

Title: Seat Belts

ISSUED BY: Battalion Chief of Training and Safety/Fire Chief

RESCINDS: Policy 303 dated September 5th, 2006

PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS: 06-06

SCOPE: All personnel of North Whidbey Fire & Rescue (NWFR)

PURPOSE: Whereas state law requires that all passengers in a vehicle are required to wear a seat belt (RCW 46.61.688). WAC 296-305-04503 mandates that all persons riding on fire apparatus shall be seated and secured to the vehicle by seat belts or safety harnesses at any time the vehicle is in motion. The purpose of this policy is to establish absolute occupant restraint standards, to eliminate vehicle related workplace injuries, enforce driver/officer vehicle movement authority, and satisfy Washington State Safety Standards for Firefighters (WAC 296-305-04503), including limited operational allowances for emergency medical care and wildland operations (WAC 296-305-07018).

CONTENT**1. Seat Belt & Passenger Requirements**

- 1.1. It is the policy of the district that all persons will wear seat belts or approved safety harnesses any time the apparatus is in motion.
- 1.2. All personnel, including firefighters, volunteers, recruits, and occupants, shall be completely seated and belted before the vehicle moves.
- 1.3. Under no circumstances shall a member unbuckle or loosen a safety harness while the apparatus is in motion for any reason, including the donning of PPE, turning out, or adjusting self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).
- 1.4. Personnel operating in wildland mobile attack mode must be secured using approved seat belts or short safety lanyards attached to rated anchorage points within designated enclosures.
- 1.5. Members actively performing necessary emergency medical care while the vehicle is in motion are permitted to be unrestrained only to the extent consistent with providing such care. All other occupants must remain seated and belted.

2. Apparatus Operator & Officer Responsibility

- 2.1. The driver/operator of the apparatus holds ultimate safety authority over the vehicle and shall not move the vehicle until verifying that all occupants are securely buckled.
- 2.2. The officer or right-seat passenger shall visually and verbally confirm that the crew is belted and secured in approved riding positions prior to authorizing vehicle movement.
- 2.3. The driver/operator shall immediately stop the vehicle if any member becomes unbelted while the vehicle is in motion, except as authorized during emergency medical care.

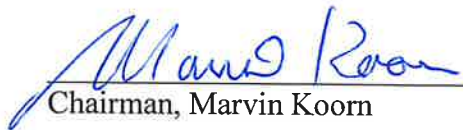
3. Enforcement & Compliance

- 3.1. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Any violation of occupant restraint requirements poses an immediate life-safety hazard and will be subject to progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with Policy 160 and documented utilizing Form 160_1 (Progressive Disciplinary Action).

4. Additional References

- 4.1. RCW 46.61.688 (Safety Belts, Use Required)
- 4.2. WAC 296-305-04503 (Firefighter Safety Standards - Apparatus Riding Standards)
- 4.3. Policy 204 / SOG 403.1 (For specific apparatus backing, intersection, and driving standards)
- 4.4. Policy 160 - Progressive Disciplinary Action

Approved by:


Chairman, Marvin Koorn


Fire Chief Chris Swiger