

SUPERSEDES:**DATE: 08-29-86****PAGE 1 OF 10****CFA STANDARDS: 17.07M, 17.08, 17.10M****SUBJECT: POLICE VEHICLE OPERATION****REV #: 9 (11/10/97)**

CONTENTS:

This policy and procedure contains the following numbered sections:

- I. Routine Vehicle Operation
- II. Emergency Vehicle Operation
- III. Vehicle Stops
- IV. Police Vehicle Pursuits - (Policy)
- V. Primary Pursuit Officer Responsibilities
- VI. Secondary Unit Responsibilities
- VII. Supervisor Responsibilities
- VIII. Communications Center Responsibilities
- IX. Operational Tactics
- X. Termination of Pursuit
- XI. Inter / Intra-Jurisdictional Pursuits
- XII. Vehicle Pursuit Report Form

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish general guidelines and responsibilities for the safe operation of police vehicles during routine, emergency and pursuit situations.

PROCEDURE**I. Routine Vehicle Operation CFA 17.08M**

Under normal, non-emergency operating conditions, and while responding to routine calls for service, members operating all police department vehicles will strictly adhere to all traffic laws and drive defensively in a safe and courteous manner. Safety belts shall be worn in compliance with State law. CFA 17.10

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 2

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

II. Emergency Vehicle Operation **CFA 17.08M**

- A. A member shall not operate a police vehicle in an emergency response mode unless responding to an emergency call for service or when in pursuit.
- B. Emergency response mode defined: Police vehicles operated in the emergency response mode shall have in operation emergency red and blue lights and if appropriate, the siren to warn vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the emergency route. "Wig-wag" headlights shall be used during **daylight hours** as an added visibility factor, on vehicle so equipped. Four-way flashers shall not be used while the vehicle (except police motorcycles) is in motion because they interfere with brake lights and turn signals.
- C. The provisions of this section shall not relieve the driver of a police vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver of a police vehicle from the consequences of careless disregard for the safety of others (FSS 316.072-5).
- D. A member responding to an emergency call for service may:
 - 1. Exceed the speed limit after weighing the risks of danger to life and property and after considering the condition of the road, traffic and weather.
 - 2. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after coming to a complete stop, before attempting to cross the intersection line. After ensuring that cross traffic has yielded, the driver may then proceed with care through the intersection.
 - 3. Disregard regulations governing direction or movement or turning in specified directions only if such action may be completed without resulting in conflict with another motor vehicle or pedestrian or other object.
 - 4. Disregard the laws governing the parking of vehicles under ordinary circumstances, except that a police vehicle shall not block access to a fire hydrant at a fire scene, or in any way obstruct the passage of fire apparatus. Marked police vehicles should be strategically parked in roadways to protect accident scenes, injured persons, or officers directing traffic, when such use is practical, and the emergency lights, along with the four-way flashers, shall be activated.

III. Vehicle Stops

- A. Three types of Vehicle Stops: Traffic, Investigative and High Risk, defined as:
 - 1. Traffic Stop - a stop of a vehicle that has/is violating a traffic statute.
 - 2. Investigative Stop - a stop made in furtherance of the police purpose, i.e.; a vehicle

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 3

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

- seen cruising a parking lot where high rate of M/V Larcenies is known to have occurred.
3. High Risk - a stop of a vehicle believed to contain known or suspected perpetrators of a criminal act an encounter that is likely to pose a high risk to the officer.
- B. A member making a vehicle stop will inform the radio dispatcher that he/she is stopping a vehicle. The following information shall be required:
1. Location of stop
 2. Tag number, if available
 3. Vehicle description
 4. Occupant description
- C. A member making a traffic stop will make every effort to direct the violator to a suitable stopping point where normal traffic flow will not be impeded. The use of side streets is encouraged when that use does not impede traffic. Private driveways, gas stations (when open), or other areas providing access to business establishments will not be used for traffic stops when alternate locations are available. When private property is used for a traffic stop, all possible care will be taken to avoid inconvenience to property owners or patrons.
- D. When stopping traffic violators in residential areas, the emergency lights may be turned off (and only use the emergency flashers) if there is no traffic hazard or need to signal the police vehicle's location to other units.
- E. Unmarked police vehicles may be used for traffic enforcement when operated by uniformed police officers, if the police vehicle is equipped with appropriate equipment (blue light and siren) for recognition by offending motorists.
- F. Members in plain clothes and detectives shall make every effort not to routinely make traffic stops unless the actions of the violator are a clear danger to pedestrian or vehicular traffic and no uniformed unit is readily available. They may, however, make Investigative Stops, after first determining that there is no uniformed unit in a position to conduct the stop for them.

