

Berks County Department of Emergency Services Fire & EMS Run Card Preparation Guidelines and Review Process

Purpose

This process establishes the Berks County Department of Emergency Services' (DES) standards for local governments' preparation, submission, and ongoing maintenance of Municipal Emergency Services Run Cards, which DES uses to facilitate the dispatch of fire and EMS resources to emergency and non-emergency incidents.

Definitions

Municipal Emergency Services Run Cards/Run Card/Response Plan: A document that describes to DES the desired response to be dispatched for each call type, as may be established by DES. Run Cards are standardized in format and have minimum requirements intended to ensure the proper operation of the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and operational efficiency in the communications center.

Municipal Emergency Services Run Card Form: A document listing resources to be dispatched for each fire and EMS incident type within a defined geographic area. This form is the submittal that establishes the Run Card/Response Plan for a geographic area and is used by DES personnel to populate the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

Emergency Services Run Card Authorization Form (Authorization Form): A document that designates the entity(ies) or individual(s) authorized to submit changes to fire and/or EMS Run Cards on behalf of a municipality or portion thereof.

Authorized Entity(ies) or Individual(s): The entity(ies) or individual(s) (can be by name or title) authorized by a local government unit to approve Run Card change requests and map change requests. The work to perform this task may be delegated to others, but draft cards, final cards, draft maps, and signature maps must be submitted to DES with the authorized signature(s), or they will not be acted on.

Requests for Information

Requests for Run Card documents may be made by the designated authorized individual responsible for the Run Card, a chief officer of the primary EMS or fire agency of the area covered by the Run Card, or a chief appointed official (manager or secretary/treasurer) of a local government unit where the Run Card is in use. Requests from a single elected municipal official must be accompanied by a document indicating that the government body/board has authorized the official to act in this capacity. Except as may be required by law, Run Cards will not be provided to other parties unless DES determines that the interest in disclosure outweighs the interest in confidentiality.

Time and distance analyses for response areas will be provided upon request or when DES knows that changes to the Run Cards are being prepared.

Response Area Boundary Changes

Response area boundaries must follow parcel lines. If a parcel is broken by a road, waterway, or similar clearly discernible real-world feature, the feature may be the break line of a boundary change.

Requests for changes to response area boundaries must be submitted via email to Berkdes@berkspa.gov. These proposed changes can be hand-drawn on an existing map or described in narrative form, depending on the complexity of the proposed change. Existing boundary maps are available at www.berkdes.com along with other Run Card resources.

A draft map reflecting DES's understanding of the proposed changes will be provided to the requester for review. If no revisions are needed, a signature map will be issued for approval by the entity(ies) or individual(s) authorized to make changes to Run Cards.

Draft maps will be retained on file for 90 days after signature maps are issued. If no action is taken to return the approved signature maps within this period, they will be discarded, and a new submittal and review will be necessary if further action is desired.

Run Card Format & Submission

Changes to Run Cards will be made using the most current Run Card form listed on the DES website, signed by the individual(s) authorized for fire and EMS responses as designated on the corresponding Authorization form, and submitted to the DES CAD Manager by email.

- Run cards should be in a single Excel workbook for each municipality per fire response agency having jurisdiction, with each response area on separate worksheets, and named for each CAD box #.
- Only Run Cards in the .xlsx (Excel) format will be accepted. No handwritten copies, photos, scans, or PDFs (except the authorization page) will be accepted.
- Run cards submitted to DES must be emailed to berkdes@berkspa.gov

Instructions for Completion of Run Cards

Incident Type Responses

- Home agency fire units should be listed on the incident type response pages.
- Any units in the Unit Type Dispatch section will be replaced with a unit of the same type if the unit fails to respond.
- For example (shown below): Company 98's AFA response is L98, E98+1. This response would require that Ladder 98, Engine 98 and one additional engine be dispatched. The (1) additional engine will be the first engine on the resource list.

Incident Type and Alarm Level	Unit Type Dispatch						EMS Units		Stations Dispatched
	List the primary station unit(s) and quantity of additional units to be dispatched						BLS	ALS	
	Aerial	Brush	Engine	Tanker	Rescue	Other			
AFA	L98		E98+1					STA98, STA99	

- Should any dispatched unit not be available, or be dispatched and fail to respond, CAD will recommend a backup of the next unit of the specific unit type from the corresponding unit resource list.

- Enter the stations to be dispatched. Station dispatches are used for manpower and notifications. There will be no replacements for station dispatches where a unit does not respond.
- Station unit-only dispatches are permitted on the following call types:
 - MVAUNK
 - MVAWITH

Resource Lists

- Incident Type Specific Resource Lists allow for a different unit type resource list specific to certain incident types and can help to avoid pulling multiple trucks from the same station for incidents where diverse types of units are required.
 - Enter the unit type
 - Enter the corresponding incident type numbers from the column on the left
 - Enter the list of units in order to be dispatched
- Apparatus listings for Berks County fire and out-of-county fire agencies can be found on the DES website at www.berksdes.com, along with other Run Card resources.
- It is imperative that the units listed on the Run Card match the units listed on the county website to avoid delays in reviewing and entering information into CAD.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION – Police Only Responses to Trees or Wires Down

If the jurisdiction desires that either or both responses be police-only dispatches, the authorized individual should request the necessary form from DES. This form must be signed by the chief law enforcement official of the jurisdiction, acknowledging that these calls will be handled as police only call types.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION – EMS Initial Responses and Resource Lists

Fire and EMS Call Types, EMS Initial Response: DES will set the minimum unit level of care and quantity, but the submitter may designate additional responding units beyond the minimum required.

