YCIxKWx4waoS76i9bh&c=X59teBoSpqLYwsWXRR_ZvUNpOIdChGXrgyxV-rgt9K2COQoqSyQMBA==&ch=_ibCRedab0GIULwWu91PEjYkAQAP5hob0oL1fs8ldjvlatI5zWjsyQ==) or a department-sponsored training session, or equivalent training.

As a general rule, full size fire apparatus should utilize normal entrances and exits to reverse their direction of travel. The median or paved U-turns should be reserved for life threatening emergencies and extenuating circumstances.

When possible, crew members should enter/exit their units on the side opposite the traffic flow. Use 3-Points of Contact when exiting vehicles. Emergency responders should always check for approaching traffic before exiting their vehicle.

In accordance with Federal Regulation 23 CFR 634, all emergency workers operating on a highway who are exposed to traffic shall wear a Class II or higher vest complying with ANSI/ISEA 107, 2004 or 2006 or a Public Safety Vest complying with ANSI/ISEA 207, 2006. Firefighters or other emergency responders engaged in emergency operations that directly expose them to flame, fire, heat, and/or hazardous materials are not required to wear a vest, provided they are attired in retro-reflective turn-out gear that is specified and regulated by other organizations, such as the National Fire Protection Association.

Drivers of fire apparatus shall position and operate apparatus in accordance with *State of New Jersey Highway Incident Traffic Safety Guidelines for Emergency Responders, Version 2*.

* The first arriving fire apparatus shall be positioned on an angle to the lanes of traffic creating a physical barrier between upstream traffic and the Incident Space where responders are working. This includes using the vehicle to “block to the left” or “block to the right”.
* If a second fire apparatus responds to the scene as a shadow vehicle, it should safe-position at least 50 feet upstream of the blocker vehicle, to help ensure an adequate buffer zone. The crew in the shadow vehicle shall abandon the vehicle and report to the incident space. The shadow vehicle assumes a fend-off position to deflect any high speed impact that would otherwise crash into the incident space.
* Unit operators shall cancel any warning lights, which impair the vision of approaching traffic (i.e. headlights, spotlights, clear warning lights).

# SPECIAL VEHICLE OPERATIONS

a) Surplus Military Vehicles

The U.S. Fire Administration has reported increased crash risks associated with these types of vehicles, particularly military fuel tankers that have been converted into water tankers. NIOSH researchers identified several factors that can create safety concerns for fire departments operating these types of vehicles. The main concerns: lack of (or failed use of) seatbelts, poor maintenance, exceeding the gross vehicle weights, using tankers for hauling water without proper baffles, unsafe riding locations and inappropriate vehicle modifications.

All firefighters shall be seated in appropriate rid­ing positions and secured by seat belts whenever the vehicle is in motion.

Surplus military vehicles should only be operated in non-emergency (no lights or sirens) mode due to their modifications from their original design and intended use.

Exemption: Vehicles that have been designed, modified, or evaluated by a qualified automotive engineer as being safe for emergency response, can be operated in an emergency mode.

Operators of surplus vehicles shall complete [AGENCY] training for each type of vehicle.

*Training should include both knowledge and skills demonstrations*

1. All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) & Utility Task Vehicles (UTVs)

**Uses for ATVs**

Primarily, ATVs are used in places where there are no paved roads that can be negotiated by fire and EMS apparatus. During certain times of the year, rutted, muddy, gravel roads may be impassable in traditional apparatus. Other places of use include areas where units would need to traverse a beach, or locations where storms have left excessive debris along roads.

When deploying quads, responders should travel in pairs to ensure that if a problem occurs, someone is there to assist and/or call for help.

Always wear a DOT-compliant helmet, goggles, long sleeves, long pants, over-the-ankle boots and gloves. It must be stressed that firefighters' helmets are not appropriate substitution for a DOT helmet. They are not designed for crash protection, and the heavy weight of firefighters' helmets sitting (often top heavy) on the head can increase the risk of spinal injury on rough terrain or in a collision or rollover.

Operators shall complete the free online E-Course through the ATV Safety Institute (visit ATVsafety.org, or call 800-887-2887), review the Owners Manual for the ATV, and successfully complete one of the following:

* Take a hands-on ATV Rider Course through an authorized ATV dealer
* The department training skills test in Appendix A-2 ATV Driver Training Record.

Operators of ATVs shall adjust their speed according to conditions including but not limited to driving surface, number of passengers, cargo weight and height.

