



BOSTON EMS SERVICE ZONE PLAN UPDATED RESPONSE TIME TARGETS

As of December 1, 2009, Boston EMS made a series of updates to its Service Zone Plan. Chief among the changes were revisions to the Department's response time goals. Throughout the course of 2009, Boston EMS has steadily reduced response times¹ to clinical incidents and has consistently outperformed historical response time goals. As such, the Department modified its response time targets to not only reflect its capability, but to challenge the Field Operations Division to continue to improve service delivery for the City of Boston. Outlined in the tables below are the Department's previous Service Zone Plan response time goals as well as the newly adopted targets.

PREVIOUS SERVICE ZONE RESPONSE TIME GOALS				
Priority	Median Response²	Fractile Response³	Starting Point	Ending Point
1P	< 5:30	< 8:59 / 85 %	Call Entry	On Scene
1	< 6:30	< 9:59 / 85 %	Call Entry	On Scene
2	< 8:30	< 14:59 / 85 %	Call Entry	On Scene
3	< 9:00	< 14:59 / 80 %	Call Entry	On Scene

UPDATED SERVICE ZONE RESPONSE TIME GOALS				
Priority	Median Response	Fractile Response	Starting Point	Ending Point
1P	< 5:00	< 8:59 / 90 %	Call Entry	On Scene
1	< 6:00	< 9:59 / 90 %	Call Entry	On Scene
2	< 7:00	< 13:59 / 90 %	Call Entry	On Scene
3	< 8:00	< 14:59 / 90 %	Call Entry	On Scene

As indicated, Boston EMS made the following changes to its response time goals:

¹ Response times are measured from call entry (i.e., the point at which a calltaker enters the call into the computer aided dispatch system) until the arrival of the first EMS unit.

² The median represents the middle value in a set of numbers. The median response time is the middle value in a finite list of response times arranged from the lowest value to the highest.

³ Displayed as a percentage, a fractile response time indicates how reliably and consistently a specified response time target is met. The fractile response has two components: a response target and a reliability factor. The "< 8:59 / 85%" response time goal listed above for priority 1P calls, for example, indicates that at least 85% of incidents categorized as 1P should be responded to in less than 9 minutes.

Priority 1P⁴

- The median response time goal decreased from 5:30 to 5:00 minutes.
- The reliability factor of the fractile response time goal increased from “< 8:59 / 85%” to “< 8:59 / 90%” indicating that at least 90% of priority 1P incidents should be responded to in less than 9 minutes. The revised “8:59 / 90%” target is consistent with the often-cited National Fire Protection Association response time goal for the highest priority calls (1P).

Priority 1⁵

- The median response time goal decreased from 6:30 to 6:00 minutes.
- The reliability factor of the fractile response time goal increased from 85% to 90%.

Priority 2⁶

- The median response time goal decreased from 8:30 to 7:00 minutes, a full minute and a half reduction.
- Both the response time target and the reliability factor of the fractile response goal changed. The response time goal dropped from 14:59 to 13:59, a full minute reduction, and the reliability component increased from 85% to 90%.

Priority 3⁷

- The median response time goal dropped from 9:00 to 8:00 minutes, a full minute reduction.
- The reliability factor of the fractile response time goal increased from 85% to 90%.

If you would like to view the Boston EMS Service Zone Plan in its entirety, please access the document at http://www.cityofboston.gov/ems/service_zone.asp. To learn more about Boston EMS, please visit our website at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/ems>.

⁴ An incident category representing truly life threatening emergencies such as reported cardiac arrest, uncontrollable arterial bleeding, airway obstruction, etc.

⁵ An incident category representing potentially life threatening emergencies.

⁶ An incident category representing non-life threatening emergencies such as orthopedic injury, lacerations with controlled bleeding, abdominal distress, etc.

⁷ An incident category representing non-acute injuries or illnesses.