

911 ACADEMY

POLICE | FIRE | EMS ABBREVIATIONS & DESCRIPTION CODES

A practical student reference for CAD, radio, call-taking, vehicle descriptions, person descriptions, fire terminology and EMS shorthand

ACADEMY USE: Learn the abbreviation, know the full meaning, and use the local agency/CAD standard when it differs.

Important: This guide combines NCIC-derived vehicle color codes with common public-safety abbreviations. Police, fire, EMS, CAD and radio shorthand is not completely standardized nationwide. Agency policy, state systems, medical-control rules and CAD configuration always take precedence.

NCIC color entries are identified specifically as NCIC. Other entries are labeled as common public-safety shorthand and should be adapted to your academy.

1. CORE 911 / CAD / LAW ENFORCEMENT SHORTHAND

Abbreviation	Meaning	Training note
RP	Reporting Party	Use in place of caller when that is your agency standard.
SUBJ	Subject	Person being described or involved.
SUS / SUSP	Suspect	Person suspected in an incident.
VIC	Victim	Person reported or identified as victim.
WIT	Witness	Witness to an incident.
COMP	Complainant	Common in law-enforcement records/CAD.
RESP	Responsible / Responding	Meaning is context-dependent; avoid if ambiguous.
LOC	Location	Incident or current location.
ADDR	Address	Street address/location.
APT	Apartment	Apartment/unit number.
BLDG	Building	Building identifier.
X / X-ST	Cross street	Used for intersections or nearest cross street.
NB / SB / EB / WB	Northbound / Southbound / Eastbound / Westbound	Direction of travel.
N / S / E / W	North / South / East / West	Cardinal direction.
IFO	In front of	Location shorthand.
ATL	Attempt to Locate	Search/locate request.
BOLO	Be On the Lookout	Information broadcast regarding person/vehicle/item.
UTL	Unable to Locate	Units did not locate subject/vehicle/event.
GOA	Gone on Arrival	Subject/event no longer present.
ETA	Estimated Time of Arrival	Time until arrival.
CAD	Computer-Aided Dispatch	Dispatch/call-management system.
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point	911/emergency communications center.
LE / LEO	Law Enforcement / Law Enforcement Officer	Common public-safety shorthand.
PD / SO / HP	Police Department / Sheriff's Office / Highway Patrol	Agency identifiers; local usage varies.
DOC	Department of Corrections	Context-dependent.
DUI / DWI	Driving Under the Influence / Driving While Intoxicated or Impaired	Legal terminology varies by state.
DV	Domestic Violence	Use terminology required by local policy.
RO	Restraining Order	May also be protective order depending on jurisdiction.
PO	Probation/Parole Officer or Protective Order	Highly ambiguous - spell out when needed.

Abbreviation	Meaning	Training note
WPN	Weapon	Common CAD shorthand.
GUN / FIREARM	Firearm	Prefer plain language when precision matters.
KNF	Knife	Common shorthand, not universal.
UNK	Unknown	Information is unknown.
UNF	Unfounded	Disposition term in some systems.
NFI	No Further Information	No additional information available.

2. PERSON DESCRIPTION SHORTHAND - HEAD TO TOE

Recommended academy sequence: sex/age/build -> hair/headwear -> face/eyes -> upper clothing -> lower clothing -> footwear -> identifiers/accessories. Local policy controls which personal descriptors are appropriate.

Abbreviation	Meaning
M / F	Male / Female (use agency-approved terminology)
ADLT / JUV	Adult / Juvenile
APPROX	Approximately
YOA	Years of age
HT / WT	Height / Weight
THN / MED / HVY	Thin / Medium build / Heavy build
BALD	Bald
BRN / BLK / BLN / GRY / RED	Brown / Black / Blonde / Gray / Red hair - local codes may differ
LSH / SSH	Long-sleeve shirt / Short-sleeve shirt
HOOD / HDY	Hooded sweatshirt / hoodie
JKT	Jacket
SWT	Sweater / sweatshirt - context dependent
TSH	T-shirt
PNTS	Pants
JNS	Jeans
SHRTS	Shorts
SHOES / SNEAK	Shoes / athletic shoes
GLS	Glasses
HAT / CAP	Hat / cap
BP / BPACK	Backpack
PURSE	Purse / handbag
TAT	Tattoo
SCAR	Scar
FACIAL HAIR	Beard / mustache / goatee - describe specifically

Example: SUBJ is an adult male, approximately 30 YOA, 6'0", 185 lbs, short brown hair, brown eyes, black baseball cap, gray hoodie, blue jeans and white athletic shoes. Tattoo on right forearm.