**Uses for UTVs**

UTVs are golf cart-like vehicles primarily used for support tasks on paved or stable surfaces.

Before operating a UTV, members will complete the UTV Qualification process defined in Appendix A-3.

# VEHICLE INSPECTION – MAINTENANCE – TESTING PROGRAM

Regular inspection of an emergency vehicle is an essential step in the safe operation under emergency conditions.

Periodic Inspections

*While most operational crews are not trained or equipped to undertake major maintenance work, most organizations assign them some responsibilities for periodic (shift, weekly, monthly) inspections and specified and limited maintenance (changing bulbs, adding certain automotive fluids, etc.). These duties and limitations should be included here.*

The driver / operator / Engineer should be responsible for completing the documentation, reporting deficiencies and verify that the requested and needed maintenance was performed.

The organization should maintain a checklist for these inspections.

*Provide sample vehicle inspection form in Appendices.*

*INSERT AGENCY PROCEDURE FOR FILING CHECKLIST.*

*INSERT AGENCY PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING DEFICIENCIES UP THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.*

Periodic Testing

Apparatus shall be tested in accordance with manufacturer’s recommendations and PEOSH Standards (N.J.A.C. 12:100-10.16).

* Pumping apparatus shall be tested at least annually
* Apparatus with aerial devices shall be tested whenever visual inspection or load testing indicates a potential problem or at least every five years
* Mobile water supply apparatus shall be inspected at least annually

Routine Maintenance and Repairs

All maintenance and repairs shall be completed by qualified mechanics or manufacturer-authorized technicians.

Records of Inspection-Testing-Maintenance

Inspections and preventive maintenance efforts (including repairs and malfunctions) should be documented and a record should be kept during the life of the vehicle. The records should include a vehicle log, a maintenance file, and all work order request forms.

WHO shall maintain records of inspections, tests, and maintenance.

# 

# VEHICLE CRASH REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this section is to provide a process to investigate and record all collisions and significant near misses involving INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicles. A near miss incident is defined as an incident in which no property damage and no personal injury occurred, but where, given a slight shift in time, position, or other circumstances, damage or injury would or may have occurred.

Vehicular Crashes:

All motor vehicle crashes involving INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicles, whether on emergency or non-emergency task, and personal vehicles on agency business shall be immediately reported to the local law enforcement agency either via radio or 9-1-1. Requests shall be made for the appropriate assistance, i.e. – first aid, traffic control, extrication, and INSERT AGENCY’S NAME representative.

The immediate priority after an injury incident will be the appropriate treatment of the injured person(s).

The driver of the vehicle must verbally report the incident to an available INSERT AGENCY’S NAME senior officer as soon as possible (preferably within one hour). If the incident occurs during a response, the Incident Commander must be notified of the accident and that the vehicle is delayed or unavailable. Consideration may be given to completing the response, depending on severity of crash and nature of emergency response. Normal information exchange must occur between the INSERT AGENCY’S NAME personnel and the other affected driver(s).

Immediately after the incident (or as soon as possible), the driver of the INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicle will be suspended from driving INSERT AGENCY’S NAME apparatus until the crash receives a preliminary investigation and a decision is made to allow or disallow driving. The senior officer available usually performs this investigation as long as he or she is not directly involved in the incident.

The driver of the vehicle involved in the incident must complete a written report within six hours of the incident and submit it to the senior officer available. Injury Incidents:

The following actions will be taken within the timeframe indicated:

* Within 8 hours – notification to NJPEOSH if firefighter(s) was fatally injured
* Within 24 hours – notification to NJPEOSH if firefighter(s) was hospitalized
* Within 24 hours – notification to insurance company of claim / loss
* Within 1- 24 hours – all available INSERT AGENCY’S NAME personnel involved in the accident (occupants, witnesses, and others with pertinent knowledge of the driver, vehicle, or events leading up to event) will provide a written account of the events leading up to the accident on the form provided in Appendix B and submit to the lead accident review officer.
* Within 48 hours – for lesser incidents, the lead accident review officer will complete and submit accident findings
* Within 72 hours – for significant incidents, an Accident Investigation Team will be designated and an initial meeting date set.

Investigating Significant accidents and near misses involving INSERT AGENCY’S NAME vehicles:

Within 72 hours, the senior officer available will appoint an ad hoc investigative Committee. The size and number / expertise of the Committee will be proportional to the significance of the accident.

The committee will consist of WHO.

