



SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS



420.01 USE OF POLICE VEHICLES 06-26-08

PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the use of police vehicles.

POLICY

To ensure that City vehicles are used in a safe manner for official business.

PROCEDURE

A. DEFINITIONS

1. GRAFFITI - unauthorized decals, signs, bumper stickers, markings, or accessories.
2. SHORT TERM PARKING - parking generally less than two (2) hours.
3. PRIORITY POLICE BUSINESS - investigating crimes, responding to calls, etc. Priority police business does not include attending meetings or court.
4. COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT - includes, but is not limited to: telephones, cellular/wireless telephones (cell phones), pagers, computers, and other mobile service devices.
5. HANDS FREE DEVICE - an apparatus used with a cellular telephone that permits the user to talk on the telephone without holding it.
6. TEXT MESSAGE - a written message sent in textual form designed to appear on the viewing screen of a cellular telephone or pager.
7. PUSH-TO-TALK DEVICES - Police radios or cellular telephone models or devices that allow for two-way radio communications in addition to regular cellular telephone service and text messaging.

B. GENERAL

1. Employees shall operate Department vehicles with due care, caution, and obey all traffic laws except as authorized by law.
2. When leaving City vehicles unattended, the drivers shall:
 - a. place the gear selector in "park".
 - b. set the emergency brake.
 - c. roll up all windows.
 - d. remove the keys.
 - e. lock all doors.
3. When Community Service Officers (CSOs) and Crime Scene Investigators use marked patrol vehicles, they shall display magnetic "Civilian Employee" signs on the right and left sides of the vehicle.
4. After using a City vehicle, employees shall remove all trash from the vehicle and dispose of it properly.
5. Employees shall also follow the provisions of G.O. 255.09, Modified Duty.

C. USE OF SEAT BELTS

1. Employees riding in Department vehicles shall use the three-point harness safety belt (shoulder and lap harness) when the vehicle is placed in motion. To ensure employee safety and reduce the possibility of injury, the three-point harness safety belt shall not be altered nor modified in any manner.
2. Employees transporting persons other than City employees shall ensure passengers use seat belts.
 - a. Unless a prisoner poses a danger to the transporting officer, officers shall fasten the belt for the handcuffed prisoner. Officers who do not secure a prisoner with a seat belt, due to a belligerent or combative attitude, shall note this fact in the Arrest Report.
 - b. Patrol wagon prisoners are exempt from the seat belt requirement.

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D. USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES

California Vehicle Code 23123 states that a person shall not drive a motor vehicle while using a wireless telephone unless that telephone is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking, and is used in that manner while driving.

1. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, employees will not utilize a cellular telephone while operating a vehicle unless the telephone is equipped for hands-free use.
2. While operating a Department vehicle or while operating any vehicle while on duty, employees shall exercise caution when dialing calls or sending a text message while the vehicle is in motion. Such use shall not be attempted while in heavy traffic or high speed conditions.

NOTE: To place or receive a telephone call, or send a text message, employees should pull off the road to the nearest, safest, most practical location and stop their vehicle.

3. Employees using a push-to-talk device for two-way communications with other law enforcement personnel who are using that device in the course and scope of his/her employment, shall be exempt from Section D1 above.
4. Traffic violations
 - a. Traffic citations issued to an employee for violating CVC 23123 while using a City vehicle are the responsibility of the employee per City Policy.

E. TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES

1. When additional vehicles are required to supplement existing operations, employees shall contact the Fleet Management Section, Office of Technical Services (OTS), and obtain a vehicle from the pool. In emergency situations, the on-duty station commander may authorize the use of any designated vehicle.
2. Fleet Vehicles
 - a. Employees seeking the use of a vehicle from the unmarked vehicle pool shall contact the Fleet Management Section, present sufficient authorization for the vehicle (e.g., a Travel and Training Request, a One-Day Request, or other form of supervisory authority), complete the Fleet Vehicle Sign-out Log, and obtain the keys. A gasoline credit card shall be issued when necessary.
 - b. When a vehicle has been assigned to sworn personnel in the Office of Operations the vehicle equipment number shall be reported, via MDC if available, to the dispatcher so it may be noted on the unit history. Personnel assigned to other Offices are not required to adhere to this procedure.
 - c. After using the vehicle, the user shall fuel, clean, and park it in the appropriate space. The ending mileage shall be noted. The keys and credit card shall be returned to the Fleet Management Section and the ending mileage reported.
3. Duplicate Sets of Keys
 - a. Under NO circumstances shall employees duplicate keys to any unmarked vehicle without prior authorization of the Manager, Fleet Management Section.
 - b. Employees shall not obtain keys to vehicles permanently assigned to another section without prior approval of the section commander. Section commanders shall ensure the keys to their permanently assigned vehicles are kept in a secured location.
4. Except as noted in section B3 above, patrol vehicles used by sworn personnel not in uniform and civilian personnel shall have "Out of Service" signs prominently displayed in both the driver and passenger rear windows.

F. PERMANENT ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES

1. City policy mandates all permanent overnight retention vehicle assignments be authorized by the City Manager.
 - a. Office chiefs shall submit a memo to the Chief of Police (COP) identifying employees within their offices needing permanent vehicle assignment. The memorandum shall be submitted before January 1 of each year.
 - b. The COP will make appropriate notification to the City Manager.

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2. The Fleet Management Section shall maintain a list of permanent vehicle assignments, including:
 - a. the type of vehicle.
 - b. position classification of persons to whom vehicles are assigned.
 - c. the reason for permanent overnight retention assignment.

G. VEHICLE/OFFICER SAFETY

Employees, before beginning their tour of duty, shall verify the vehicle is in good operating condition. Items to be checked include: emergency lights, siren, and MDC.

1. Before going in-service at the start of shift and always after transporting any passengers, officers shall, if possible, remove the back seat of the vehicle and inspect the area under the seat, the rear passenger compartment, and the area under the front seats for contraband, evidence and/or property prisoners may have hidden and/or lost.
2. A complete vehicle inspection shall also be conducted at the end of shift before securing the vehicle.
3. Patrol Wagon
When backing the patrol wagon, the passenger officer, or another City employee, shall signal the driver from behind the vehicle.

H. VEHICLE REPAIR

1. When a vehicle needs repair or service, the driver shall:
 - a. park the vehicle at the applicable police facility garage.
 - b. leave the hood ajar.
 - c. complete a Fleet Equipment Request/Repair Form.
 - d. leave the form with an on-duty employee at the police facility garage. If the garage is closed, leave the form in the box designated for the forms.
2. If a shortage of vehicles occurs, employees shall contact their immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall check with the on-duty garage personnel, who shall determine if any of the deadlined vehicles are safe to use.
3. No employee shall close the hood on a deadlined vehicle and use it without first obtaining the permission of the police garage employee on duty.
4. When a vehicle breaks down in the field, the employee shall notify Communications of the exact location of the vehicle and the nature of the problem.
 - a. When the public safety garage is open:
 - (1) Communications shall contact a garage employee who will determine if a tow is needed. If the mechanical problem is minor and can be corrected in the field, garage personnel shall respond to the officer's location to make repairs.
 - (2) If needed, a tow truck shall be dispatched by garage personnel to have the disabled vehicle towed to the applicable police facility garage.
 - b. If the public safety garage is closed, Communications shall contact the tow company directly for towing to the applicable police facility garage.
 - c. A disabled vehicle shall not be left unattended while waiting for a tow. A vehicle that is disabled for any reason shall not be pushed by another vehicle for any distance except to alleviate a traffic hazard.

I. OUT OF TOWN BREAKDOWN

When a City vehicle requires repair work while out of town, the employee shall notify the WJKPF garage of its location, nature of the problem and, if possible, an estimate for repairs. Only the garage supervisor may authorize repair out of town.

NOTE: Costs of repairing damage to City vehicles resulting from misconduct by the employee having custody of the vehicle may be recoverable from the employee.

