



ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 2.04

TITLE: VEHICLE PURSUITS

SERIES NUMBER: 2 - OPR

SERIES TITLE: OPERATIONS

TOPICS / REFERENCE: HIGH-SPEED PURSUIT, PURSUIT POLICY, PURSUIT PROCEDURES

APPENDICES: NONE

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE / ISSUE DATE: AUGUST 2, 2006

DATE OF LAST REVISION: JULY 18, 2017

THIS ORDER REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RESCINDED

POLICY:

Vehicular pursuits of fleeing suspects can present a danger to the lives of the public, officer(s), and suspect(s) involved in the pursuit. Tactics used to stop a fleeing vehicle may be considered a use of force. It is the policy of the Rockford Police Department to regulate the manner which vehicle pursuits are undertaken and performed.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the initiation and continuation of vehicular pursuits.

These guidelines are not meant to be all-inclusive, since each incident must be dealt with on an individual basis, but are intended as broad guidelines to assist the employees and supervisors involved.

This Order is comprised of the following numbered section:

- I. DEFINITIONS**
- II. PROCEDURES**
- III. REPORTING AND REVIEWING REQUIREMENTS**

APPENDICES: NONE

I. DEFFINITIONS:

- A. Vehicular Pursuit:** A deliberate attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend a fleeing suspect who is actively attempting to elude apprehension.

B. Authorized Emergency Vehicle: A vehicle of this agency equipped with operable emergency equipment as designated by state law.

1. From the Illinois Compiled Statutes / Illinois Vehicle Code:

[\(625 ILCS 5/1-105\)](#) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 1-105)

Sec. 1-105. Authorized emergency vehicle. Emergency vehicles of municipal departments or public service corporations as are designated or authorized by proper local authorities; police vehicles; vehicles of the fire department; vehicles of a HazMat or technical rescue team authorized by a county board under Section 5-1127 of the Counties Code; ambulances; vehicles of the Illinois Department of Corrections; vehicles of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice; vehicles of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency; vehicles of the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal; mine rescue and explosives emergency response vehicles of the Department of Natural Resources; vehicles of the Illinois Department of Public Health; vehicles of the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority with a gross vehicle weight rating of 9,000 pounds or more and those identified as Highway Emergency Lane Patrol; vehicles of the Illinois Department of Transportation identified as Emergency Traffic Patrol; and vehicles of a municipal or county emergency services and disaster agency, as defined by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act.
(Source: P.A. 100-62, eff. 8-11-17.)

- C. Pursuit-Rated Vehicle:** An authorized emergency vehicle that is specially designed and equipped for use during high-speed pursuits.
- D. Primary Unit:** The police unit immediately following the suspect vehicle at a reasonable distance and that assumes primary control of the pursuit.
- E. Secondary Unit:** Any police unit that becomes involved as a backup to the primary unit and follows the primary unit at a safe distance.
- F. Trail or Trailing:** The unauthorized following of a pursuit at any distance, to include paralleling, intercepting, or tracking.
- G. Caravanning:** Direct participation in, or following of, a pursuit by emergency vehicles other than the primary and authorized secondary units.
- H. Terminate:** To abandon or abort the pursuit.
- I. Termination Point:** The location where the pursuit comes to a conclusion.
- J. Marked Emergency Police Vehicle:** Any police vehicle identifiable by decals or painted lettering of the word "Police" and/or a conspicuously placed police department seal or insignia; also equipped with flashing, oscillating or revolving warning lights and siren permanently mounted on or within the vehicle.
- K. Unmarked Emergency Police Vehicle:** Any police vehicle without distinctive identifiable markings but equipped with permanently mounted or portable flashing, oscillating or revolving warning lights and siren.

L. Special Purpose Vehicle: Any Rockford Police Department vehicle, other than a marked or unmarked squad car (sedan), normally used for patrol, crime prevention and suppression, traffic law enforcement or routine investigations:

1. Examples of Special Purpose Vehicles include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Bicycles;
 - b. Mobile Command Unit vehicles;
 - c. Bomb Unit vehicles;
 - d. Patrol Shift supervisor SUVs;
 - e. Chaplain's Division vehicles;
 - f. Evidence and Property Unit vehicles;
 - g. Squadrol vans;
 - h. Hostage Negotiation Unit van;
 - i. SWAT vehicles;
 - j. I.D. Unit vans;
 - k. Traffic Unit Supervisor SUVs;
 - l. K-9 squad cars; and
 - m. Rockford Narcotics surveillance and raid vehicles.