*Consider senior officer (unless that officer was involved or is a direct witness), the departmental safety officer, if available, apparatus engineer, and a representative group of additional personnel (if the department is made up of multiple stations, then include firefighters from other station). If the senior officer available was involved, then the next most senior officer available will assume responsibility for the investigation.*

*The agency may also consider outside resources such as safety consultant, insurance representative, and local law enforcement / traffic safety officers.*

The investigation committee will gather any and all information necessary to determine the cause(s) of the incident and to determine what measures are necessary to prevent similar occurrences in the future. A report of the investigation findings will be prepared as defined in Appendix C. The report will include a description of the incident, the cause(s), and the corrective actions deemed appropriate.

WHO *(Commissioners or officers)* will assign primary ownership for completion of the corrective actions.

# APPENDIX A-1 – DRIVER TRAINING RECORD FOR PUMPER #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Driver Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Candidate has a valid New Jersey Drivers License. Copy is on file.

 Candidate has current proof of insurance. Copy of Declaration page is on file.

 Candidate has a satisfactory driver license history. Copy of Abstract is on file.

 Candidate has been medically cleared by licensed Healthcare Provider. Provider release is on file.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Satisfactorily  completed | Date, duration & activity toward criteria | Trainer  initials | Criteria  Requisite Knowledge and Skills |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Knowledge: per manufacturer's specifications and requirements.   * Batteries & Electrical system * Coolant system & Belts * Engine Oil & Hydraulic Fluids * Tires & Steering System |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Knowledge: vehicles dimensions, weight, turning radius, engine gauges' normal & warning readings |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Knowledge: describe the effects, hazards, and control measures of liquid surge, braking reaction times, load factors, effects of high center of gravity on roll-over potential, speed and centrifugal force, principles of skid avoidance, weight and height limitations of local area, applicable laws and regulations of emergency response. |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: perform routine inspections, tests, and servicing on the following items, given a department vehicle and manufacturer's recommendations, so that operational status is verified. |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: document the routine inspections, tests, and servicing in accordance with department policies and procedures. Explain policy how to report deficiencies. |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: Ability to operate and maintain safe following distance of department vehicle. Demonstrate the following maneuvers under clear & dry conditions, given a department vehicle, in compliance with applicable local laws and departmental regulations   * (4) right turns and (4) left turns * 1 mile straight section of 2 lane road * (1) through-intersection and (2) stop intersections * (1) curve, each left and right * (1) entrance ramp on limited access roadway * (2) lane changes, (1) each left and right * (1) downgrade to require down-shifting and braking * (1) upgrade to require gear change to maintain speed * (1) underpass or low clearance bridge |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: Demonstrate the following maneuvers under adverse conditions such as rain, fog, night, etc., given a department vehicle, in compliance with applicable local laws and departmental regulations   * (4) right turns and (4) left turns * through-intersection and (2) stop intersections * curve, each left and right * entrance ramp on limited access roadway * lane changes, (1) each left and right * downgrade to require down-shifting and braking |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: back the vehicle from a roadway into restricted spaces (12 wide and requiring 90 turns) on both the right and left sides, given a spotter and department vehicle, without having to stop and pull forward and without striking obstructions. |
| Satisfactorily  completed | Date, duration & activity toward criteria | Trainer  initials | Criteria  Requisite Knowledge and Skills |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: demonstrate the ability to use mirrors by backing the vehicle around obstructions on a challenge course without stopping or striking obstructions |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: demonstrate the ability to use mirrors by turning the vehicle 180 degrees within a confined space, given a spotter, and in an area in which the vehicle cannot perform a U-turn without stopping and backing up, without striking obstructions |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: demonstrate the ability to use mirrors by maneuvering the vehicle, in an area of reduced horizontal clearances, both forwards and in reverse. |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: demonstrate the ability to operate all fixed systems and equipment on the vehicle, not specifically addressed elsewhere in this standard, listed below:   * Vehicle radio system * Vehicle emergency warning audio & visual equipment * Onboard generator & scene lighting * Onboard hydraulic rescue tools * Onboard cascade / SCBA refill station |
| **Date \_\_\_\_\_\_**  **Init. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  | Requisite Skills: produce hand and master streams, given the sources specified below, so that the pump is engaged, all pressure control and vehicle safety devices are set, flow is achieved and maintained, and the apparatus is continuously monitored for potential problems:   * From internal tank * From pressurized source; hydrant, etc. * From static source or draft * Transfer from internal tank to external source |

*This form should be modified for each vehicle.*

# APPENDIX A-2 - ATV DRIVER TRAINING RECORD

Driver Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Candidate has a valid New Jersey Drivers License. Copy on file.