3. NCIC VEHICLE COLOR (VCO) CODES

The following codes are derived from NCIC vehicle color tables reproduced in federal/state reference materials. For a two-color vehicle, many systems record primary/secondary color; local entry rules control exact formatting.

NCIC Code	Color	NCIC Code	Color
AME	Amethyst	LAV	Lavender
BGE	Beige	LBL	Light Blue
BLK	Black	LGR	Light Green
BLU	Blue	MAR	Maroon / Burgundy
BRZ	Bronze	MUL/COL	Multicolored
BRO	Brown	MVE	Mauve
CAM	Camouflage	ONG	Orange
COM	Chrome	PLE	Purple
CPR	Copper	PNK	Pink
CRM	Cream / Ivory	RED	Red
DBL	Dark Blue	SIL	Silver / Aluminum
DGR	Dark Green	TAN	Tan
GLD	Gold	TEA	Teal
GRN	Green	TPE	Taupe
GRY	Gray	TRQ	Turquoise
WHI	White	YEL	Yellow

NCIC color caution: NCIC categories consolidate some real-world paint colors. For example, silver/aluminum and chrome/stainless entries may map to specific NCIC codes. Use the approved code table in the operational system when entering records.

CYMBALS vehicle-description sequence: **C**olor - **Y**ear - **M**ake/Model - **B**ody style - **A**dditional information - **L**icense - **S**tate.

4. VEHICLE DESCRIPTION / BODY STYLE SHORTHAND

These are common CAD/dispatch abbreviations, not a claim that every item is an NCIC body-style code. Use your state/NCIC interface tables for official record entry.

Abbreviation	Meaning	Example/use
2D / 2DR	2-door	2-door passenger car
4D / 4DR	4-door	4-door passenger car
SED	Sedan	Passenger sedan
CP / CPE	Coupe	2-door coupe
HB	Hatchback	Hatchback passenger vehicle
SW / WGN	Station wagon / wagon	Wagon body style
SUV	Sport Utility Vehicle	SUV / crossover
PU / PK / P/U	Pickup truck	Pickup body style
VAN	Van	Passenger/cargo van
MINIVAN	Minivan	Passenger minivan
MC / M/C	Motorcycle	Motorcycle
MOPED	Moped	Low-powered cycle
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicle	NCIC recognizes ATV as a make-category special code in some contexts
UTV	Utility Task Vehicle	Side-by-side / off-road utility vehicle
BUS	Bus	Transit/school/coach depending context
TAXI	Taxicab	Vehicle use descriptor
TRK	Truck	Generic truck; specify type when possible
BOX TRK	Box truck	Straight/box truck
SEMI / TT	Semi / tractor-trailer	Commercial combination vehicle
TRLR	Trailer	Trailer
RV	Recreational vehicle	Motorhome/travel vehicle; specify if known
CONV	Convertible	Convertible passenger vehicle
LIMO	Limousine	Limousine
UNK	Unknown	Unknown year/make/model/body/etc.

Additional vehicle descriptors: damage location, decals, roof rack, ladder rack, tool box, tinted windows, bumper stickers, aftermarket wheels, missing hubcap, broken lamp, temporary tag, cargo, trailer, direction of travel and last known location.

5. STATE / DIRECTION / ROADWAY ABBREVIATIONS

Code	State	Code	State
AL	Alabama	AK	Alaska
AZ	Arizona	AR	Arkansas
CA	California	CO	Colorado
CT	Connecticut	DE	Delaware
FL	Florida	GA	Georgia
HI	Hawaii	ID	Idaho
IL	Illinois	IN	Indiana
IA	Iowa	KS	Kansas
KY	Kentucky	LA	Louisiana
ME	Maine	MD	Maryland
MA	Massachusetts	MI	Michigan
MN	Minnesota	MS	Mississippi
MO	Missouri	MT	Montana
NE	Nebraska	NV	Nevada
NH	New Hampshire	NJ	New Jersey
NM	New Mexico	NY	New York
NC	North Carolina	ND	North Dakota
OH	Ohio	OK	Oklahoma
OR	Oregon	PA	Pennsylvania
RI	Rhode Island	SC	South Carolina
SD	South Dakota	TN	Tennessee
TX	Texas	UT	Utah
VT	Vermont	VA	Virginia
WA	Washington	WV	West Virginia
WI	Wisconsin	WY	Wyoming
DC	District of Columbia		

Roadway: NB/SB/EB/WB = northbound/southbound/eastbound/westbound; I = Interstate; US = U.S. Route/Highway; SR = State Route (usage varies); MP = milepost/mile marker; EXIT = exit; ONR / OFR = on-ramp / off-ramp; INT = intersection.