J. VEHICLE DAMAGE/GRAFFITI

1. Collisions involving City vehicles shall be investigated per the provisions of G.O. 537.04. NOTE: The California Highway Patrol M.A.I.T. may be called to assist in the investigation of accidents involving a fatality or serious injuries. See G.O. 537.01.
2. Employees involved in collisions or noting damage to vehicles that happened during their shift shall complete a City of Sacramento Driver's Report of Accident form (RM2 or Blue border form) and a Fleet Management Equipment Repair/Request form, and submit them to their supervisor as soon as circumstances permit. Blue border forms shall then be

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- routed to the Professional Standards Unit (PSU), and the Equipment Repair/Request form to garage personnel.
3. Before and after using City vehicles, Department personnel shall visually inspect the vehicle, inside and out, visors and back of seats. This inspection includes operating condition, appearance (damage), and any graffiti present.
 - a. If during the inspection the employee discovers new damage which has not been reported, the employee shall complete an Equipment Request/Repair Form. The form shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor who shall immediately investigate the matter. The supervisor shall:
 - (1) investigate the unit history and identify the previous user plus any other pertinent information.
 - (2) route the Equipment Request/Repair Form and results of the investigation to the section commander who shall:
 - (a) review the report and forward it to the Fleet Management Section to request the damage be repaired or removed.
 - (b) order further investigation or initiate the process for disciplinary action if appropriate.
 - b. If during the inspection the employee discovers new graffiti present, observed materials shall be removed before using the vehicle. The removal may be done by personnel observing the damage or garage personnel. If removal is not possible due to time constraints, the nature of the materials or other variables, the employee shall complete an Equipment Request/Repair Form.
 - c. Employees who notice new damage/graffiti shall park the vehicle at the applicable police facility garage and leave the hood ajar.
 4. Vehicles should not be utilized until the discrepancies are corrected, and another vehicle substituted. In situations where the use of a vehicle is necessitated, supervisors, with concurrence of the garage staff, may authorize the use of a vehicle deadlined for cosmetic reasons.

K. VEHICLE TAKEN HOME

Except for permanently assigned vehicles, City vehicles are to be used for official business only and shall not be taken home except under special circumstances (early morning raids, surveillance, official trips, etc.). If it becomes necessary to take a vehicle home:

1. the driver shall complete a Use of Police Vehicle form (SPD 440).
2. the concerned division commander shall sign the form and forward it to the Fleet Management Section through the Captain, Staff Services Division.

L. USE OF CITY OWNED VEHICLES

Employees shall not transport unauthorized persons in police vehicles for other than official police business, unless prior authorization is received from the employee's supervisor.

M. TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

1. Employees transporting children in City vehicles under the age of four (4), or weighing less than 40 pounds, shall secure the child in an approved child passenger seat.
2. If due to physical unfitness, medical condition, or size, the child being transported will not benefit from a seat belt, the employee shall select alternative means of transportation for the child. Alternative means to consider are:
 - a. another City vehicle with proper restraints.
 - b. parent, relative, or friend's vehicle with proper restraints.
 - c. ambulance or proper medical transporter.

N. PARKING AND PARKING PLACARDS

1. "Police Only Zones" are intended for short term parking. All day parking is prohibited in these zones.
2. City vehicles may park in metered areas when conducting short term, priority police business (a parking placard is not mandatory).
3. Parking placards shall be assigned by the Deputy Chief of Police, OTS. Parking placards may be used to park in metered spaces for short term priority police business.

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O. TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

1. Traffic and parking citations issued to an employee using a City vehicle are the responsibility of the employee per City Policy.
2. Any employee receiving a citation under an emergency situation shall complete an Emergency Vehicle Exemption form (SPD 007), directing it to the employee's Office Chief, explaining the situation in detail. Upon approval of the Office Chief, the memorandum and citation shall be sent to the Office of the Chief (OOC), Attn: Staff Assistance.
3. The OOC shall log the citation and send a request for dismissal, including a reason for the request, to the City Transportation Division.