

**Purpose:** This policy describes the expected actions of personnel in regard to the use of safety belts.

**Administration:** The Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief, Deputy Chief of Health and Safety will have the ultimate responsibility for administration of this policy within the scope of their job descriptions. The driver/operator and the firefighter in the officer seat of the apparatus will have responsibility for administration of this policy on an incident by incident basis.

**Policy:** To assure the safety of all personnel, safety belts shall be worn by all drivers and passengers in all Cumru Township Fire Department Apparatus. This also applies to the use of privately owned or other vehicles if used while responding to and returning from a detail. Responding to an emergency incident does not in any manner reduce the responsibility to operate vehicles safely. While prompt response to emergency incidents is an organizational priority, safety is always the highest priority. The responding apparatus must arrive safely at the location where they are needed before the required services may be delivered. Unsafe operation of an emergency vehicle creates an unacceptable risk to the CTFD members, to the public, and to the individuals that are requiring our services.

**Definitions:**

**Driver Responsibility:** The driver of a Cumru Township Fire Department vehicle is responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle at all times, including compliance with all traffic laws as well as CTFD policies, procedures and SOG's.

**Officer Responsibility:** The officer in charge of the CTFD apparatus is responsible for supervising the driver and all other personnel riding on that respected apparatus; this includes assuring the driver complies with all traffic laws as well as Cumru Township Fire Department policies, procedures, and SOG's.

**Firefighter Responsibility:** All firefighters are required to comply with all safety policies and procedures while driving, operating, riding in, or performing any function that involves a department vehicle.

**Procedures:**

- It is mandatory that all department personnel use the seat belt installed by the manufacturer properly and securely fastened when operating or riding in any vehicle so equipped.
- Damaged, malfunctioning, or inoperable seat belts shall immediately be reported to the respected Captain, or the Deputy Chief of Health and Safety.
- No person shall operate a department vehicle in which the seat belt in the driver's position is inoperable.
- No person shall stand in the cab or don personal protective equipment (PPE) while the vehicle is in motion.
- The driver shall not move any vehicle until all personnel are properly seated and safety belts are properly latched.
- When responding to emergency incidents, all personnel are required to have their appropriate PPE donned prior to boarding the apparatus. This does not include SCBA.  
**EXCEPTION-driver/operators shall wear the appropriate PPE to allow for their safe functioning of the vehicle.**
- If an alarm is received while the apparatus is in-service on a non emergency role and personnel are not in PPE, the driver will stop the apparatus, in a safe location, personnel will put on PPE and then proceed. At no time shall personnel unbuckle or loosen their safety belts to don PPE while the vehicle is in motion.

**References:**

- NFPA 1500 section 6.2.5: "drivers shall not move fire apparatus until all persons on the vehicle are seated and secured with seat belts."
- NFPA 1500 section 6.3.2: "seat belts shall not be released or loosened for any purpose while the vehicle is in motion."