

**Tempe Fire Department Policies and Procedures**  
**Response to Violent Incidents**  
**209.07**  
**Rev 10-07-09**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines for the response of Fire Department members to incidents involving violence. Violent incidents are defined as shootings, stabbings, cuttings, assaults, or any other type of incident in which fire department members may be exposed to harm as a result of a violent act.

**PROCEDURE**

For calls where Alarm knows or suspects that violence has been involved in the call, the call will be dispatched with instructions to "proceed with caution."

The first-in fire department unit should proceed with caution as they respond into the area of the incident. If the first-in fire department unit is not comfortable with conditions at the scene upon approach, they have the option to stage in accordance with this procedure. The first in fire department unit should determine and announce to other responding units whether they should continue into the scene or stage.

For calls where Alarm knows or suspects that the potential for further violence exists, such as a sniper, fight in progress, or active shooter in the area, the call will be dispatched with instructions to "stage for PD". Companies are required to stage in these situations. Fire department units will remain staged until PD has declared the scene safe to enter. While staged, fire department units should be aware that some violent incidents are dynamic and could migrate into the area where they are staged. All staged and responding units should monitor the appropriate PD channel.

Alarm will collect and provide as much information as possible and rapidly communicate that information to responding companies as soon as possible by radio and MDT when responding to, staged, or operating at incidents that involve violence.

Any fire department unit can make the decision to stage based on experience, what can be seen or heard, what can be learned from radio traffic, or MCT information. If the decision to stage is made, the person in charge of the unit shall inform the Alarm Room that they are staged and should consider special calling a Command Officer.

When the decision to stage is made:

1. All additional fire department responding units except the Duty Chief will Level II stage. The company officer of the first unit to stage will advise other units of that location.
2. Members should consider the hazards at hand and stage far enough away to avoid becoming a part of the incident - out of line of sight and out of the line of fire for gunshots.
3. Members should remember that the crowd may become a hazard.
4. Companies may stage in the fire station, on the apparatus and ready to respond, if the call is within 1/4 mile of the station.
5. Units reporting to stage should consider reducing to code 2 as they approach the staging location. Units should turn off warning lights when staged, and then turn them back on when completing the response to the scene. Turning off warning lights at the scene may reduce crowd attraction to the incident.

6. The staging location should include a path of retreat. The best plan may be to retreat if necessary to insure the safety of the crew members.

If fire department companies respond to an incident of an unknown nature and find themselves in a violent situation, they will immediately retreat to a safe location. Emergency traffic should be used as necessary, and Alarm should be advised of the need for rapid police response.

When the Police Department advises the scene is secure, the first unit may proceed back to the scene, report when the scene is safe for other units to enter, and begin operations.

If an actual assault on fire personnel is imminent or in progress, the law allows for the use of reasonable force and physical restraint to the extent necessary to control the potential or actual assailant until the Police Department takes control of the situation.

During violent situations where fire crews are at risk of injury and need police assistance immediately, they may use the radio code "906." Alarm will immediately advise the police dispatcher that a fire company is in trouble, has transmitted a "906" code, and needs police assistance immediately. Company officers should provide details of the situation when able to do so. Under a "906" code, Alarm will not ask the company for details or why the police are needed.

In some unsecured violent incidents, with patients, it may be necessary for the Police Department to deliver the patient(s) to fire companies at the perimeter (the police become the Extrication Sector).