TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT

C-63 Doors Locked - Lock-ins Lock outs

Emergency Manual

Date Revised: 02/01/2018

Last Modified: 09/27/2024 09:54

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Policy/Procedure

1. EMS Incident - When responding to a request for medical assistance and finding doors locked upon arrival, crews shall:

1. Check ALL doors on the structure.
2. Check with dispatch for existence of a Knox Box and examine entrances to the structure for the existence of one.
3. Ask Dispatch how they received this call and confirm the address.
4. If, after considering the information from Dispatch, the Incident Commander determines there is a need to forcibly enter the building:
    1. The IC shall direct Dispatch to send a police crew to the location to take a report regarding the crew's action and document the building was secured, if possible. Police should remain on scene until the crew has returned to service. The Officer should note the police crew number on the incident report.
    2. Fire personnel shall force entry by the most economical and expedient means as determined by the situation.
    3. If it is determined no patient is present fire personnel shall secure the structure and notify Dispatch of the situation.

2. Fire Incident - When responding to the scene of a reported fire in a structure and finding entrances to the building locked, crews shall:

1. Determine whether there is smoke or fire showing. If so, fire personnel shall force entry in the area that best follows tactical procedures.

2. In residential dwellings such as houses or duplexes, determine whether there is smoke or fire showing and, if not, make a visual inspection of the interior of the structure, if possible. Fire personnel shall then complete a walk-around of the structure to the extent that building features or terrain allows. If nothing is found, the Incident Commander shall ask Dispatch where the call originated. If the alarm was initiated by a third party, a unit shall either respond to the callers address to request information regarding the alarm, or, if impractical, direct Dispatch to call the third party to solicit this information. Malicious false calls should be referred to the Fire Investigation Unit for follow up, utilizing the most efficient method of communicating this information.

3. Determine whether the building is a commercial occupancy. If so, the Incident Commander shall direct Dispatch to attempt to locate the owner or key holder. If confirmation is received that a key holder is responding, crews shall wait until the key holder arrives and, upon arrival, check the interior of the building. If no key holder is located, crews shall complete a. walk-around of the structure to the extent that building features or terrain allows.

    - It may be prudent to remain on-scene for a greater period of time than at a residential structure to ensure a small fire in the incipient stage, which is not producing sufficient quantities of heat or smoke to be visible from the exterior, has not correctly activated a detection or suppression system inside the building. While this time frame cannot be accurately defined, a fifteen minute period of inspection, or greater, should suffice.

4. Note all pertinent information on the NFIR and in the company journal.

3. General Information: Though rare, Toledo Fire and Rescue personnel are occasionally requested to assist with entrance to locked structures in non-emergency situations. Below are guidelines regarding those situations:

1. Lock-Outs will normally be “In Service” assignments.

2. In non-emergency situations, upon arrival and at the owner’s request to breach doors or windows to gain entrance to a structure, before any attempt to force entry to the premises is made, request a police crew be dispatched to the scene. Law enforcement officers are better equipped to determine proper ownership and will remove the Fire Department’s liability for forcing entry.

3. After verification, crews should ask if the owner knows of any open or unlocked windows that could be laddered and entered through. If no windows are available crews should pick the most safe, appropriate, and economical means of gaining entry.

4. The Officer should enter in the company journal and on the NFIR the owner’s name, the name of the individual granted access (if different from the owner), the means of entry, and the unit designation of police who were on the scene.

4. Child Locked in Bathroom: Children who lock themselves in bathrooms will generally be considered non-emergency responses unless information obtained by Dispatch personnel indicates otherwise.

1. If a child who has locked themselves in a bathroom is in apparent danger, crews shall place a ladder to the bathroom window and have a firefighter enter through the window. If the window is too small for entry, the firefighter on the ladder should talk to the child and attempt to calm him or her. An attempt can be made to coax the child to unlock the door. If the child is unable to unlock the door, firefighters shall use customary means to force entry.

2. If a child who has locked themselves in a bathroom is not in apparent danger, crews may take the time to unhinge the door, remove the lock plate, or remove the wooden doorstop to gain entry.

3. After gaining entry, a medical assessment of the patient should be completed.

See Also:

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Last update: **09/27/2024 09:54**