6. FIRE SERVICE ABBREVIATIONS

Common fire-service terms. Unit naming and tactical terminology vary significantly by department and incident command system implementation.

Abbreviation	Meaning
FD	Fire Department
ENG / E	Engine
TRK / T	Truck
LAD / L	Ladder
QUINT	Quint apparatus
RES / R	Rescue
BC / BCMD	Battalion Chief / command officer
CMD	Command
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
UC	Unified Command
STG	Staging
RIT / RIC	Rapid Intervention Team / Rapid Intervention Crew
PAR	Personnel Accountability Report
MAYDAY	Emergency distress transmission by firefighter
IDLH	Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health
SCBA	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PASS	Personal Alert Safety System
FF	Firefighter
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
SDS	Safety Data Sheet
LEL	Lower Explosive Limit
UEL	Upper Explosive Limit
LPG / LP	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
NG	Natural Gas
MVA / MVC	Motor Vehicle Accident / Motor Vehicle Collision

Abbreviation	Meaning
EXTR	Extrication
VEIS	Vent-Enter-Isolate-Search
V-E / VENT	Ventilation
W/S	Working Structure / Working Fire (local usage varies)
FA	Fire Alarm
SMK	Smoke
STR FIRE	Structure Fire
BRSH	Brush / vegetation fire
MUT AID	Mutual Aid
AFA	Automatic Fire Alarm

7. EMS / MEDICAL ABBREVIATIONS

Common EMS shorthand. Clinical documentation standards and approved abbreviations are controlled by agency protocol, medical direction and ePCR policy.

Abbreviation	Meaning
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
AEMT	Advanced Emergency Medical Technician
PM / PARAMEDIC	Paramedic
BLS	Basic Life Support
ALS	Advanced Life Support
CCT	Critical Care Transport
ePCR	Electronic Patient Care Report
PCR	Patient Care Report
PT	Patient
CC	Chief Complaint
Hx	History
PMH	Past Medical History
Meds	Medications
Allg / Allergies	Allergies
LOC	Level/Loss of Consciousness - context matters
A&O; / AO	Alert and Oriented
GCS	Glasgow Coma Scale
AVPU	Alert, Verbal, Pain, Unresponsive
ABC	Airway, Breathing, Circulation
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
AED	Automated External Defibrillator
ROSC	Return of Spontaneous Circulation
BVM	Bag-Valve-Mask
OPA	Oropharyngeal Airway
NPA	Nasopharyngeal Airway
ETT	Endotracheal Tube
IV	Intravenous
IO	Intraosseous
BP	Blood Pressure

Abbreviation	Meaning
HR	Heart Rate
RR	Respiratory Rate
SpO2	Peripheral Oxygen Saturation
BGL / BG	Blood Glucose Level / Blood Glucose
ECG / EKG	Electrocardiogram
12-lead	12-lead ECG
STEMI	ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction
CVA	Cerebrovascular Accident / stroke
TIA	Transient Ischemic Attack
SOB	Shortness of Breath
CP	Chest Pain (can be ambiguous - spell out when needed)
N/V	Nausea/Vomiting
N/V/D	Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
ABD	Abdomen / abdominal
AMS	Altered Mental Status
SZ	Seizure
OD	Overdose
ETOH	Alcohol / ethanol involvement
DNR	Do Not Resuscitate
AMA	Against Medical Advice
LKW	Last Known Well
MOI	Mechanism of Injury
NOI	Nature of Illness
MVC	Motor Vehicle Collision
GSW	Gunshot Wound
SW	Stab Wound (may be ambiguous locally)

8. EMS ANATOMY / POSITION / TREATMENT SHORTHAND

Abbreviation	Meaning
R / L	Right / Left
RUE / LUE	Right Upper Extremity / Left Upper Extremity
RLE / LLE	Right Lower Extremity / Left Lower Extremity
BUE / BLE	Bilateral Upper Extremities / Bilateral Lower Extremities
ANT / POST	Anterior / Posterior
SUPINE	Lying face up
PRONE	Lying face down
SITTING / SEMI-FOWLERS	Position terms; chart per protocol
C-SPINE	Cervical spine
ROM	Range of Motion
CMS	Circulation, Motor, Sensation (local wording may differ)
PMS	Pulse, Motor, Sensation (local wording may differ)
WNL	Within Normal Limits
NAD	No Apparent Distress
O2	Oxygen
NC	Nasal Cannula
NRB	Non-Rebreather Mask
CPAP	Continuous Positive Airway Pressure
PEEP	Positive End-Expiratory Pressure
NS	Normal Saline
LR	Lactated Ringer's
IM	Intramuscular
IN	Intranasal
SL	Sublingual
PO	By mouth / oral - can conflict with other public-safety meanings
PR	Per rectum - clinical context only
TX	Treatment
DX	Diagnosis
RX	Prescription / treatment depending context
ETA	Estimated Time of Arrival
ED / ER	Emergency Department / Emergency Room

