



Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS Standard Operating Procedure

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Standard Operating Procedure: 4.1.11	Effective Date: 6/1/2026
Subject: Medic Unit Crew Utilization	Section: Fire Rescue Operations
Authorized: Deputy Chief Paul Supko	Revision Date: N/A

Applicability: Volunteer Career

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and uniform expectations of how medic unit crews will be utilized for suppression unit staffing on first due engine companies. This policy will reduce the number of driver-only responses and reduce instances where the first due engine responds understaffed.

This policy is intended to provide guidance during times when a full volunteer engine crew (3 interior qualified volunteers + FADO) is not in the station at the time of dispatch. When a volunteer crew is in the station, the medic crew will continue to staff the medic unit.

The guidelines contained in this policy are mandatory and shall be followed by all stations. Compliance is required to ensure the most rapid, effective response to our citizens and to maintain consistent operational practices across the county.

This policy only applies to First Due Box Alarm and Structure Assignments.

II. DEFINITIONS

Box Alarm: Call types limited to Trailer Fire, House Fire, Building Fire, & Barn Fire.

Cross Staff: A term used to describe when firefighter certified members assigned to a medic unit move to the first due engine to make minimum staffing.

DFEMS Suppression Personnel: Career personnel who hold the rank of Firefighter/EMT, FADO, Firefighter/Paramedic, Lieutenant, or above.

First Due Engine: The engine assigned by CAD as first due, regardless of district.

Local Alarm: Call types limited to Brush Fire, Farm/Machinery Fire, Trash/Dumpster Fire, Vehicle Fire, Large Vehicle Fire, Outside Fire, Woods Fire, Field Fire

Minimum Staffing: An engine responding on an assignment requires at least four (4) personnel, including a FADO, officer or acting officer, and two (2) interior firefighters.

Structure Alarm: Call types limited to Chimney Fire, Appliance Fire, Electrical Fire, Small Shed / Bldg. Fire, Outside Fire with Exposures.

III. POLICY

A. When Medic Unit Crews will assist with Engine Staffing

1. First Due Engine - Box & Structure Alarm Assignments
 - a. FF-certified medic crew members cross-staff the engine.
 - b. Paramedic-only member drives the medic unit and follows.

Note: *The only exception to A.1 is any dispatch to a gas leak. Medic Crews will not cross staff the first due engine for this call type.*

2. Other First Due Engine Responses
 - a. The medic unit may add themselves and follow to avoid single-person engine responses (ex., fire alarm, lockout).

B. When Medic Unit Crews WILL NOT Assist with Engine Staffing

1. When it is not the first due engine.
2. When dispatched as a Routine Service alarm and there are 2 on the engine (1 interior qualified volunteer + FADO).

C. Priority Considerations

1. Understaffed medic units must return to service quickly.
2. If a high-acuity EMS call is dispatched nearby, divert the medic unit when possible.
3. ECC notifies units that there is another priority call in the response area.
4. Crews must not delay operations or post-fire resets unnecessarily.
5. Companies with a double pull of apparatus on a first due assignment may utilize one medic crew who is cross trained to make staffing between the two units.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Box & Structure Alarms – Dispatched as the First Due Engine

1. **No DFEMS Suppression Lieutenant at Station:**

- a. Medic crew cross-staffs the engine if:
 - i. They are FF-certified
 - ii. The engine is first due on the box or structure assignment.
 - iii. Remain on the engine unless three or more volunteers are present before response check.
 - a. Three or more Volunteers, prior to response check, will displace the medic crew (both members) back to the Medic Unit
- b. Medic unit is left in the station unstaffed if both crew members are FF-certified

2. DFEMS Suppression Lieutenant Is Present:

- a. Medic crew cross-staffs the engine if:
 - i. They are FF-certified
 - ii. The engine is first due on the box or structure assignment
 - iii. Remain on engine unless 2 or more volunteers are present.
- b. Medic unit is left in the station unstaffed if both crew members are FF-certified

Note: *The only exception to A.1&2 is any dispatch to a gas leak. Medic Crews will not cross staff the first due engine for this call type.*

B. Response Expectations

1. Units will respond immediately once staffing is at four personnel. Volunteer members arriving after the first engine's response may respond with additional apparatus.

C. Routine First Due Engine Responses

1. The medic unit may respond along with the engine to prevent a solo, FADO only response.
 - a. The EMS crew remains on the EMS unit and follows.
 - b. When dispatched as a Routine Service alarm and there are 2 on the engine (1 interior qualified volunteer + FADO).

D. Special Considerations

1. Paramedic Only Staffing: FF/EMT cross staffs the engine; paramedic drives medic unit behind engine.

2. Replacement Notifications: First due engine officer must notify ECC to:

- a. Understaff and replace the medic unit if it's unavailable due to cross staffing.

Example Phrases:

- *“Engine 91 enroute with 4. Understaff Medic 99 and replace it on the call.”*
- *“Engine 131 enroute with 4. Medic 139 is driver-only. Replace the medic.”*

Prior to response – In the station:

- *“Medic 89 to Carroll understaff Medic 89, and replace them on the call.”*

V. RECISSION

This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding Medic Unit Crew Utilization or similar content previously issued for personnel of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS.

Rescinded SOP 3.31 EMS Unit Staffing

VI. RELATED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES / DOCUMENTS

None

VII. ATTACHMENTS

None