

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 22-0199
(First Reader)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers McCray, Ramos, Middleton, Bullock

Introduced and read first time: February 22, 2022

Assigned to: Public Safety and Government Operations Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Finance, Baltimore City Fire Department, Baltimore City Information and Technology

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 **Firefighter Safety Act**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing basic operational approaches to risk assessments; outlining
4 emergency response rules of engagement; requiring all fire suppression personnel employed
5 by the Baltimore City Fire Department to be equipped with digital audio and video recording
6 devices by a certain date; requiring the implementation of a safety and risk management
7 system; defining certain terms establishing reporting requirements; and providing for a
8 special effective date.

9 BY adding

10 Article 9 - Fire Suppression and Prevention
11 Sections 7-1 through 7-7, to be under the new subtitle designation,
12 “Subtitle 7. Firefighter Safety Act”
13 Baltimore City Code
14 (Edition 2000)

15 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
16 Laws of Baltimore City read as follows:

17 **Baltimore City Code**

18 **Article 9. Fire Suppression and Prevention**

19 **SUBTITLE 7. FIREFIGHTER SAFETY ACT**

20 **§ 7-1. DEFINITIONS.**

21 (A) *IN GENERAL.*

22 IN THIS SUBTITLE, THE FOLLOWING TERMS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 22-0199

1 (B) *ABANDONED OR DERELICT BUILDING.*

2 (1) *IN GENERAL.*

3 “ABANDONED” OR “DERELICT” BUILDING MEANS A STRUCTURE THAT IS NOT BEING
4 USED FOR ANY PURPOSE, AND IS NOT BEING MAINTAINED OR PRESERVED FOR SOME
5 FUTURE USE OR OCCUPANCY.

6 (2) *VALUE.*

7 A BUILDING IN ABANDONED OR DERELICT CONDITION TYPICALLY HAS NO VALUE OR
8 NEGLIGIBLE VALUE.

9 (C) *DEPARTMENT.*

10 “DEPARTMENT” MEANS THE BALTIMORE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT.

11 (D) *DEFENSIVE EXTERIOR ATTACK.*

12 “DEFENSIVE EXTERIOR ATTACK” MEANS A FIREFIGHTING STRATEGY WHERE PERSONNEL
13 CONTAIN A FIRE FROM OUTSIDE THE STRUCTURE THAT IS AFLAME AND PRIORITIZE:

- 14 (1) THE SAFETY OF DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND CIVILIANS;
15 (2) THE RESCUE OF INDIVIDUALS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE FIRE; AND
16 (3) MITIGATING THE SPREAD OF THE FIRE TO NEARBY AREAS.

17 (E) *OFFENSIVE INTERIOR ATTACK.*

18 “OFFENSIVE INTERIOR ATTACK” MEANS A FIREFIGHTING STRATEGY WHERE PERSONNEL
19 ARE INSIDE A STRUCTURE THAT IS AFLAME AND PRIORITIZE:

- 20 (1) THE SAFETY OF DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND CIVILIANS;
21 (2) THE RESCUE OF INDIVIDUALS INSIDE THE STRUCTURE; AND
22 (3) MITIGATING THE SPREAD OF THE FIRE THROUGHOUT THE REMAINDER OF THE
23 STRUCTURE.

24 (F) *RULES OF ENGAGEMENT.*

25 “RULES OF ENGAGEMENT” MEANS THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SET BY THE CHIEF OF
26 THE DEPARTMENT THAT PROVIDE PARAMETERS FOR DECISION-MAKING AND ACTION THAT
27 PROTECT FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND MINIMIZE THE OCCURRENCE OF:

- 28 (1) INJURIES;
29 (2) DEATHS; AND

Council Bill 22-0199

1 (3) DUTY-RELATED ILLNESSES.

2 (G) *SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.*

3 “SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM” MEANS A SET OF INTERNAL POLICIES AND
4 PROGRAMS THAT SET AND ENFORCE SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS FOR DEPARTMENT
5 PERSONNEL.

6 (H) *VACANT BUILDING.*

7 (1) *IN GENERAL.*

8 “VACANT BUILDING” MEANS A BUILDING THAT IS NOT CURRENTLY IN USE, BUT WHICH
9 COULD BE USED IN THE FUTURE.

