

## 6. Vehicle Pursuits

Members may pursue, attempt to stop and apprehend as expeditiously and safely as possible, any person in a vehicle who the member reasonable believes has committed a crime of violence. A crime of violence is defined as any felony involving the commission of a violent act or when there is reasonable cause to believe that serious physical harm or death might be inflicted upon another person. ALL OTHER PURSUITS ARE PROHIBITED. However, this does not prevent a member from maintaining visual contact with the vehicle for the purpose of coordinating the use of the Tire Deflating Device. **In considering the need for and continuation of a pursuit, the deputy should weigh such factors as:**

- a. **Is the suspect known to the deputy and could apprehension occur at a later date;**
- b. **Type of area where the pursuit will occur, i.e., business district, rural area or high density neighborhood;**
- c. **Time of day;**
- d. **Road surface;**
- e. **Type of roadway (city street, state or county road);**
- f. **Weather conditions;**
- g. **Traffic conditions, to include pedestrians;**

Immediately upon initiating a pursuit, the member shall activate the vehicles emergency warning equipment (i.e., lights and siren) and notify the communication center.

The member or supervisor shall terminate the pursuit when hazards created by the pursuit outweigh the necessity for immediate apprehension. At any time a pursuit is discontinued, the communication center is to be notified and the officer shall disengage the emergency equipment (i.e., lights and siren) at that moment.

- 1) **Back-up units - Only the marked primary and one marked back-up vehicle shall be authorized for direct participation in a pursuit. However, a supervisor may authorized more than two units to be in active pursuit in unusual circumstances.**

(revised on 6-7-01)

- a) **The marked backup unit, upon joining the pursuit, shall be immediately identified as such to the communication center. If the primary unit is a one person unit, the assisting unit may assume**

radio communications responsibility, allowing the primary unit to devote full attention to driving.

**b)** The marked backup unit will maintain a safe distance behind the primary unit and remain close enough to render assistance if required. A marked backup unit shall not attempt to pursue or assume control unless the primary unit drops out or such action is directed by a supervisor or the initiating unit is an unmarked unit.

**2)** Communication Center's Responsibility - the on-duty communications officer shall perform the following functions during a pursuit.

**a)** Receive and record all incoming information during a pursuit.

**b)** Immediately notify a supervisor when a pursuit is initiated.

**c)** Clear the radio channel of any unnecessary traffic and advise all other units that a pursuit is in progress, providing all relevant information.

**d)** Advise other agencies of the pursuit and whether assistance is needed or is not needed.

**e)** Perform relevant record and motor vehicle checks.

**f)** Control all radio communications during the pursuit.

**g)** Coordinate assistance under the direction of the supervisor.

**h)** Continue to monitor the pursuit until it has been terminated.

**3)** Supervisory Responsibilities - Supervisory responsibilities during a pursuit are outlined as follows:

**a) Supervisor**

- (1)** Upon being notified or becoming aware of a pursuit, the supervisor shall take command and determine the following:

  - (a)** That the pursuit is being conducted by a marked unit
  - (b)** Whether the pursuit should be continued.
  - (c)** Whether only the required or necessary units are involved in the pursuit.
  - (d)** Whether affected allied agencies have been notified of the pursuit and whether assistance is needed or is not needed.
- (2)** The supervisor will continue to direct the pursuit, and approve or order alternative tactics and maintain control until the pursuit is terminated. In the absence of adequate information from the primary or backup unit, the supervisor may order termination of the pursuit.
- (3)** As with any tactical field problem, it is not necessary that the supervisor be physically present in order to assert control and begin coordination of the pursuit.
- (4)** The supervisor in the Sector where the pursuit ends should proceed to the termination point to provide guidance and necessary supervision.
- (5)** In cases where a Sergeant is not on duty, the acting supervisor shall determine whether the pursuit is justified or should be discontinued, and shall use the established guidelines in making that decision. The member shall promptly file an appropriate incident report for review by the station commander.
- (6)** Any traffic crash involving a Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicle in pursuit, whether or not the Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicle was actually involved in the crash as a contact

vehicle, shall be investigated by a supervisor.

