
Ames Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Book: 2 – Routine Operations
Section: II – Apparatus Operations
Chapter: 1 – **Seat Belt Use**

Date Approved: 7/29/24 Revision No.: 1 Approved by: 

PURPOSE:

To establish appropriate and safe behavior regarding the use of seat belts when driving, operating, or riding in an emergency vehicle.

POLICY:

Everyone driving or riding in fire department vehicles shall be seated in approved riding positions with seatbelts or safety restraints fastened while the vehicle is in motion. Seatbelts shall also be worn while the vehicle is stationary if engaged with traffic, such as while blocking a roadway incident or otherwise alerting traffic.

PROCEDURES:

- Drivers shall not begin to move vehicles until all passengers are seated and properly secured.
- All passengers shall remain seated and secured as long as the vehicle is in motion.
- While en-route, seatbelts should not be loosened or released to dress or don/doff equipment.
- Members shall not attempt to mount or dismount from a moving vehicle under any circumstances.
- Officers will be held accountable for subordinates in violation of this policy.

Exceptions:

Per NFPA 1500, the following exception to seat belt use is permitted:

- Fire Department members providing direct patient care inside an ambulance are permitted to *momentarily* release a seat belt while the vehicle is in motion.
 - This must be *essential* to provide patient care.
 - When the procedure has been completed, the Fire Department member shall refasten the seat belt.
 - Time without the protection of a seat belt should be minimized.

REFERENCES:

NFPA 1500: Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, National Fire Protection Agency (2007).