10 (2) *VALUE.*

11 A VACANT BUILDING HAS INHERENT PROPERTY VALUE, EVEN THOUGH IT MAY NOT
12 CONTAIN VALUABLE CONTENTS OR HUMAN OCCUPANTS.

13 (I) *UNOCCUPIED BUILDING.*

14 (1) *IN GENERAL.*

15 “UNOCCUPIED BUILDING” MEANS A STRUCTURE THAT IS NOT OCCUPIED BY ANY
16 INDIVIDUAL AT THE TIME AN INCIDENT REQUIRING ACTION BY THE DEPARTMENT
17 OCCURS.

18 (2) *VALUE.*

19 AN UNOCCUPIED BUILDING HAS INHERENT PROPERTY VALUE, AS WELL AS VALUABLE
20 CONTENTS.

21 **§ 7-2. BASIC OPERATIONAL APPROACH.**

22 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL USE THE FOLLOWING POLICIES TO GUIDE OPERATIONS:

23 (1) THE DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES AND ACCEPTS THAT A BASIC LEVEL OF MEASURED AND
24 CONTROLLED RISK IS PRESENT IN EFFORTS TO SAVE LIVES AND PROPERTY;

25 (2) IF DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL REASONABLY BELIEVE AN INDIVIDUAL’S LIFE IS IN
26 DANGER, A HIGHER LEVEL OF RISK IS ACCEPTABLE AND OPERATIONS SHALL BE
27 DIRECTED TOWARDS RESCUING THE INDIVIDUAL IN DANGER;

28 (3) IF THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO SAVE AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE
29 LIFE IS IN DANGER, THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT PUT PERSONNEL AT RISK; AND

30 (4) AN EVALUATION OF SAFETY CONDITIONS SHALL BE AN ONGOING PART OF ALL
31 TACTICAL AND STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING AT AN INCIDENT OR INCIDENT
32 SIMULATED FOR TRAINING PURPOSES.

Council Bill 22-0199

§ 7-3. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT.

THE CHIEF OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES THAT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

(1) DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL MAY NOT TRAVEL MORE THAN 15 MILES PER HOUR OVER THE POSTED SPEED LIMIT WHEN RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY;

(2) OFFENSIVE INTERIOR ATTACKS MAY NOT BE INITIATED AT ABANDONED, DERELICT, VACANT, OR UNOCCUPIED STRUCTURES UNLESS:

(I) THE DEPARTMENT HAS CONFIRMED THERE IS AN OCCUPANT INSIDE THE LOCATION;

(II) FIRE CONDITIONS ARE INCIPIENT AND CONSUME LESS THAN 25% OF THE STRUCTURE; AND

(III) STRUCTURAL AND HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS PERMIT A SAFE ENTRY;

(3) WHEN A STRUCTURE IS ABANDONED, DERELICT, VACANT, OR BELIEVED TO BE UNOCCUPIED AND FIRE CONDITIONS CONSUME MORE THAN 25% OF THE STRUCTURE, DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SHALL PERFORM A DEFENSIVE EXTERIOR ATTACK;

(4) DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL MAY NOT ENTER A COLLAPSED STRUCTURE, UNLESS:

(I) AN INDIVIDUAL'S LIFE IS IMMEDIATELY IN DANGER; AND

(II) THE PERSONNEL ENTERING THE STRUCTURE HAVE THE APPROPRIATE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT;

(5) DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL MAY NOT ENTER A HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENT, UNLESS:

(I) AN INDIVIDUAL'S LIFE IS IMMEDIATELY IN DANGER;

(II) THE HAZARDOUS MATERIAL OR SUBSTANCE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED; AND

(III) THE PERSONNEL ENTERING THE STRUCTURE HAVE THE APPROPRIATE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT.

§ 7-4. AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE.

(A) *IN GENERAL.*

EACH FIREFIGHTER EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND ASSIGNED TO FIRE SUPPRESSION MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A DIGITAL AUDIO AND VIDEO PORTABLE RECORDING DEVICE.

(B) *LIMITATIONS.*

THE DEVICE REQUIRED BY THIS SECTION SHALL BE USED ONLY AT THE SCENE OF A FIRE.