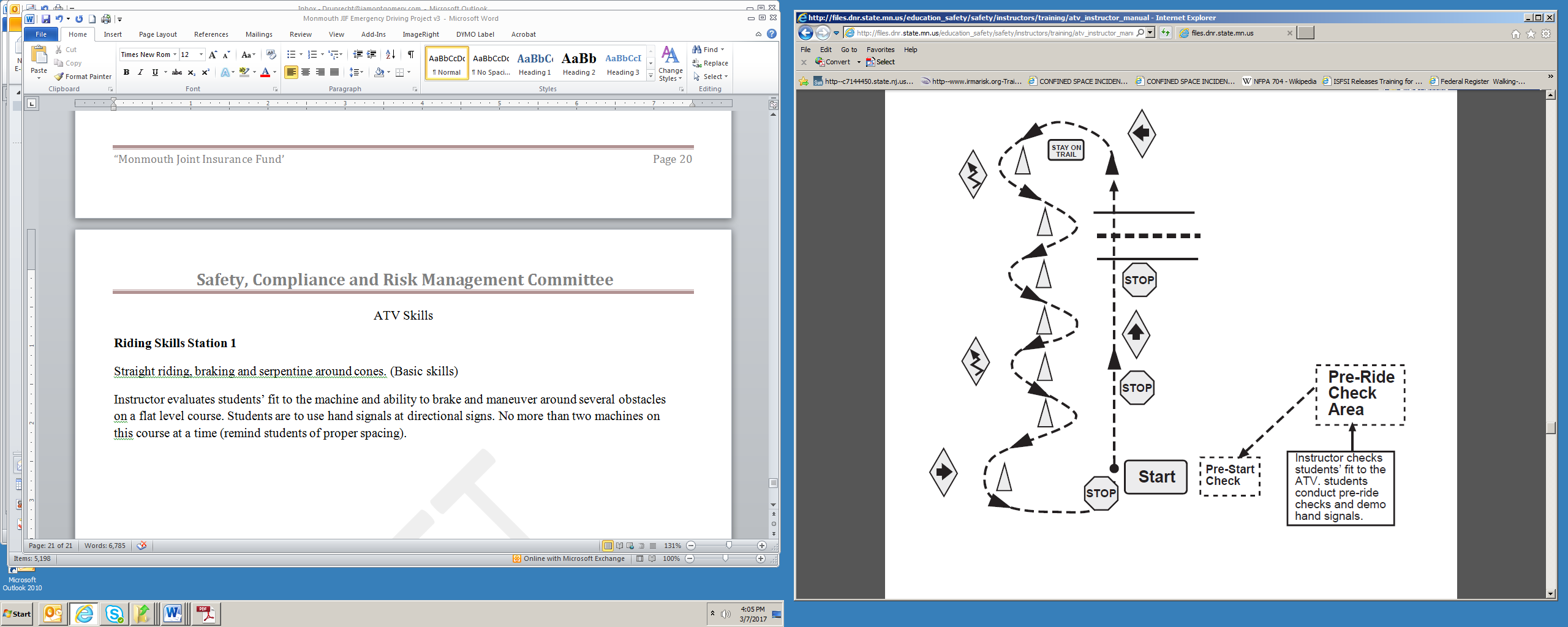
 Candidate provided / reviewed Owners Manual

 Candidate has current proof of insurance. Copy of Declaration page on file.

Riding Skills Station 1

Straight riding, braking and serpentine around cones. (Basic skills)

Instructor evaluates students’ fit to the machine and ability to brake and maneuver around several obstacles on a flat level course. Students are to use hand signals at directional signs. No more than two machines on this course at a time (remind students of proper spacing).



🞏Successfully completed; Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Driver Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Riding Skills Station 2

Negotiating various ground obstacles (Basic Skills)

Students practice going over simulated logs at various angles. Some are from a stop and one is done in reverse gear. No more than two ATVs on the course at a time (remind students to maintain proper spacing).