M. Forcible Stop Techniques:

1. **Roadblock:** A restriction or obstruction used or intended for the purpose of preventing free passage of motor vehicles on a roadway in order to effect the apprehension of a violator;
2. **Boxing In/Rolling Roadblock:** The surrounding of a violator's moving vehicle with moving pursuit vehicles which are then slowed to a stop along with the violator's vehicle;
3. **Channeling:** A form of boxing-in, or setting of conditions by emergency vehicles that directs vehicular traffic, or the suspect's vehicle, onto another roadway or into an area of limited escape. Depending on the form, this can also be considered a type of rolling roadblock.
4. **Vehicle Contact Action** (Ramming, Police Immobilization Technique - PIT maneuver):
 - a. Any action undertaken by the pursuing officer intended to result in contact between the moving police vehicle and the pursued vehicle.
5. **Heading Off:** An attempt to terminate a pursuit by pulling ahead of, behind or toward a violator's moving vehicle to force it to come to a stop; and
6. **Pursuit Termination Devices (Spike Strips):** Self-contained tire-deflating devices for deployment across the roadway.

II. PROCEDURES:

A. Initiation of Pursuit:

1. Pursuit is authorized only if the officer has a reasonable belief that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury. In general, pursuits for minor violations are discouraged;
2. The decision to initiate a pursuit must be based on the pursuing officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large;
3. Unless a greater hazard would result, a pursuit should not be undertaken if the subject(s) can be identified with enough certainty that they can be apprehended at a later time;
4. In deciding whether to initiate or continue a pursuit, the officer shall take the following into consideration:
 - a. The seriousness of the offense;
 - b. Known information on the suspect;
 - c. Road configuration (e.g. interstate, divided highway, work zone);
 - d. Physical location and population density (e.g. residential area, school zone, business district);
 - e. Existence of vehicular and pedestrian traffic;
 - f. Lighting and visibility;
 - g. Weather and environmental conditions;
 - h. The relative performance capabilities of the pursuit vehicle and the vehicle being pursued;
 - i. Officer training and experience;
 - j. Available equipment;
 - k. Speed and evasive tactics employed by the suspect;
 - l. The presence of other persons in the police and suspect vehicle;
and
 - m. Any other condition or situation that would create an unreasonable risk.
5. A pursuit should not be initiated or engaged in while providing transportation for any person, other than law enforcement officers.

B. Pursuit Operations:

1. All emergency vehicle operations shall be conducted following jurisdictional laws and related regulations;

2. Upon undertaking a pursuit, the pursuing vehicle shall activate emergency lights, sirens, and cameras, and they shall remain activated for the duration of the pursuit;
3. Upon undertaking a pursuit, the officer shall notify communications of the:
 - a. Initial purpose of the stop;
 - b. Any information concerning the use of firearms, threat of force, or other unusual hazard;
 - c. Location, direction and speed of the pursuit;
 - d. Description of the pursued vehicle, including license plate number, if known; and
 - e. Number, identity, and description of any known occupants.
4. The officer shall continuously update communications on the pursuit conditions, location, weather conditions, and presence of other traffic;
5. Communications personnel shall notify an available supervisor of the pursuit, clear the radio channel of non-emergency traffic, and relay necessary information to other officers and jurisdictions;
6. When available, the secondary unit shall immediately notify communications that they are joining the pursuit and should assume responsibility for relaying information to communications;
7. Pursuits conducted in a direction against the lawful flow of traffic on a one-way street or lane of a divided highway should be avoided unless exigent circumstances dictate otherwise;
8. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, a pursuit shall consist of no more than two police vehicles: a primary and a secondary unit:
 - a. All other personnel shall stay clear of the pursuit unless instructed to participate by a supervisor;
 - b. Caravanning and trailing is prohibited. However, officers should monitor the progress of the pursuit and be prepared to assist if directed by a supervisor;
 - c. The number of vehicles engaged in a pursuit may be adjusted to fit the situation with supervisory approval;
 - d. A supervisor who has joined in the pursuit and supervises the units shall be considered an additional unit; and
 - e. The supervisor shall consider units from other jurisdictions in determining the number of vehicles participating.
9. Whenever possible, pursuit-rated vehicles should be utilized; and
10. The primary unit shall become secondary when the fleeing vehicle comes under air surveillance or when another unit has been assigned as the primary unit.

