



Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS Standard Operating Procedure

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Standard Operating Procedure: 6.05	Effective Date: January 1, 2025
Subject: Accident Review Committee	Section: Health & Safety
Authorized: Paul Supko, Deputy Chief	Revision Date: March 19, 2025

Applicability: Volunteer Career

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Accident Review Committee (ARC) is to provide a systematic and fair approach to the review of accidents involving department vehicles. The ARC will determine the preventability of the accident and recommend appropriate disciplinary actions for emergency vehicle operators (EVOs), ensuring accountability and the promotion of safe driving practices. This policy applies to both career and volunteer members of the Carroll County Department of Fire and EMS.

II. DEFINITIONS

Emergency Vehicle Operator (EVO) - Any career or volunteer member authorized to operate emergency vehicles.

Accident Review – The process by which an accident is investigated.

Fire Apparatus Driver Operator (FADO) - Promoted member of the Department of Fire & EMS whose job description is to operate heavy apparatus such as engines, ladder trucks, tankers, and rescue squads.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Committee Composition:

1. The ARC will consist of the following members:
 - a. Chief of Training & Safety (Chairperson)
 - b. One DFEMS Lieutenant (one alternate)
 - c. One DFEMS Subject Matter Expert (one alternate)
 - d. One CCVESA representative (one alternate)
 - e. One CCVESA/DFEMS Safety Officer (one alternate)

- f. One at-large members from the Volunteer Department (Volunteer corporations will be permitted a representative and an alternate on each case involving their company owned apparatus.)

B. Accident Reporting:

1. All accidents involving department vehicles must be reported immediately to the appropriate supervisor via the chain of command per policy 6.04 EVO.
2. All incidents will be first reviewed by the ARC Chairperson to determine whether the incident needs to be reviewed by the ARC. This decision will be communicated to the respective company chief when involving volunteer owned apparatus.

C. Review Process:

1. The ARC will convene within 14 days of receiving the accident report.
2. The ARC will review all relevant information, including but not limited to:
 - a. Accident Report Form
 - b. Witness statements
 - c. Video footage (if available)
 - d. Police reports
 - e. Vehicle inspection reports
 - f. Repair estimates
3. The EVO involved in the accident will be allowed to present their account of the incident to the ARC.
4. The ARC will have up to 7 days to complete the review and make a recommendation, pending mitigating factors.

D. Determination of Preventability:

1. The ARC will use the following criteria to determine the preventability of the accident:
 - a. Adherence to department driving policies and procedures
 - b. Compliance with traffic laws and regulations
 - c. Environmental and road conditions
 - d. Actions of other drivers and pedestrians
 - e. Vehicle condition and maintenance records
2. The ARC will categorize the accident as either:
 1. Preventable: The EVO failed to take reasonable precautions to prevent the accident.
 2. Non-preventable: The accident occurred despite the EVO taking all reasonable precautions.

E. Disciplinary Recommendations:

1. If the accident is determined to be preventable, the ARC will recommend disciplinary actions based on the severity of the incident and the EVO's prior record. **Possible** disciplinary actions include progressive discipline reflecting:
 - a. Minor Incident (e.g., minor property damage, no injuries):

- i. First Offense: Written warning and mandatory remedial driver training
 - ii. Second Offense: Suspension of driving privileges for up to 30 days and additional training
 - iii. Third Offense: Suspension of driving privileges for up to 60 days and possible demotion or reassignment
- b. Major Incident (e.g., significant property damage, injury, or fatality):
 - i. First Offense: Suspension of driving privileges for up to 60 days, mandatory retraining, and possible demotion or reassignment
 - ii. Second Offense: Suspension of driving privileges for up to 90 days, intensive retraining, and consideration for termination
 - iii. Third Offense: Termination of driving privileges and consideration for termination of employment/volunteer status
- 2. The ARC will also consider any mitigating factors and the EVO's overall service record.
- 3. The ARC will present their findings to the Director/Fire EMS Chief via the chain of command for final review.

F. Appeals Process:

- 1. The EVO has the right to appeal the ARC's determination and disciplinary recommendations.
- 2. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Director/Fire EMS Chief within 7 days of receiving the ARC's decision.
- 3. The Director/Fire EMS Chief will review the appeal and may uphold, modify, or overturn the ARC's recommendations within 7 days.

G. Record Keeping:

- 1. The ARC will maintain detailed records of all accidents reviewed, including findings, recommendations, and any disciplinary actions taken.
- 2. These records will be kept confidential and secure, accessible only to authorized personnel.

H. Training and Prevention:

- 1. The Training Officer will analyze accident trends and recommend proactive measures to prevent future incidents.
- 2. All EVOs will receive regular training on safe driving practices, department policies, and procedures.

IV. RESCISION

This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding the Accident Review Committee or similar content previously issued for personnel of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS.

V. RELATED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES / DOCUMENTS

- 1. SOP 1.04 "DFEMS Staff Notifications"

2. SOP 2.16 "Nicotine, Alcohol, and Controlled Substance Testing"
3. SOP 2.03 "Disciplinary Policy"
4. SOP 6.04 "Emergency Vehicle Operations"

VI. ATTACHMENTS