



SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



580.13 FOOT PURSUITS 04-11-2023

PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures for foot pursuits and give officers direction and options to consider before, during, and after initiating a foot pursuit, as well as when an officer should terminate a foot pursuit.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Sacramento Police Department that officer and public safety should be the overriding consideration in determining whether a foot pursuit will be initiated, continued, or terminated. Officers should continuously assess and evaluate whether the need for apprehension justifies the risk to the safety of the officers, the public, and the fleeing suspect. If at any time the pursuing officers, or their supervisors, determine the risk to safety outlined in this order supersedes the need for apprehension, the foot pursuit should be terminated.

PROCEDURE

A. DEFINITION

1. **FOOT PURSUIT:** An incident where an officer pursues on foot, a person who is evading detention or arrest.
2. **RESISTING ARREST:** Any person who willfully resists, delays, or obstructs any public officer, peace officer, or an emergency medical technician, in the discharge or attempt to discharge any duty of their office or employment is in violation of Penal Code § 148(a)(1).
3. **REASONABLE SUSPICION:** Reasonable suspicion occurs when an officer reasonably believes a person is about to engage in, is engaging in, or has engaged in criminal activity. Mere flight by a person who is not suspected of criminal activity shall not serve as justification for engaging in any foot pursuit without the development of reasonable suspicion regarding the individual's involvement in criminal activity or being wanted by law enforcement.

B. GENERAL

1. Although it is an officer's decision to initiate a stop, it is the suspect or violator who decides to initiate a foot pursuit by fleeing.
2. No sworn officer shall be disciplined for not initiating, not engaging in, or for terminating a foot pursuit if the risk of pursuing outweighs the need for apprehension.

C. FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN INITIATING, CONTINUING, AND TERMINATING FOOT PURSUITS

1. When a suspect exhibits the intention of avoiding arrest by fleeing on foot and refusing to stop, officers should consider public safety and effective law enforcement to determine whether initiation of a foot pursuit is reasonable. An officer may pursue suspects only when they reasonably believe the suspect has committed an act that would justify a stop, investigative detention, or arrest.
2. The involved officers and supervisor should continually assess the facts and circumstances of a situation when determining when to initiate, continue, or terminate a foot pursuit.



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3. In deciding whether to initiate or continue a foot pursuit, an officer should consider if the following resources are available:
 - a. Aircraft support.
 - b. K9 support.
 - c. Additional patrol or outside agency personnel.
4. In deciding whether to initiate, continue, or terminate a foot pursuit, officers should consider the following factors:
 - a. Whether the officer is acting alone or with assistance.
 - b. The availability and distance of assisting officers.
 - c. Familiarity of the area.
 - d. Knowledge of the fleeing suspect's:
 - (1) Identity that could lead to apprehension at another time.
 - (2) Criminal violation, if any.
 - (3) Possession of weapons.
 - (4) Criminal background and propensity for violence.
 - e. Physical capabilities of the officer to safely control the suspect once apprehended.
 - f. The number of suspects who have fled.
 - g. The suspect entering a building, structure, confined space, isolated area, or dense or difficult terrain.
 - h. Quality of radio communications.
 - i. Weather conditions, darkness or visibility.
 - j. Whether pursuing officers have lost sight of the suspect and for how long.
5. When a supervisor orders a foot pursuit to be terminated, officers shall not continue to pursue the suspect.

D. INITIATING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The officer initiating a foot pursuit should, as soon as practical, activate their Body Worn Camera and broadcast the following information:
 - a. Unit identifier and that a foot pursuit has been initiated.
 - b. Officer location and direction of travel.
 - c. Number of suspects and description.
 - d. Any knowledge regarding the suspect's possession of weapons.
 - e. Reason for the foot pursuit.
2. Identify themselves as an officer to the fleeing suspect and order them to stop.

E. FOOT PURSUIT COORDINATION

1. The primary (initiating) officer should, as soon as practical, coordinate with assisting officers and the communication center to establish a perimeter and contain the suspects.
2. Assisting officers should respond and attempt to contain the pursued suspects.
 - a. Officers should respond to the appropriate locations of the incident based on the information provided.
3. When two or more officers are in foot pursuit, they should:
 - a. Maintain communication with one another.
 - b. Work as a team to safely contain, locate, and apprehend the suspects within the perimeter.
4. When an officer has decided to terminate a foot pursuit but has reason to believe the suspect is contained in the immediate area or in nearby buildings, the primary officer should broadcast their location, direction of travel of the suspect and where the suspect may be contained.



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5. When practical, the primary or any secondary units should make every attempt to coordinate the placement of arriving officers. If possible, a unit responding from a distance, should remain stationary and, using map software, assist with this task.

F. SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The supervisor should make every effort to ascertain sufficient information needed to take control and coordination of the foot pursuit. Supervisors should ensure that proper information is obtained from the pursuing officers.
2. Upon becoming aware of a foot pursuit, the supervisor should:
 - a. Monitor and help coordinate personnel responding to the foot pursuit as soon as possible.
 - b. Ensure the officers engaged in the foot pursuit have the appropriate resources needed (e.g., air support and K9 units).
 - c. Order the termination of a foot pursuit at any time he or she concludes that the danger to pursuing officers or the public outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension of the suspects.
 - d. Respond to the scene of a foot pursuit when feasible and necessary.
 - e. Ensure that all reporting requirements are completed by the appropriate personnel upon the conclusion of each incident.
3. A supervisor shall create a tracking software entry to document the foot pursuit.
 - a. Route the entry in accordance with departmental procedure.
 - b. Entries shall be completed within 30 days of the incident.

B. COMMUNICATION CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Upon being notified that a foot pursuit is in progress, communications personnel should immediately notify the field supervisor and ensure they are aware of the call and are provided all available information.
2. Communications personnel should carry out the following responsibilities during a foot pursuit:
 - a. Receive, record, and immediately broadcast incoming information regarding the foot pursuit, the involved officers, and the suspects.
 - b. Control all radio communications and clear the affected radio channels of all non-emergency traffic.
 - c. Coordinate and dispatch backup assistance, K9, and air support units under the direction of the field supervisor.
 - d. Patch radio channels, when appropriate, to enhance officer safety if officers broadcast a foot pursuit on the wrong channel.