(7) When another agency requests the Monroe County Sheriff's Office assistance in a pursuit situation, a supervisor may authorize such assistance only when the pursuit meets the criteria established by Monroe County Sheriff's Office policy concerning pursuits, however, a supervisor may authorized one Monroe County Sheriff's Office unit as a backup to assist the other agency in a pursuit which involves a crime of violence when that agency has requested assistance and has only one unit involved in the pursuit.

(8) All provisions of this chapter are applicable in pursuits which are conducted at the request of another agency, including those provisions concerning the termination of a pursuit as outlined in the section on Emergency Vehicle Operation.

4) Emergency Vehicle Operation, Tactics, and Prohibitions - Members shall comply with the following provisions:

a) Offensive tactics - In the course of pursuit, deliberate contact between vehicles or forcing the pursued vehicle into parked cars, ditches or any other obstacle, boxing in, heading off, ramming, running roadblocks or driving alongside the pursue vehicle while it is in motion is prohibited.

b) Caravanning - Caravanning by field units is prohibited.

c) Passing - Members shall not attempt to pass other field units involved in the pursuit unless the passing officer received specific permission from the primary unit or the supervisor.

d) Spacing - All units in pursuit shall maintain adequate space between vehicles to ensure proper reaction and breaking time.

e) Number of police vehicles - No more than two police vehicles will become actively involved in a pursuit, unless specifically directed otherwise by the supervisor. Other members should be alert to the pursuit progress and location.

f) Unmarked police vehicles - Members operating unmarked police vehicles may engage in a pursuit only when the fleeing violator presents an immediate and direct threat to life. Whenever a marked

vehicle becomes available to take over the pursuit, the unmarked vehicle will withdraw from active pursuit and serve in a support role, however, the unmarked vehicle shall not continue in a pursuit mode.

**g) Motorcycles** - Motorcycle officers will not participate in pursuits due to the extreme hazards to the officer.

**h) Limited access, multilane, and one-way roadways** - Members shall not drive on the wrong side of the roadway or in the wrong direction to overtake or pursue a violator.

**i) Traffic control devices** - Members shall come to a complete stop before proceeding through a stop sign or a red traffic control signal. Members shall make use of all available warning devices to alert other motorists and pedestrians.

**j) Roadblocks** - The use of a partial or complete roadblock must be authorized by a supervisor and can be used only as a last resort when deadly force is justified. The roadblock must be clearly visible and provide adequate warning to allow vehicles to come to a safe stop.

**k) Four way Flashers** may interfere with brake lights and turn signals and shall NOT be used while the vehicle is in motion.

**l) Shooting from or at a moving vehicle during pursuits:**

**(1)** Members shall not shoot from or at a moving vehicle, except under the following circumstances:

**(a)** As a last resort to prevent imminent death or serious physical injury to the officer or other person.

**(b)** As a last resort to apprehend a suspect who has just committed a felony resulting in death or serious physical injury.

**(c)** Firearms may be used only under circumstances which provide a high probability of striking

the intended objective and without causing harm to innocent persons.

m) Emergency lights and siren shall be engaged at all times during a pursuit situation.

**5) Immediately following a pursuit, the case officer will do an initial report, all other involved participating officers will do a supplement to that report and the reviewing supervisor will send a copy of this report to the Commander of Special Operations.**

**The commander of Special Operations shall conduct a documented analysis on all pursuits annually. This documented analysis will be submitted to the Undersheriff for review.**

6) Pursuit Review Board - The respective Sector commander will respond to the scene of any pursuit that results in any injury. All pursuits will be reviewed by the Pursuits Review Board. The chairperson of the board will be the commander of the Bureau of Operations or the designee of the said commander. Members of the board will be senior commanders appointed by the chairperson. The board will review the facts and circumstances of pursuits to determine

if the pursuit was in compliance with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office policy. Findings will be reported to the Undersheriff and respective Sector commanders.