C. Supervisory Responsibilities:

1. Supervisors are responsible for managing all vehicular pursuits to include determining whether the pursuit should continue or be terminated;
 2. When made aware of a vehicular pursuit, the appropriate supervisor shall notify communications that he or she is monitoring the pursuit and accepting supervisory responsibility;
 3. The supervisor is responsible for:
 - a. Monitoring incoming information;
 - b. Coordinating and directing activities as needed to ensure that proper procedures are used, to include ensuring that:
 - i. No more than the necessary number of units are involved;
 - ii. Where available, aircraft has been requested;
 - iii. The appropriate radio channel is being utilized; and
 - iv. Surrounding jurisdictions have been notified.
 - c. Discontinuing the pursuit when necessary.
 4. A supervisor shall respond to the termination point following a pursuit.
- D. Pursuit Tactics:**
1. All officers involved in a vehicular pursuit shall wear a seat belt;
 2. Non-involved officers shall not follow the pursuit on parallel streets unless authorized by a supervisor or when it is possible to conduct such an operation without unreasonable hazard to other vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
 3. Available patrol units having the most prominent markings and emergency lights shall be used to pursue, particularly as the primary unit. When a pursuit is initiated by other than a marked patrol unit, such unit shall disengage when a marked unit becomes available;
 4. Motorcycles should not be used for pursuits except in extremely exigent circumstances and when weather and related conditions allow. Motorcycle units shall disengage when support from marked patrol units becomes available;
 5. All intervention tactics short of deadly force such as spike strips, low speed tactical intervention techniques, PIT maneuver, and low speed channeling (with appropriate advance warning) should be used when it is possible to do so safely and when the officer utilizing such tactics has received appropriate training:
 - a. Officers shall employ only the force option that reasonably appears necessary to control the situation;
 - b. The decision to use intervention tactics shall be based on careful consideration of all facts known to the officer and should be initiated when conditions permit; and

- c. A supervisor's permission should be obtained prior to the use of intervention tactics.
 - 6. Intervention tactics should be used only when:
 - a. The officer has reason to believe the continued movement of the pursued vehicle would place others in imminent danger of serious physical injury or death; and
 - b. The apparent risk of harm, to other than the occupant of the pursued vehicle, is so great as to outweigh the apparent risk of harm involved in making the forcible stop.
 - 7. Firearms shall not be discharged from a moving vehicle; and
 - 8. Once the pursued vehicle is stopped, officers shall utilize appropriate officer safety tactics. The suspect(s) shall be taken into custody in accordance with law and agency policy, using only the amount of force reasonably necessary to effect an arrest.
- E. Termination of the Pursuit:**
- 1. The primary unit and supervisor shall continually reevaluate and assess the pursuit situation including all of the initiating factors and terminate the pursuit whenever it is reasonable to believe the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension;
 - 2. The pursuit may be terminated by the primary unit at any time;
 - 3. A supervisor may order the termination of a pursuit at any time;
 - 4. A pursuit should be terminated if the suspect's identity has been determined, immediate apprehension is not necessary to protect the public or officers, and apprehension at a later time is feasible; and
 - 5. The pursuit should be terminated if the pursued vehicle's location is no longer definitively known.
- F. Interjurisdictional Pursuits:**
- 1. The pursuing officer shall notify a supervisor and communications when it is likely that a pursuit will continue into a neighboring jurisdiction or across the county or state line. Communications shall immediately notify law enforcement in the jurisdiction being entered by the pursuit;
 - 2. When a pursuit extends into another jurisdiction, the responsible supervisor, or the primary unit if a supervisor is not available, shall determine if the other jurisdiction should be asked to assume the pursuit. The following should be considered:
 - a. The distance between the pursuing and pursued vehicles and the speed involved;
 - b. The pursuing officer's level of familiarity with the area;
 - c. The willingness and capability of the other jurisdiction to assume control of the pursuit; and

d. Communication limitations at longer distances.