EMS Station Resource List: Until automated geography-based dispatching is possible, EMS resource lists will be completed based on time and distance to the centroid of the Run Card while continuing to honor the first due EMS station.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION – EMS Incident Type: Fire Medical Response

Number of EMS Units: Enter the number of units required for the level-of-care response.

Fire Medical Response (formerly QRS call type): List the fire agency/agencies to be dispatched for a Fire Medical Response. These are fire units dispatched at the same time as the appropriate EMS unit(s).

In conjunction with changes to proximity-based EMS dispatching, FIRE MEDICAL RESPONSE will no longer be configured by “due order.” CAD requires a time-based approach using the EMS unit's expected time of arrival. In the interim, Run Card submissions must include both the “due order” and a time parameter so that cards can be properly transitioned without necessitating a resubmittal.

Fire Medical Response decisions must be consistent within a jurisdiction. For this purpose, a jurisdiction means the area where the primary fire company and municipality are the same.

A jurisdiction may select the MEDICAL RESPONSE time delay based on a per-call type consideration. The choices are 0, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 45, and NO.

Consistency must be maintained:

- Across ALS call types
 - Initial Dispatch
 - No Response
 - Time Parameter Above (must be the same for any ALS type call)
- Across ILS/BLS call types
 - Initial Dispatch
 - No Response
 - Time Parameter Above (must be the same for any ILS/BLS type call)

For Example:

Fire department 99's ALS fire medical response is permitted to be:

- ALS Medical: 15 minutes
- ALS Trauma: 15 minutes
- Class 5: No Response
- Cardiac Arrest: Initial Dispatch

The following is **NOT** permitted as the time parameter must be the same, if being used, across all ALS-type incidents:

- ALS Medical 15 minutes
- ALS Trauma: 10 minutes (cannot be a different time parameter from ALS Medical and Class 5)
- Class 5: 20 minutes (cannot be a different time parameter from ALS Medical and ALS Trauma)
- Cardiac Arrest: Initial Dispatch

Exceptions will be made for special response cards or where justified. E.g., a jurisdiction has a special response card for medical facilities or an elderly high-rise complex. These cards MAY differ from the rest of the jurisdiction.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION – Target Hazard/Special Run Card Address List

If the Run Card is to be used for a specific address(es), those addresses should be listed on this page. Examples of special Run Cards include high-hazard or high-occupancy buildings, medical facilities, or any other address or group of addresses that require a different response than the surrounding geography.

Authorization Page

Complete and print the Run Card Authorization page for each Run Card submitted. This page must be signed by the individual(s) authorized to submit changes to fire and EMS responses, per the Authorization forms on file with DES. If the Authorization form lists the municipal governing body as the entity authorized to make Run Card changes, a copy of the action (e.g., an ordinance, resolution, or approved meeting minutes authorizing the action) taken by the municipal governing body must be included with the Run Cards submitted.

Review Process

The review process will generally be completed within 7-10 business days of receipt of the Run Card. The review process may take longer based on the number of Run Card submissions in progress. Assigned DES personnel will maintain contact with the submitter, and the submitter is invited to contact DES with any concerns about timeliness.

All draft Run Cards will be reviewed to ensure they meet the following conditions, which are essential for proper CAD functionality and operational efficiency. Any deviation from the below will result in the draft cards being returned to the submitter for modifications:

All sections of the Run Card are completed fully:

- All call types (except Fire Relocate) have a response.
- All resource lists are completed as required.
- Special response cards include addresses and common names as may be known.
- Authorization Pages are included and complete.

Incident types are resourced appropriately:

- Less progressed incident types are not more heavily resourced than preceding incident types.
 - For example, the progression of fire incidents from AFA to SI to SI 2 to SF must be resourced equally or greater at each step in the progression.
 - Likewise, MVANO through MVAENT & Fire must progress the same way.
- Any units listed in a response must be able to be backed up from a unit type resource list.
- Fire Relocate assignments are made only between stations with matching unit types to ensure proper CAD functionality.
 - For example, an aerial unit cannot be relocated to a station that does not have an aerial truck. Otherwise, CAD would not be able to recommend it for dispatch as an aerial, since it would not be configured as a run-card resource for the relocated station.

Permissible OIC Notification for Incident Types: Incident types shaded in gray on the Municipal Emergency Services Run Card Form are permitted to have OIC-only notification on the initial dispatch.

- These incident types are required to have defined unit types listed on the 2nd alarm only if the initial dispatch is an OIC notification.

Comprehensive Resource Lists: Resource lists are completed with at least the required number of units. Requirements are listed under the unit type in the resource list (for example, Aerial [10] means there is a requirement that at least 10 aerial units be listed).

- It is recommended that the main resource list be completed using the time and distance provided. To avoid pulling multiple trucks from the same station, separate apparatus lists should be added for incident types where multiple types of units are needed.

Draft Run Cards returned to an agency with comments will remain on file with DES for 90 days after comments are sent. If there is no action taken to update the cards and finalize the submittal within this period of time, they will be discarded and a new submittal and new review will be necessary if further action is desired.