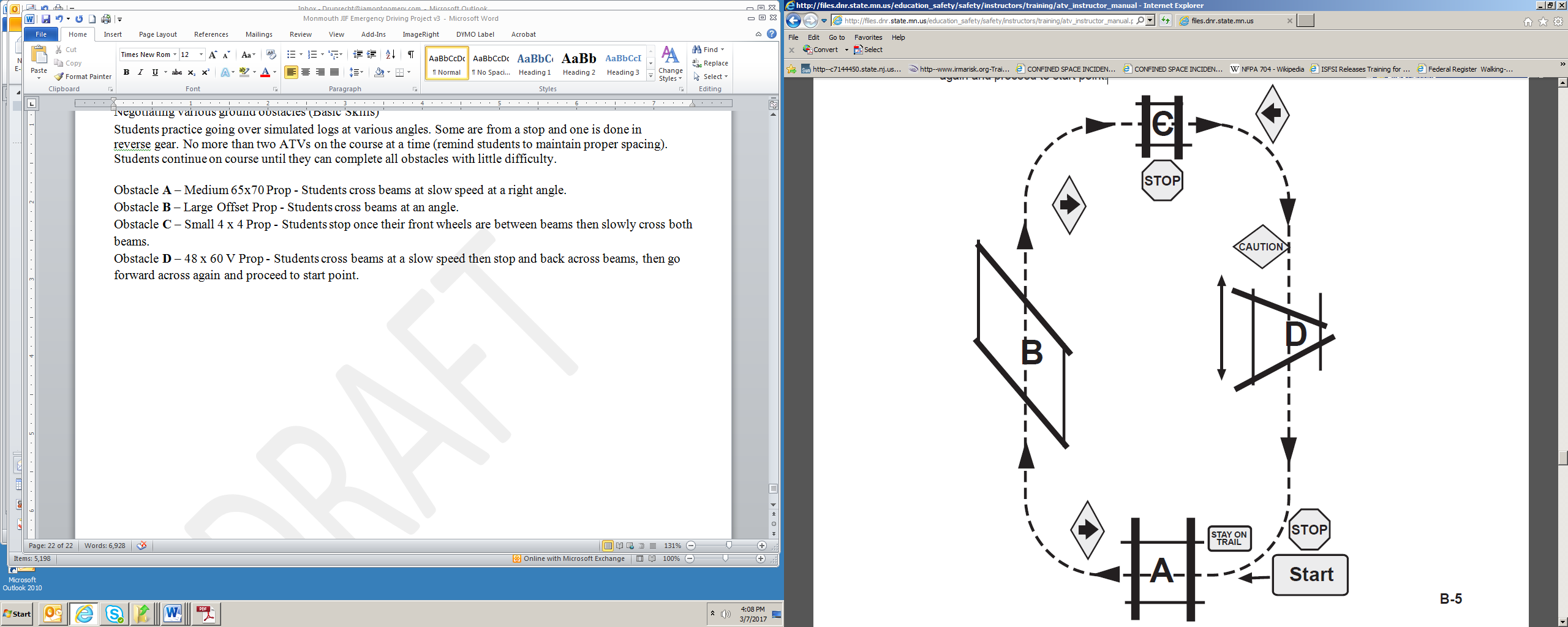
Students continue on course until they can complete all obstacles with little difficulty.

Obstacle A – Medium 65x70 Prop - Students cross beams at slow speed at a right angle.

Obstacle B – Large Offset Prop - Students cross beams at an angle.

Obstacle C – Small 4 x 4 Prop - Students stop once their front wheels are between beams then slowly cross both beams.

Obstacle D – 48 x 60 V Prop - Students cross beams at a slow speed then stop and back across beams, then go forward across again and proceed to start point.



🞏Successfully completed; Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Driver Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Riding Skills Station 3