- 3.** If it is determined that the control of the pursuit should be relinquished to another jurisdiction, the request shall be clearly relayed to that agency. Confirmation of their acceptance of control of the pursuit should be obtained;
- 4.** Pursuit into a bordering jurisdiction shall conform to the laws of both jurisdictions and any applicable interjurisdictional agreements. The action of officers shall be governed by policy; and
- 5.** Once a pursuit has been taken over by the law enforcement agency of another jurisdiction, the initial pursuing officers shall cease emergency driving and proceed to the termination point.

G. Pursuits from Other Jurisdictions:

- 1.** Participation in a neighboring jurisdiction's pursuit is appropriate only in response to a specific request for participation. Mere notification of the existence of a pursuit shall not be construed as a request for participation. Upon such notification, the communications center shall clarify whether this agency is being requested to assist in the pursuit;
- 2.** Prior to acceptance of a pursuit from another agency, the responsible supervisor shall determine the degree of this agency's involvement, if any, and provide the appropriate direction; and
- 3.** When the pursuit is assumed by this agency and where appropriate, the supervisor shall attempt to cancel units from the other agency.

H. Post-Pursuit Procedures:

- 1.** Whenever an officer engages in a pursuit, he or she shall file a written report on the appropriate form detailing the circumstances. This report shall be reviewed by the appropriate supervisor(s) to determine compliance with policy;
- 2.** Any pursuit that results in a fatality, personal injury, or serious property damage shall be investigated by personnel who were not directly involved in the pursuit;
- 3.** All videos of vehicular pursuits shall be reviewed following the incident;
- 4.** The department shall analyze police pursuit activity at least annually and identify any additions, deletions, or modifications warranted in departmental pursuit procedures. This analysis shall:
 - a.** Consider the following implications on the organization:
 - i.** Policy;
 - ii.** Equipment;
 - iii.** Training;
 - iv.** Philosophical approach; and
 - v.** Interjurisdictional issues.

- b. Occur even if a pursuit did not occur during the designated time period.

5. Any vehicle involved in a pursuit should be inspected before returning to service.

- I. Training:

1. Officers who drive police vehicles shall be given initial and periodic updated training in the agency's pursuit policy and in safe driving tactics; and

2. Sworn Personnel will receive training prior to using any Forcible Stop Techniques.

III. REPORTING AND REVIEWING REQUIREMENTS:

- A. All officers involved in any pursuit, even if the pursuit is terminated and the suspect is not apprehended, will leave an incident report concerning their actions:

1. Only one incident report is required from multiple officer units; and

2. The pursuing unit will leave the originals and all other units, including supervisors, will leave supplements.

- B. Vehicle pursuit incident reports will be reviewed by a supervisor following the incident report review process:

1. Supervisors will complete a pursuit report in BlueTeam following the incident report review process.

- C. Vehicle pursuit incident reports will also be reviewed by the Vehicle Pursuit Review Board (See General Order 3.20 – Review Boards).

- D. The Training Unit supervisor will be responsible for an annual analysis of vehicle pursuit incidents, to be submitted in writing to the Deputy Chief of Police, for the purpose of determining patterns or trends that could indicate training needs, equipment upgrades, and/or policy modifications.

ALL GENERAL ORDERS REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RESCINDED.

ANY MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT MAY, BY VIRTUE OF EXPERTISE OR POSITION OF FUNCTION, BE DESIGNATED TO AUTHOR OR PROVIDE SOURCE MATERIAL FOR A WRITTEN DIRECTIVE. THE OVERALL AUTHORITY TO ISSUE, MODIFY OR APPROVE WRITTEN DIRECTIVES IS DESIGNATED TO THE CHIEF OF POLICE. HOWEVER, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO ISSUE DIRECTIVES IS DELEGATED TO THE FOLLOWING.

ALL GENERAL ORDERS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY BY THE GENERAL ORDER REVIEW COMMITTEE AND WHEN NECESSARY, REVISED OR CANCELED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING WRITTEN DIRECTIVES ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL ORDER 1.10 – WRITTEN DIRECTIVES.

ALL NEW AND REVISED GENERAL ORDERS SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE CHIEF OF POLICE BEFORE ISSUE/REISSUE.

ANY EMPLOYEE WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISIONS AND/OR IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS ORDER ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT THEIR IDEAS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICT COMMANDER OR BUREAU CHIEF.

BY ORDER OF

_____ **07/18/2017**

Daniel G. O'Shea

Chief of Police