

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE  
REGULAR BASIC COURSE  
**LEARNING DOMAIN 22**  
VEHICLE PULLOVERS

I. LEARNING NEED

Peace officers must recognize the inherent risks involved when conducting a vehicle pullover in order to take the appropriate precautions necessary to ensure their own safety as well as the safety of others.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Describe the three basic categories of vehicle pullovers, to include:
  - 1. Traffic enforcement pullover
  - 2. Investigative pullover
  - 3. High-risk pullover
  
- B. Describe the inherent risks to officer safety that are associated with conducting a vehicle pullover
  - 1. “Tombstone courage”
  - 2. Poor positioning
  - 3. Physical and mental fatigue
  - 4. Failure to watch a suspect’s hands
  - 5. Complacency
  - 6. Bad attitude
  - 7. Relaxing too soon
  - 8. Not using available equipment properly
  - 9. Failure to search or conducting a poor search
  - 10. Inadequate communication
  - 11. Poor weapon maintenance
  
- C. Demonstrate appropriate actions officers can take to maintain their own safety and the safety of others while conducting a vehicle pullover
  - 1. Be aware that suspects have guns
  - 2. Call in contacts
  - 3. Maintain a position of advantage
  - 4. Consider varying vehicle approach
  - 5. Know location of the vehicle pullover

## II. LEARNING NEED

Peace officers must understand the techniques for conducting tactically sound vehicle pullovers

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Demonstrate safety techniques when initiating a vehicle pullover, including:
  1. Selecting an appropriate location
    - a. Safety factors (e.g., out of the flow of traffic)
    - b. Visibility to passing traffic
    - c. Avoidance of potentially hostile environments
    - d. Lighting/illumination
    - e. Possible escape routes
    - f. Availability of cover and concealment
  2. Communicating with dispatch
  3. Getting the attention of the driver of the target vehicle
    - a. Lights (e.g., emergency lights, headlights, spotlights)
    - b. Hand gestures
    - c. Horn/audible devices
    - d. Siren
    - e. Maintaining appropriate distance from target vehicle prior to initiating the pullover
- B. Demonstrate appropriate actions for the safe and tactical placement of the patrol unit
  1. Type of pullover
  2. Type of vehicle being stopped
  3. Available space
  4. Environment/topography
  5. Offset position
  6. Lighting (emergency)
- C. Apply appropriate procedures for exiting the patrol unit
  1. Check approaching traffic and open the door only if the path is clear
  2. Consider lowering the driver and passenger front door windows
  3. Unlock the doors
  4. Quickly exit the vehicle
  5. After exiting, momentarily pause to observe the target vehicle

- D. Demonstrate appropriate safety precautions patrol officers should take when approaching a target vehicle on foot
1. Stay close to the patrol vehicle to minimize any hazard from passing traffic
  2. Continuously observe the occupants of the target vehicle
  3. Maintain an awareness of the surrounding and other hazards
  4. Keep gun hand free during the approach
  5. Use a flashlight sparingly to avoid the potential of vehicle occupants being able to track the officer's movements
- E. Distinguish between the advantages and disadvantages of a driver side approach, a passenger side approach and a non-approach to a target vehicle
1. Driver-side approach is the most direct, quickest path to violator. It provides direct contact with the driver, closer observation of the driver, and enables the officer to see the VIN. Disadvantages include: Vulnerability to passing traffic, places officer in "kill zone", and allows fewer escape routes for the officer.
  2. A Passenger-side approach keeps the officer away from passing traffic, provides an element of surprise, allows more options for cover/concealment, and enhances the observation of the rear seat. Disadvantages include: Officer must speak across the passenger the driver, pedestrian traffic, environment may not allow for this approach, and the officer is not able to easily detect objective signs of intoxication.
  3. The non-approach is used if the driver immediately exits the vehicle, providing the officer cover and concealment. Suspects actions can be monitored. Disadvantages include: Exposes the violator to hazards of passing traffic, officer loses containment of occupants, increases the potential for assault on the officer, and it hinders the ability to observe the interior of the vehicle.
- F. Demonstrate appropriate positioning for patrol officers when making face to face contact with the driver of a target vehicle
1. Officer should be behind the trailing edge of driver/passenger side door.
  2. After the initial contact and a visual check of the vehicle interior, it may be necessary or desirable for the officer to change position
  3. Movements depending on agency policies and guidelines
- G. Demonstrate the process for conducting a vehicle stop driver contact, to include:
1. Greeting
  2. Identifying self and department
  3. Requesting driver's license, registration, proof of insurance
  4. Explaining the reason for the stop
  5. Making a decision to warn, cite or arrest

7. Closing, appropriate to decision
- H. Demonstrate appropriate procedures and communication techniques for directing the driver and occupants out of a target vehicle
1. Direct the driver/occupants to exit one at a time
  2. Conduct a lawful search
  3. Maintain control of driver/occupants
- I. Apply appropriate procedures for checking the validity and authenticity of a driver's license or other form of personal identification
1. Confirm the driver is authorized to operate a specific type of motor vehicle
  2. Enforce the provisions of the Vehicle Code which requires possession of a valid driver license
  3. Verify the driver is complying with any restriction on the license
  4. Confirm the driver's identity so the driver can be cited and released
  5. Verify the address is correct