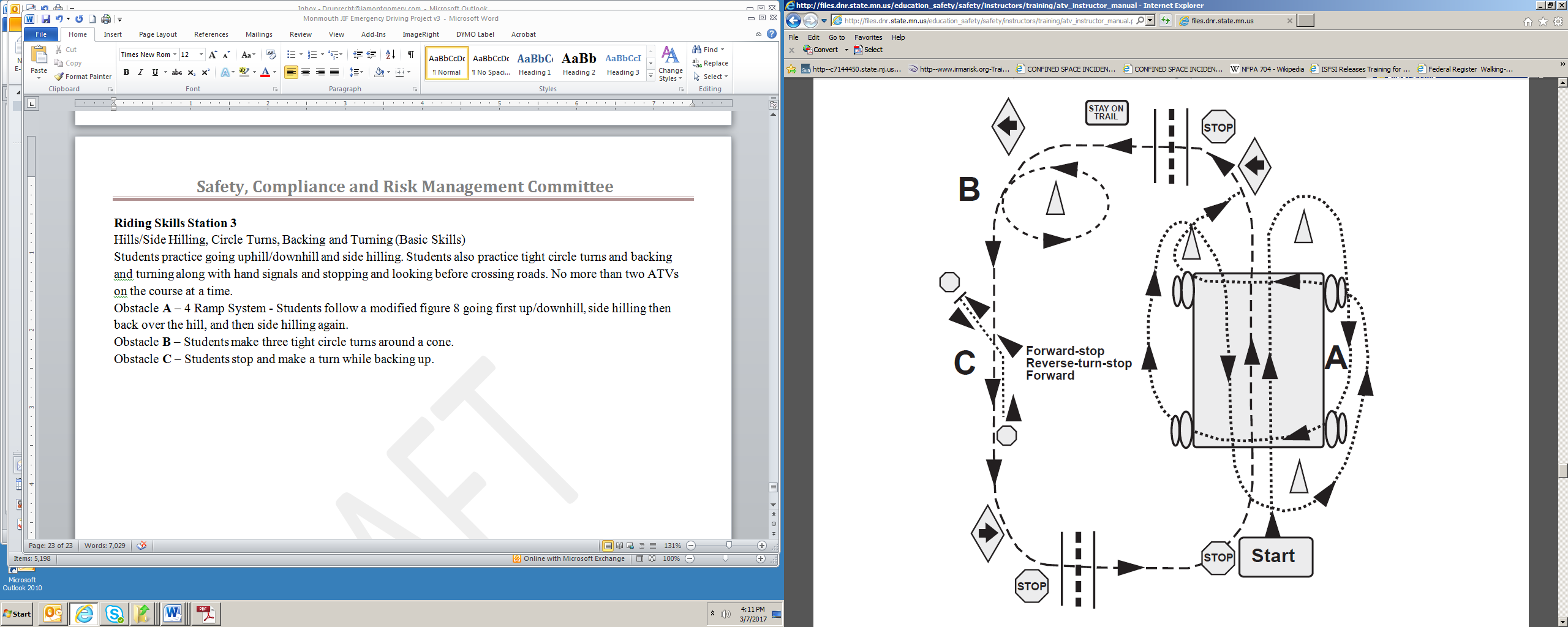
Hills/Side Hilling, Circle Turns, Backing and Turning (Basic Skills)

Students practice going uphill/downhill and side hilling. Students also practice tight circle turns and backing and turning along with hand signals and stopping and looking before crossing roads. No more than two ATVs on the course at a time.

Obstacle A – 4 Ramp System - Students follow a modified figure 8 going first up/downhill, side hilling then back over the hill, and then side hilling again.

Obstacle B – Students make three tight circle turns around a cone.

Obstacle C – Students stop and make a turn while backing up.



🞏Successfully completed; Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX A-3 - UTILITY VEHICLE DRIVER TRAINING RECORD

Driver Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Candidate has been provided / reviewed the Owners Manual and agency Motor Vehicle Operation Policy.
* Candidate has a valid driver’s license and satisfactory Motor Vehicle Record

Quiz:

T F Utility vehicles have a greater tendency to tip over than passenger vehicles.

T F Utility vehicles have the right-of-way when encountering pedestrians.

T F Utility vehicles are safe to operate on muddy surfaces.

T F Driver and passengers must be seated in designated seats and secured with a lap belt.

T F Utility carts may only be driven from the driver’s seat.

T F Utility carts must be inspected before each day’s use.

T F Arms and legs of driver and passengers must be kept inside vehicle when in motion.

Demonstration of Skills:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Satisfactory (please initial) | Unsatisfactory – please explain |
| Candidate properly performed the pre-use inspection, using the agency pre-use checklist |  |  |
| Candidate entered vehicle with 3 points of contact and secured lap belt before starting vehicle |  |  |
| Candidate started vehicle, selected proper direction (forward or reverse), released brake, and proceeded in a straight line forward |  |  |
| Candidate performed 5 right turns and 5 left turns at designated intersections. |  |  |
| Candidate came to a smooth stop 3 times. |  |  |
| Candidate properly loaded and secured representative cargo. |  |  |
| Candidate parked vehicle in a safe location, applied parking brake, and turned off key. Exited the vehicle with 3 points of contact. |  |  |
| Additional Skills: |  |  |

##### APPENDIX B - VEHICLE ACCIDENT / LOSS INVESTIGATION REPORT

Name of Driver: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Type of vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time of accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date & time reported: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

