



PHILADELPHIA PARKING AUTHORITY TAXICAB AND LIMOUSINE DIVISION

DISPATCHER PROTOCOL PANIC BUTTON ACTIVATION

The dispatchers are the key component in the panic button process and your actions are of paramount importance for the drivers safety. For dispatchers to be effective they must know what is required of the drivers as well as what is expected of them. This information is provided with that thought in mind.

The use of the panic button is restricted to life-threatening circumstances. This technology is being made available to every Medallion taxicab, with the safety of the taxicab driver in mind. All drivers have been trained in exactly what defines an emergency which would justify the activation of the panic button alarm. These emergencies are:

1. Armed robbery of the taxicab driver in progress
2. Car jacking of the taxicab in progress
3. Assault upon the taxicab driver in progress

As you can see, these limited circumstances are restricted to events in progress. This is for a very important reason. The police department places a greater importance on violent crimes of this nature that are in progress. They will respond at high speed and in large numbers, which endangers the officers and the public. If the panic buttons are abused by signaling an alarm whenever a minor problem with a passenger occurs, the police will quickly adopt the attitude that drivers frequently "cry wolf." Consequently, in the event of a true emergency, little importance will be placed upon your call.

Drivers that become victims of one of these crimes in progress have been instructed to follow these steps:

1. Try to remain calm and do not resist or argue.
2. Be a good witness. Try to remember as much as you can about clothing, physical description, weapon, dialect, or anything else that would help the police identify the criminal.
3. Follow the criminal's instruction to the best of your ability.
4. Activate the panic button signal without making any sudden moves.
5. Try to drive slowly, and in the direction of a well lighted area.

As soon as possible after the criminal leaves your taxicab, drive one block in the opposite direction, or to a nearby major street and stop.

Contact your dispatcher by radio and then contact the police through 911. Be prepared to describe the criminal(s) and the direction of escape. Follow the police instructions. Press charges if the police make an arrest.

Dispatchers who receive a signal indicating a panic button alarm has been activated should immediately contact 911. Notify the police 911 operator that a panic button alarm has been activated. Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- 1.) Taxicab "p" number
- 2.) Radio dispatch association
- 3.) Color of your association to aid the responding police in locating the taxicab.
- 4.) Location and direction of travel
- 5.) Supply travel speed if indicated
- 6.) Update police as requested, stay on the line as necessary

As soon as safely possible the driver will contact his dispatch association and the police 911 operator. Gather the following information:

- 1.) What type of crime occurred
- 2.) Any injuries
- 3.) What type and number of weapons
- 4.) Number and description of perpetrators
- 5.) Direction of escape
- 6.) What was taken
- 7.) Pick up point

In the event of a false alarm, contact the 911 police operator and inform them of the false alarm immediately. A false alarm is described as *any activation of the panic button, for any reason, that is not one of the life threatening emergencies listed in the protocol*. Certified radio dispatch associations are to also notify the PPA/TLD by e-mail. False alarms will result in an investigation by the police department and the TLD.