### III. LEARNING NEED

Peace officers must recognize situations involving high levels of risk in order to apply appropriate tactical actions during a vehicle pullover.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Demonstrate officer safety precautions that should be taken during any high-risk vehicle pullover
1. Utilize appropriate resources/equipment
  2. Rely on basic training and known tactics
  3. Maintain personal control and professional attitude
- B. Discuss appropriate actions for cover officers who are called to assist the primary officer during a high-risk vehicle pullover
1. Protect the primary officer who is conducting the business of the pullover
  2. Place their own patrol vehicles in a proper position to avoid silhouetting other officers with the vehicle's headlights or other lighting equipment
  3. Take or maintain proper positions of cover and concealment
  4. Maintain their firearms at the ready
  5. Maintain visual contact with the vehicle occupants at all times
  6. Avoid a crossfire situation
- C. Demonstrate tactics for conducting a safe and effective high-risk vehicle pullover:
1. Develop a plan of action

2. Initiate the pullover
3. Direct action of vehicle occupants
4. Order occupants from the target vehicle
5. Establish physical control of occupants
6. Clear the target vehicle of any additional occupants

D. Discuss officer safety considerations when searching the target vehicle, including:

1. Use of available cover officer(s)
2. Types of objects sought and likely locations
3. Potential hazards (e.g., needles, edged weapons, etc.)
4. A systematic search process
  - a. Interior
  - b. Exterior

#### IV. LEARNING NEED

Peace officers must make appropriate safety and tactical adjustments when conducting pullovers involving vehicles other than passenger cars and pickup trucks.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Explain appropriate safety and tactical considerations when conducting vehicle pullovers involving:
1. Vans, campers, and motor homes
  2. Motorcycles
  3. Buses and semi-trucks

#### V. REQUIRED TESTS

- A. A scenario test that requires the student to demonstrate, by application, proficiency of a simulated vehicle pullover during the hours of darkness (as defined in Vehicle Code Section 280). At a minimum, the test shall evaluate the following competencies:
1. Police Vehicle Operation – The ability to operate a patrol vehicle in a safe and efficient manner and to position the vehicle appropriate to the situation.
  2. Problem Solving/Decision-Making - Analyzing situations and implementing plans to solve problems in a timely manner. Using verbal or physical skills to determine the appropriate resolution to a situation.
  3. Legal Authority/ Individual Rights - The identification of laws and constitutional rights governing to consensual encounters, detentions, and arrests.

4. Officer Safety- The demonstration of situational and tactical awareness and appropriate response.
5. Communication- The use of effective verbal and non-verbal skills to convey intended meaning and establish understanding.

Presenters must use the POST-developed Scenario Test and the POST Scenario Competency Evaluation and Grading Test Forms or presenter-developed forms approved by POST, which minimally include the performance dimensions used for this scenario test.

## VI. REQUIRED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- A. The student will participate in a learning activity depicting a situation in which the subject is initially noncompliant with verbal instructions to sign the citation. The student will demonstrate the communication skills to resolve the conflict including:
  1. Making an “ethical appeal” based upon a peace officer’s professional presence and providing the subject with an opportunity to voluntarily comply (asking)
  2. Identifying the law, policy, or rationale that applies to the situation, answering the subject’s implied question “why?”, and providing another opportunity for the subject to voluntarily comply (setting context)
  3. Explaining the options or courses of action which could be taken by the peace officer and their potential personal consequences to the subject, and providing the subject with yet another opportunity to voluntarily comply (presenting options)
  4. Taking the action appropriate to the situation if the subject fails to voluntarily comply (e.g., arrest)
- B. The student will participate in a learning activity involving a vehicle stop. The student will demonstrate the following:
  1. Greeting
  2. Identifying self and department
  3. Requesting driver’s license, registration, and proof of insurance
  4. Explaining the reason for the stop
  5. Making decision to warn, cite, or arrest

6. Closing appropriate to decision

C. The student will participate in a learning activity, with one or more students acting as a team that simulates a high risk vehicle stop. The high risk stop will minimally include:

1. Identify violation/suspect
2. Request and coordinate responding units
3. Select appropriate location for the stop.
4. Advise dispatch of stop information
5. Activate emergency equipment
6. Patrol vehicle position
7. Communication (dispatch, suspects/other officers)
8. Safe and effective tactics to secure suspect(s) and vehicle

D. The student will participate in one or more learning activities from the POST-developed *Instructor's Guide to Learning Activities for Leadership, Ethics and Community Policing (December 2005)* or other comparable sources regarding vehicle pullovers. At a minimum, each activity, or a combination of activities must address the following topics:

1. Exercise of effective problem solving, communication and officer safety during vehicle stops
2. Use of an appropriate ethical decision-making process to demonstrate "equal protection of the law"
3. How the community may view vehicle pullover tactics as a function of the policing mission
4. How peace officers may educate community members on the purpose of vehicle pullovers

Description	Hours
POST Minimum Required Hours	<u>14</u>
Agency Specific Hours	<u>2</u>
Total Instructional Hours	<u>16</u>