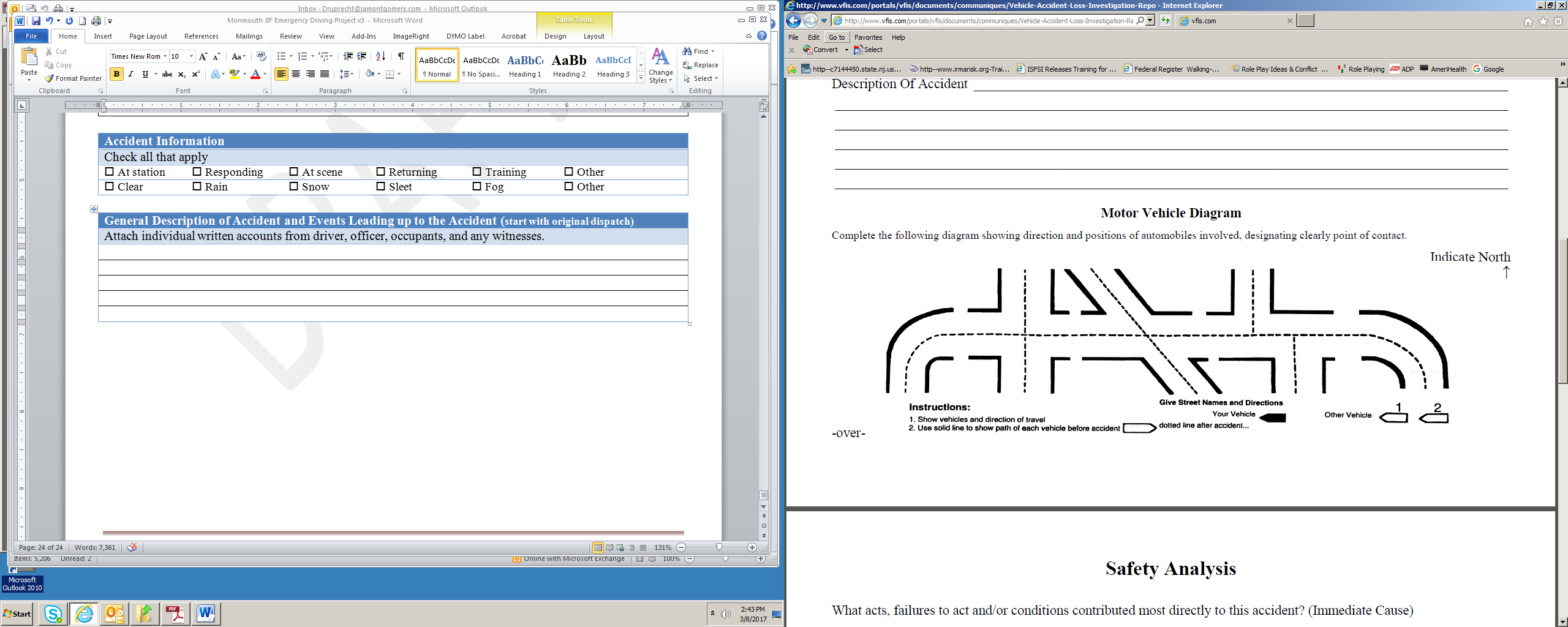
Location of accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Driver Information | | |
| Age: | Years experience as firefighter: | Years experience as driver: |
| Comments on experience as driver with vehicle involved: | | |

|  |
| --- |
| Roadway Information |
| Check all that apply |
| 🞏 Straight 🞏 Curved 🞏 Level 🞏 Hills 🞏 Dry 🞏 Wet 🞏 Muddy 🞏 Snowy / icy 🞏 2-lane 🞏 multi-lane \_\_ 🞏 Divided 🞏 smooth surface 🞏 holes/ruts 🞏 loose material 🞏 Other Comments on roadway: |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Accident Information | | | | | |
| Check all that apply | | | | | |
| 🞏 At station | 🞏 Responding | 🞏 At scene | 🞏 Returning | 🞏 Training | 🞏 Other |
| 🞏 Clear | 🞏 Rain | 🞏 Snow | 🞏 Sleet | 🞏 Fog | 🞏 Other |

|  |
| --- |
| General Description of Accident and Events Leading up to the Accident (start with original dispatch) |
| *Attach individual written accounts from driver, officer, occupants, and any witnesses.* |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |



Name of person completing report: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 🞏 Driver 🞏 Passenger 🞏 Witness

Date & time of accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Location of accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Starting at the time of dispatch describe the events leading up to and immediately following the accident.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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What factors contributed to the accident and what could be done to address those factors?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Use additional pages if necessary* page \_\_ of \_\_

Accident Investigation Report Template

Investigation Team:

Include name, job title, home unit, and team role for each team member.