IV. POLICE VEHICLE PURSUITS

- A. Policy
1. The foremost goal of the Altamonte Springs Police Department is the protection of life and property. Therefore, it is our policy to restrict and regulate those circumstances under which motor vehicle pursuits in carrying out law enforcement activities will be permitted.

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 4

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

2. Members are authorized to pursue suspects who are reasonably thought to be violent and pose a danger to the public at large. Therefore, members may pursue a suspect only if the member reasonably believes the suspect has committed or attempted to commit a forcible felony which involves the actual, apparent, or threatened use of deadly force, and the fleeing driver poses an immediate threat to the public at large. **CFA 17.07M (A)**
3. In instances where immediate apprehension cannot be effected with reasonable safety, a member shall attempt to obtain sufficient information to effect subsequent apprehension without engaging in a motor vehicle pursuit.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and responsibilities for officers and supervisors when engaged in motor vehicle pursuits. This policy shall serve as a standard for the administrative review of the judgement exercised by officer(s) and supervisor(s) involved in the pursuit.

C. Definitions

1. Vehicle Pursuit - an active attempt by a law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend the occupants of a moving vehicle, Provided that the driver of such vehicle is or should be aware of the intent of the law enforcement officer, increases his or her speed, takes other evasive actions, or refuses to stop in an attempt to avoid apprehension.
2. Primary Pursuit Unit - generally the unit which initiates the pursuit, or any unit that assumes control of the pursuit as the lead vehicle.
3. Secondary Pursuit Unit - the emergency unit which trails the primary unit at a safe distance and which is available to assume the primary role or assist the primary unit if the fleeing vehicle is stopped.
4. Back-Up Units - other emergency police vehicles, other than the two active pursuit vehicles (primary and secondary), may be designated as back-up units. They are to remain alert to the direction and progress of the pursuit and may position themselves at strategic sites along the probable pursuit route or on parallel roadways for response to any emergencies that may develop. Unless authorized by the Watch Commander, back-up units are not permitted to utilize emergency lights and siren as a means to place themselves in strategic locations.
5. Emergency Vehicle - any authorized police vehicle equipped with a siren and flashing and/or revolving blue (blue and red) lights which meet the requirements of Chapter 316 of the Florida Statutes.

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 5

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

V. Primary Pursuit Officer Responsibilities CFA 17.07M (B)

- A. The pursuing officer shall immediately notify the Communications Center that a pursuit is underway and provide the following information:
 - 1. The violation is considered to be a "Forcible Felony", with actual or threatened use of deadly force.
 - 2. Description of vehicle, and license number.
 - 3. Location and direction of travel
 - 4. Number and description of suspects (occupants) in the vehicle.
- B. Individual responsibility for actions of a pursuit rest with the primary unit unless directed otherwise by the Watch Commander.

VI. Secondary Unit Responsibilities CFA 17.07M (C)

- A. The secondary unit, upon joining the pursuit, shall immediately notify the Communications Center of its identity. If practical, the secondary unit should assume radio communications responsibility for the primary unit.
- B. The secondary unit should maintain a safe distance from the primary unit, but be close enough to render assistance.
- C. Should the primary pursuit unit become disabled, the secondary unit will become the primary unit and the Watch Commander will designate a new secondary unit.

VII. Supervisor Responsibilities CFA 17.07M (F)

- A. Overall responsibility for the decisions concerning continuance or termination of a pursuit rests primarily with the Watch Commander. The Watch Commander shall assert control of the pursuit by monitoring and directing specific units into or out of the pursuit, redesignating primary, secondary, and back-up units, approving or ordering alternative tactics, or terminating the pursuit if appropriate.
- B. Upon being notified of the pursuit, the Watch Commander shall verify the following:
 - 1. The reason for the pursuit
 - 2. No more than the required number of units are involved in the pursuit
 - 3. Proper radio frequency is being utilized
 - 4. Affected inter-jurisdictional agencies are notified