Council Bill 22-0199

§ 7-5. SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

THE CHIEF OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

(1) IDENTIFY A SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICER WHO SHALL:

(I) REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE CHIEF; AND

(II) BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE DEPARTMENT'S SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM;

(2) EMPOWER THE SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICER TO ENFORCE COMPLIANCE WITH THE SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM;

(3) REQUIRE THAT AN ANNUAL DEPARTMENT-WIDE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN BE DEVELOPED TO:

(I) DEFINE AND CATEGORIZE THE DIFFERENT TASKS ASSIGNED TO THE DEPARTMENT;

(II) DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF RISK ASSOCIATED WITH EACH TASK; AND

(III) DEVELOP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO MINIMIZE RISK THROUGH INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS;

(4) ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN UNSAFE BUILDING MARKING PROGRAM IS IMPLEMENTED AS PART OF THIS SYSTEM TO ADDRESS FIREFIGHTING IN ABANDONED, DERELICT, VACANT, AND UNOCCUPIED STRUCTURES; AND

(5) REQUIRE THAT THERE IS A NON-LAPSING AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND REVIEW PROCESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S:

(I) ADMINISTRATION OF POLICIES;

(II) OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES; AND

(III) COMPLIANCE WITH ALL LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LAWS.

§ 7-6. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

(A) *UNSAFE ACTION.*

DISCIPLINARY ACTION MAY NOT BE TAKEN AGAINST ANY MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT WHO QUESTIONS AN ACTION AT AN EMERGENCY, IF THE MEMBER REASONABLY BELIEVES THE ACTION COULD PUT DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL OR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AT RISK OF INJURY.

Council Bill 22-0199

1 (B) *VIOLATION OF SAFETY DIRECTIVES.*

2 DISCIPLINARY ACTION SHALL BE TAKEN AGAINST ANY MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT WHO
3 IS FOUND TO HAVE:

4 (1) INTENTIONALLY VIOLATED SAFETY DIRECTIVES AT AN INCIDENT; OR

5 (2) INTENTIONALLY GIVEN A DIRECTIVE THAT VIOLATES A SAFETY-RELATED POLICY
6 OR PROCEDURE, EVEN IF IT DOES NOT RESULT IN THE INJURY OF DEPARTMENT
7 PERSONNEL.

8 **§ 7-7. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

9 (A) *IN GENERAL.*

10 ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1ST OF EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REPORT THE
11 FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL:

12 (1) THE DEPARTMENT'S AGENCY-WIDE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN;

13 (2) A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ACTION ITEMS, INCLUDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
14 THAT HAVE BEEN ADOPTED TO MINIMIZE THE OCCURRENCE OF UNSAFE PRACTICES;

15 (3) THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS THAT RESULTED IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS A RESULT
16 OF UNSAFE PRACTICES;

17 (4) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF FIREFIGHTERS THAT WERE INJURED:

18 (I) ON THE SCENE OF A FIRE OR OTHER INCIDENT AT AN OCCUPIED STRUCTURE;
19 AND

20 (II) ON THE SCENE OF A FIRE OR OTHER INCIDENT AT AN ABANDONED OR
21 VACANT STRUCTURE; AND

22 (5) THE ANNUAL AMOUNT OF WORKER'S COMPENSATION THAT WAS PAID TO
23 DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL FOR INJURIES AT THE SCENE OF A FIRE OR OTHER
24 INCIDENT, DISAGGREGATED BETWEEN:

25 (I) INJURIES THAT OCCURRED AT OCCUPIED STRUCTURES; AND

26 (II) INJURIES THAT OCCURRED AT ABANDONED OR VACANT STRUCTURES.

27 (B) *REPORT TO BE MADE PUBLIC.*

28 THE REPORT REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE
29 TO THE PUBLIC ON THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE.

Council Bill 22-0199

1 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That, notwithstanding any other provision of
2 this Ordinance:

3 (a) for the 1st year following the effective date of the Ordinance, § 7-4 {"Audio and video
4 recording device"} of this Ordinance only applies to:

5 (1) battalion chiefs assigned to fire suppression;

6 (2) personnel assigned to the Office of Safety and Risk Management;

7 (3) Fire Academy training personnel; and

8 (4) the firefighters assigned to the fire suppression companies in the Third Battalion;
9 and

10 (b) beginning on the 1st anniversary of the effective date of this Ordinance, the devices
11 required by § 7-4 {"Audio and video recording device"} of this Ordinance must be
12 provided to all firefighters assigned to the Baltimore City Fire Department's suppression
13 division.

14 **SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the 180th
15 day after the date it is enacted.