Executive Summary:

A brief narrative of the facts involving the accident including dates, locations, times, name of incident, jurisdiction(s), number of individuals involved, etc. Names of injured personnel or personnel involved in the accident are not to be included in this report (reference them by position).

Narrative:

A detailed chronological narrative including events leading up to and including the accident, as well as actions taken after the accident. This section will contain who, what, where and when.

Investigation Process:

Provide a brief narrative of actions taken by the investigation team. This narrative should include investigative actions and timeline (when the team conducted interviews, inspections, site visits, etc.), and if other sources were consulted (i.e. equipment manufacturers). This section should also address if environmental, equipment, material, procedural, and human factors were present, and state how findings/recommendations were developed.

Findings and Recommendations:

Appropriate format is to list the finding, its discussion below it, and then the recommendation to address the finding.

* Findings are developed from the factual information. Each finding is a single event or condition. Each finding is an essential step in the accident sequence, but each finding is not necessarily causal or contributing. Findings must be substantiated by the factual data and listed in chronological order within the report. Do not include opinion or speculation.
* Discussion - Provide an explanation of factual and other pertinent information that lead to the finding(s).
* Recommendations - Recommendations are the prevention measures that should be taken to prevent similar accidents. Provide recommendations that are consistent with the findings, and identify who is responsible for completing the recommended action. If no action is required, state as such. Do not include opinion or speculation.

Conclusions and Observations:

The Accident / Near Miss should be classified as one of three categories;

*At Fault* – The actions or inactions of the driver directly caused the accident / near miss.

*Preventable* – The actions or inactions of the driver did not directly result in the accident / near miss, but there was a reasonable opportunity to for the driver to foresee the events that led to the accident / near miss and take action to avoid the incident.

*Not Preventable* – The driver did not have a reasonable chance to foresee the events leading to the accident / near miss.

Investigation team’s opinions and inferences, and “lessons learned” may be captured in the section.

Appendices:

* Maps
* Photographs
* Vehicle maintenance logs

# APPENDIX C – IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

* Roster all Drivers – this should be updated each year by WHO and submitted to chief executive officer of Municipality or Board of Fire Commissioners.
* Assign individual to conduct Motor Vehicle Record check – MVRs may not be conducted by the local police department. A N.J. Customer Abstract Information Retrieval (CAIR) account must be used to check driver history abstracts. There is a fee associated with this service. Fire agencies may be able to coordinate with their local towns or risk manager / insurance agent for the service.
* Assign individual to verify personal vehicle insurance for drivers of personal vehicles on agency business – a trusted and discreet individual should be identified to annually collect and copy the Declaration Page of firefighters and agency representatives who operate personal vehicles on fire agency business.
* Train fire officers / administrators on *Reasonable Suspicion for Alcohol and Drug Use* – This is based on the NJDOT CDL regulations for drivers of large trucks and should be considered a best practice for fire agencies to minimize the possibility of an impaired driver operating apparatus. The class is offered at no charge for members of the MEL Joint Insurance Fund.
* Develop Driver Training Record form for each piece of response apparatus – Agencies can use the form in Appendix A-1 or A-2 as models. The key to creating an effective training program is to identify the necessary knowledge about the vehicle and the equipment on the vehicle, and the skills that must be demonstrated to safely operate the vehicle and the equipment on the vehicle.
* Assign member or members to review each Section of the model Best Practices – each Section should be reviewed against current procedures and operations. Where there is a difference between the model Best Practices and the agency’s procedures or operations, agency leaders should discuss how to align the two.
* Consider the questions and issues presented in the shaded text – Agencies will need to develop verbiage that addresses the operations or situations presented at their location. The developers of this Best Practices document acknowledge the limitations of a single document that can comprehensively reflect the operations of each member.
* Replace [INSERT AGENCY’S NAME] in the document with ‘Company’, ‘Department’ or ‘District’ – This can be completed easily by using the ‘REPLACE’ function on the Ribbon at the top of the document, and selecting the ‘Replace’ tab on the box that opens.
* Insert new language from the model Best Practices into the agency’s policy and procedure manual – The developers of the model Best Practices did not format the verbiage to make it easier to copy and paste into the agency’s manual.
* Approve completed policy – the policy should be approved by the local governing council