Abbreviation	Meaning
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
OR	Operating Room

Clinical caution: Avoid abbreviations that can be misread in patient care documentation. For example, PO can mean "by mouth" clinically but may mean something entirely different in law-enforcement context. Use the approved ePCR abbreviation list.

9. RADIO / DISPATCH / STATUS SHORTHAND

Abbreviation	Meaning / use
ACK	Acknowledged
ENR / ENRT	En route
ONS / OS	On scene
CLR	Clear / available - local status meaning varies
AVL	Available
OOS	Out of Service
RTS	Return to Service
STG	Staging
REQ	Request
ASST	Assist
CXL / CNCL	Cancel
PRI	Priority
EMERG	Emergency
RESP	Respond / response - context dependent
TAC	Tactical radio channel
OPS	Operations channel
CMD	Command channel / command function
DISP	Dispatch
MDC / MDT	Mobile Data Computer / Mobile Data Terminal
GPS	Global Positioning System
ANI/ALI	Automatic Number Identification / Automatic Location Identification
WPH1 / WPH2	Legacy wireless 911 Phase I / Phase II terminology
TTY / TDD	Text telephone / telecommunications device for deaf or hard-of-hearing users
RTT	Real-Time Text
NG911	Next Generation 911
CAD	Computer-Aided Dispatch
RMS	Records Management System
NCIC	National Crime Information Center
NLETS	International Justice and Public Safety Network

10. ABBREVIATIONS TO USE CAREFULLY

The same letters can have different meanings across police, fire and EMS. Academy students should recognize the abbreviation but avoid using it when context could cause a safety or documentation error.

Abbreviation	Possible meanings	Safer practice
PO	Protective order / probation officer / by mouth	Spell out unless the operational context makes the meaning unmistakable.
CP	Chest pain / command post / other local uses	Use "chest pain" in mixed-discipline CAD when needed.
LOC	Location / level of consciousness / loss of consciousness	Spell out in mixed police-fire-EMS narratives.
MS	Mental status / multiple sclerosis / other	Avoid unless defined by local EMS policy.
PT	Patient / point / physical training	Use patient in medical narratives when ambiguity exists.
CO	Carbon monoxide / commanding officer / company	Use full term in cross-discipline incidents.
IC	Incident Commander / intensive care (less common shorthand)	Prefer Incident Commander in ICS context.
BC	Battalion Chief / birth control / other	Use Battalion Chief in cross-discipline documentation.
DOA	Dead on Arrival	Use only if permitted by local policy; legal/medical determination rules vary.
DNR	Do Not Resuscitate	Use only in appropriate medical context and according to protocol.

Best training rule: Abbreviations save keystrokes only when every intended reader understands them the same way. When in doubt, use plain language.

11. SOURCES & STANDARDIZATION NOTES

- **NCIC vehicle colors:** U.S. Department of Justice / NCJRS, *NCIC Code Manual* (vehicle data codes and personal descriptors). Public historical editions remain useful for code-table reference.
- **NCIC color cross-check:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration crash-reporting manual appendix, "NCIC Vehicle Color (VCO) Field Codes."
- **EMS terminology:** National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) Version 3.5.x Data Dictionary and Extended Data Definitions. NEMSIS provides a national EMS data standard; individual agencies may implement additional local data elements and terminology.
- **Fire/incident command terminology:** Common U.S. fire-service and Incident Command System terminology. Department SOP/SOG and regional mutual-aid plans control local abbreviations, apparatus identifiers and tactical terms.
- **State abbreviations:** Standard two-letter U.S. postal abbreviations shown for academy recognition. Operational NCIC/NLETS entry screens may use system-specific code tables and validation rules.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Before issuing this guide as an operational standard, compare it against your agency CAD dictionary, state criminal-justice information system manual, fire SOP/SOG, EMS protocols/ePCR standards and communications policy. Delete or revise any abbreviation your agency does not authorize.

Suggested academy use: Pair this reference with timed typing drills, person-description exercises, CYMBALS vehicle descriptions, CAD narrative practice, and scenario-based police/fire/EMS call-taking.