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 6

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

VIII. Communications Center Responsibilities CFA 17.07M (E)

- A. Upon notification that a pursuit is in progress, communications personnel shall:
1. Receive and record all incoming information on the pursuit vehicle.
 2. Initiate emergency radio traffic and advise all other units that a pursuit is in progress, providing all relevant information, including unit numbers of the primary and support unit (multi-select on all channels if applicable including all location/direction changes).
 3. Ensure the watch commander is aware of the situation.
 4. Perform all relevant record and motor vehicle checks as expeditiously as possible.
 5. Control all radio communications during the pursuit, and repeat information provided by active pursuit units.
 6. Coordinate and dispatch back-up assistance under the direction of the watch commander.
 7. Ascertain the availability of aerial and K-9 units and report their status to the watch commander.
 8. Notify any affected area agencies and attempt to establish a common radio network when pursuits have or are likely to cross jurisdictions.
 9. Continue to monitor the pursuit until it has been terminated.

IX. Operational Tactics CFA 17.07M (A)

- A. Other factors and circumstances to evaluate upon initiation of a motor vehicle pursuit:
1. Area and conditions in which the pursuit is occurring:
 - a. Residential areas
 - b. School zones
 - c. Road conditions
 - d. Special events in progress
 - e. Congested business areas or intersections
 - f. Weather conditions
 2. Time of day
 - a. Are the school children going or coming from school?
 - b. Is the traffic congestion going to be a problem?
 3. Suspects vehicle speed and driving style
 - a. Extreme high speed
 - b. Reckless driving habits, failure to stop at stop signs or lights
 - c. Is suspect ramming other vehicles to escape capture?

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 7

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

B. Only two (2) units, Primary and Secondary will engage in the pursuit: **CFA 17.07M (D)**

**** ALL EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT & SIRENS WILL BE UTILIZED ****

1. A caravan of unassigned units will be prohibited.
2. Units should never follow a suspect vehicle the wrong way on a limited access roadway and should use extreme caution if the suspect vehicle proceeds the wrong way on a one-way street.
3. Units will not pass one another unless authorized by primary unit.
4. All pursuit units will maintain a reasonable and safe following distance.
5. Motorcycle units will not engage in pursuit unless optimum traffic conditions exist. Motorcycle units will discontinue pursuit when a marked vehicle is present, or when the pursuit enters onto a limited access roadway.
6. Unmarked vehicles properly equipped with blue lights and sirens are permitted to engage in pursuits, but will be relieved by the first available marked vehicle. Unmarked vehicles will act as secondary units until a second marked vehicle is present, at which time, the unmarked vehicle will discontinue pursuit mode, and continue safely if additional units are required.
7. All initiating pursuit vehicles will relinquish primary pursuit position to neighboring City/County Law Enforcement Officers when crossing jurisdictional boundaries.
8. All units will terminate the pursuit when radio communication with dispatch or communication with the Watch Commander is lost.
9. The use of blocking and/or ramming a fleeing vehicle to apprehend a violator, is **not authorized**. CFA 17.07M (G)
10. Stationary road blocks are prohibited. CFA 17.07M (G)
11. Members shall not discharge their firearms from or at a moving vehicle unless the occupants of the other vehicle are using deadly force against the officer or another person by means of other than the vehicle.
 - a. Firearms may be used only under circumstances which provide a high probability of striking the intended objective CFA 17.07M (G)
 - b. When aerial surveillance is available, the pilot will notify Communication Center/Dispatch as soon as possible. When feasible, the aircraft becomes responsible for communicating the progress of the pursuit, after

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 8

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

communication is established between the air and ground units confirming the transfer of this responsibility. All pursuing units at that time will break away from the pursuit and will leave adequate distance for suspect vehicle to take alternate plan.

