

SAMPLE SOP/SOG FOR FORCED ENTRY INTO UNOCCUPIED AND SECURED PROPERTIES. EDIT THIS SAMPLE POLICY TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS.

PURPOSE

To establish procedures for forced entry into secured properties during emergency responses.

SCOPE

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) shall apply to all members of the fire department.

POLICY

I. General Forcible Entry Considerations

- a. The primary objective of any forced entry is to gain rapid entry into a secured structure, through an access route that produces the least amount of property damage.
- b. At times it may be necessary to sacrifice the objective of minimizing damage to enter a structure with the greatest speed. It should be remembered, however, that the majority of incidents do not justify indiscriminate damage in order to gain entry into a secured structure.
- c. When forcing entry into secured structures, consideration should also be given to securing the structure after access has been gained.
- d. Remember to “try before you pry,” in all situations involving forcible entry.
 1. Use the Knox Box if applicable.
 2. Investigate alternate means of egress.
- e. Full turnout gear, gloves, and eye protection shall be worn by all members involved in forcible entry operation.

II. Forced Entry at Medical Emergencies

- a. If upon arriving at the scene of a reported medical emergency, fire department personnel can see or communicate with a patient who is incapacitated inside a secured structure, the following actions should be taken:
 1. Notify the dispatcher that forced entry will be initiated to gain access to the patient.
 2. Request the response of a police officer.

3. Request the assistance of fire department Engine Company as needed.
 4. Force entry and provide patient care.
- b. If upon arriving at the scene of a reported medical emergency, fire department personnel cannot see or communicate with anyone inside a secured structure, the following actions should be taken:
1. Contact the dispatcher and confirm the location of the call, and inquire about the location where the 911 call originated.
 2. Request the response of a police officer.
 3. Request a callback by the dispatcher for further information. Listen for any phones ringing from inside the structure when this action is taken.
 4. Await the arrival of a police officer and/or police supervisor who can authorize forced entry, if the circumstances present reasonable cause for such entry.
 5. If it is determined that a reasonable cause for forced entry exists, fire department personnel shall be accompanied by police officers when entering the structure and searching for the patient.

III. Forced Entry at Other Emergencies

- a. Personnel are authorized to force entry into secured structures to which they have been dispatched, when any of the following conditions are observed:
1. Obvious signs of smoke or fire.
 2. Obvious signs of water leaking from under doors, which may indicate sprinkler activation or a broken water pipe.
 3. Presence of a hazardous condition that could result in injury or property damage
- b. Personnel shall not force entry into a secured structure to which they have been dispatched to investigate a fire alarm activation, unless there are obvious signs of smoke, fire, sprinkler activation, or hazardous condition, such as the smell of gas. The dispatcher shall be requested to make every effort to contact a key holder to respond to the scene and open the structure. Company officers should check the exterior of the structure for the presence of a Knox Box or any posted lists of emergency contact persons.

IV. Securing Property Following Forced Entry

Before leaving an incident scene where forced entry was used to gain access to a secured structure, the structure shall be re-secured, or turned over to a responsible individual in accordance with the fire department policy.