



Allegany County Emergency Services Board Policies and Standards



Subject: Close Call

Approved: January 13, 2026

Approved:

Shannon Adams
Emergency Services Board Chair

Background: Near-miss reporting has proven to reduce fatalities, injuries, and equipment loss in a number of industries (i.e., aviation, fire & EMS, medicine gas/oil, nuclear). Managing errors through the use of non-punitive strategies such as near-miss reporting has proven to be effective tool in keeping the workforce and community served safe. Given the concept's proven track record, and the dedication this county has to health and welfare of its members, Allegany County Emergency Services Board is issuing this policy endorsing the use of the near-miss reporting.

Applicability: This policy applies to all members of operating within Allegany County, Maryland.

Definitions:

Near-miss event- A near-miss event is defined as an unintentional unsafe occurrence that could have resulted in an injury, fatality, or property damage. Only a fortunate break in the chain of events prevented an injury, fatality or damage.

Near-Miss Reporting System- The National Firefighter Near-Miss Reporting System (<https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/submit-your-close-call/>) is a voluntary, confidential, non-punitive and secure reporting system with the goal of improving Fire/EMS safety. By collecting and analyzing information on near-miss events, improvements can be made in command, education, operations and training.

Reporter: Someone who files a near-miss report.

Reviewer: A contract employee of <https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/submit-your-close-call/> hired to review near-miss reports and collect data. Reviewers sign confidentiality agreements as a condition of employment by the National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System. Reviewers are active or recently retired fire service members with at least 15 years' experience.

Policy: The Allegany Emergency Services Board is adopting a non-punitive approach to human error. Members who commit an error while in the performance of their duty shall be exempt from disciplinary action, provided they promptly file a near-miss report. This exemption from disciplinary action applies to actions that do not willfully violate county policy or purposely place members or citizens unnecessarily in harm's way.

Members who personally experience, witness or are made aware of the near-miss event shall file a near-miss report.

Members filing near-miss reports shall use the National Firefighter Near-Miss Reporting System (<https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/submit-your-close-call/>) as the application for recording their near-miss event.

Multiple reports of the same incident are encouraged. The variety of perspectives provides additional value to reporting the incident.

Members are encouraged to forward a copy of the posted report to the Emergency Management Chief within 48 hours of the incident so the county can rapidly respond to implement corrective actions needed to prevent the near miss from becoming a serious injury or fatality within our county.

Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality is paramount. No member submitting a near-miss report shall be forced to identify themselves. The county management shall not seek out the identity of a member or members who file near-miss reports. Members who voluntarily submit their contact information to the county will remain anonymous.

Procedure: Members who experience, witness or are informed of a near-miss incident shall submit the report to <https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/submit-your-close-call/> to support the program's efforts to improve firefighter safety.

Responsibility: The fire chief and his/her officers are responsible for ensuring the department maintains a non-punitive approach to correcting errors.

Department officers are responsible for maintaining an environment that encourages members to report errors and file near-miss reports.

All members are responsible for filing timely near-miss reports.

All officers are responsible for maintaining a working knowledge of the National Firefighter Near- Miss Reporting System.

The duty / safety officer is responsible for filing a report to <https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/submit-your-close-call/> whenever notified or becomes aware of a near-miss event. This is in addition to the department filing a report.

Mandatory Reporting Incidents: The following incidents shall be reported within 48 hours of the near-miss with documentation forwarded to the Emergency Management Chief.

- May-Day
- Firefighter injury
- Collapse with injuries
- Apparatus Struck in roadway
- Fire/EMS vehicle crash

Lessons Learned/Corrective Actions: All close calls will have a PIA (Post Incident Analysis) within 45 days of the incident to be held by the department. The Emergency Service Board will appoint a group to review all Mandatory Reporting Incidents under the supervision of the Emergency Management Chief. The group will report their findings in writing to the Emergency Management Chief to make any corrective actions to county policy or procedures.

FirefighterCloseCalls.com

1. Full Name **
2. Email Address **
3. Phone Number
4. Details of Close Call **
5. Lessons Learned **
6. Emailed to **
 - a. Billy
 - b. Billy and National Near Miss