X. Termination of Pursuit CFA 17.07M (H)

- A. A decision to terminate the pursuit may be the most rational means of preserving the lives and property of both the public and the officers and suspects engaged in the pursuit. The pursuing units have an obligation to discontinue when circumstances dictate a pursuit is not justified or it is reasonable to do so. A pursuit shall be terminated when:
1. In the opinion of the officer or the Watch Commander, the level of danger outweighs the necessity of the pursuit.
 2. The suspects identity has been established to the point that later apprehension can be accomplished and he or she does not pose an immediate danger to the public at large.
 3. The distance between the officer and the pursued vehicle is so great it becomes obvious that apprehension is unlikely.
 4. The officer loses visual contact with the pursued vehicle for an extended period of time.
 5. Police equipment failure makes it impractical or unsafe to continue.
 6. If the pursuing vehicle loses radio contact with its communications center.
 7. The member engaged in the pursuit no longer has a reasonable belief that the person pursued is suspected of committing, having committed, or attempting to commit a forcible felony.
- B. Upon the termination of any pursuit, the department vehicle(s) used in said pursuit will be removed from service. Such vehicles will remain out of service until inspected and cleared to return to service by the City's vehicle repair shop.(City Garage)

XI. Inter / Intra-Jurisdictional Pursuits CFA 17.07M (I)

- A. Out-bound pursuits
1. If a vehicle pursuit appears to be continuing outside the jurisdiction of the City of Altamonte Springs, the Communications Center will inform the target agency that a vehicle pursuit is headed in their direction, and request their assistance. Such notification shall include:

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 9

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

- a. Nature of offense/reason for pursuit
 - b. Number of suspects in the pursued vehicle
 - c. Number of units currently involved
 - d. Vehicle description and direction of travel
 - e. Any special conditions or considerations
2. The decision to grant such assistance to the Altamonte Springs Police Department will be that of the on-duty field supervisor of the requested agency.
 3. If assistance is granted, a unit from the requested affected agency will assume the primary unit position, and the Altamonte Springs unit will continue in a secondary unit position at a safe distance behind the primary unit. The decision to continue or terminate the pursuit will transfer to the new primary unit's agency. In the event the pursuit is subsequently terminated by the primary unit from another jurisdiction, the Altamonte Springs Police Department unit will not resume the primary position or re-initiate the pursuit.
 4. If the agency having jurisdiction does not grant assistance to the Altamonte Springs Police Department, the primary unit must re-evaluate the need to continue the pursuit based upon existing conditions and knowledge of the geography of the area. If the decision is to continue, the Communications Center will continue to inform other affected agencies down the line, and request their assistance. Units from the agency having jurisdiction over the area, the pursuit has entered, will be requested to protect the public from the pursuit, without actually involving themselves in the chase.
 5. If the agency having jurisdiction over the area the pursuit has entered requests the primary unit to discontinue the pursuit in view of public safety concerns, the primary unit will honor that request and immediately terminate the pursuit.
 6. Pursuits that appear to be leaving Seminole County will only be continued in extreme need situations with the approval of the field supervisor of the agency assuming the primary position. The field supervisor of the adjoining county will be notified of the pursuit into their jurisdiction.
 7. Pursuing officers that continue beyond the limits of Seminole County will adhere to the procedures established by this policy.
- B. In-Bound Pursuits
1. Officers shall not become involved in another agency's pursuit unless clearly and specifically directed to assist.
 2. Assistance with or involvement in pursuits originating outside of Altamonte Springs that enter Altamonte Springs must meet the same criteria establish by this policy. If the criteria does not agree with the Altamonte Springs policy, Department members shall not involve themselves in the pursuit, and may request the pursuing agency to

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

MANUAL: P/P 86-04, Police Vehicle Operation

PAGE: 10

REVISION: #9 (11/10/97)

OF: 10

terminate the chase due to public safety considerations based upon existing conditions.

3. The decision to grant assistance to the requesting agency shall be that of the on-duty Watch Commander.
4. Once the decision has been made to render assistance in a pursuit that originated in another jurisdiction, Altamonte Springs Police Department units will assume the primary unit position of the pursuit as it occurs within the City of Altamonte Springs. A unit from the originating agency will continue in a secondary unit position at a safe distance behind the primary unit. Upon assuming the primary unit position, the Altamonte Springs Police Department assumes the responsibility for the decision continue or terminate, as governed by this policy.
5. If the decision is to not render assistance to the pursuit, Altamonte Springs units will act to protect the public from the pursuit without becoming involved in the actual pursuit.

XII. Vehicle Pursuit Report Form CFA 17.07M (J)

- A. A vehicle pursuit report form (Attachment "A") shall be completed after every pursuit. The form shall be submitted by the officer conducting the pursuit and shall be completed by the end of that officer's tour of duty. The form shall be forwarded by the chain of command to the Professional Standards Unit for filing.