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|  | GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT | |  |
| | Department Vehicles and Equipment | | |
| | GENERAL ORDER | 606.1 | |
| Effective Date | 10/09/2025 | | |
| Authorized by: | Mark P. Sroka CHIEF OF POLICE | SIGNATURE | DATE 10/09/2025 |

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish policy and procedures governing the use of Department vehicles by on duty personnel.

2. POLICY

The Department’s police vehicles are utilized to serve the residents of the City by providing a high degree of visibility and the availability of personnel resources and equipment for rapid deployment. It is the policy of the Department to utilize both marked and unmarked vehicles as valuable tools to detect and deter crimes. The Department utilizes both types of vehicles for general patrol, traffic enforcement, and covert operations. To ensure accountability and uniformity, all personnel will strictly adhere to the guidelines and procedures outlined in this directive.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Department Vehicle

Within the context of this directive, the term “Department vehicle” refers to any motor vehicle owned by, leased, or assigned to the Gaithersburg Police Department.

3.2. Personal Patrol Vehicle (PPV)

Within the context of this directive, the term “Personal Patrol Vehicle” or “PPV” refers to any Department vehicle that is assigned for any period to a Department member for job related use and may be taken to the place of residence or other approved location while not in an “on-duty” status.

3.3. Personnel

Within the context of this directive, the term “personnel” or “employee” refers to all employees of the Gaithersburg Police Department, unless a more direct distinction is made.

4. **PROCEDURE**

4.1. **General Provisions**

- 4.1.1. Officers below the rank of Sergeant operate police vehicles that are conspicuously marked, unless an officer is issued or assigned use of an unmarked vehicle for a special assignment or purpose.
- 4.1.2. Personnel shall utilize Department vehicles' seat belts and shoulder harnesses in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- 4.1.3. All Department vehicles utilized for general patrol are registered as emergency vehicles and are equipped pursuant to the provisions of TA 21-106 and TA 22-218 with:
 - 4.1.3.1. An audible warning device (siren);
 - 4.1.3.2. Visual signals (red and blue lights); and
 - 4.1.3.3. Multi-channel mobile radio transceivers (City and County frequencies).
- 4.1.4. Department bicycles, and covert vehicles without emergency equipment, are either not equipped nor registered as emergency vehicles, therefore operators must obey all traffic laws and do not have the privileges of emergency vehicles extended to them.
- 4.1.5. Officers will not make any changes to Department vehicles, such as installing or removing equipment, markings, decals, emblems, wheel covers, etc.
- 4.1.6. The Department issues body armor to every officer and establishes requirements for its use while performing operational duties.
 - 4.1.6.1. Officers who are not required to wear their issued body armor while performing administrative duties will have their issued body armor readily available.

4.2. **Inspections and Maintenance**

- 4.2.1. Department vehicles are seen by members of our community and others as a symbol of the City. Personnel who are assigned Department vehicles must maintain them, and the equipment contained therein, in a clean condition and state of operational readiness.

- 4.2.2. Officers shall maintain the exterior and interior of the vehicles in a condition that would allow the vehicle to pass an unannounced inspection.
- 4.2.3. Personnel will wash a Department vehicle when its unclean appearance detracts from the overall look of the vehicle and may reflect unfavorably on the Department and the City.
 - 4.2.3.1. All personnel operating a Department vehicle may use the contracted car wash service one time a month.
 - 4.2.3.2. Supervisors may grant special approval for additional use of the contracted car wash service, where reasonable and necessary.
- 4.2.4. Personnel shall be responsible for the care of assigned Department vehicles and adherence to a maintenance schedule.
 - 4.2.4.1. Scheduled preventive maintenance, normally at 5000 mile intervals, will be accomplished in a timely manner.
- 4.2.5. Personnel will inspect the Department vehicle issued for their tour of duty prior to use.
 - 4.2.5.1. In accordance with General Order 601.1. Prisoner Searches and Transports before and after each transport and at the beginning of the shift, vehicles will be searched for weapons and items of potential evidence that may have been discarded from a previous transport.
 - 4.2.5.2. Deficiencies or damage shall be documented by sending an email to the Fleet Coordinator via their supervisor. Conditions that should be documented include, but are not limited to:
 - 4.2.5.2.1. New damage or damage not previously noticed;
 - 4.2.5.2.2. Malfunction of any emergency equipment;
 - 4.2.5.2.3. Vehicle lighting deficiencies that cannot be immediately corrected;
 - 4.2.5.2.4. Excessive tire wear damage;

- 4.2.5.2.5. Unsatisfactory overall cleanliness or appearance of the vehicle; and
- 4.2.5.2.6. Any condition or indication that may render the vehicle unsafe.
- 4.2.5.3. Officers shall ensure their vehicles contain, at a minimum, the following equipment:
 - 4.2.5.3.1. A first-aid kit containing an ample amount of supplies and rubber gloves;
 - 4.2.5.3.2. Road flares;
 - 4.2.5.3.3. A charged fire extinguisher;
 - 4.2.5.3.4. A tire iron; and
 - 4.2.5.3.5. An inflated spare tire.
- 4.2.5.4. If the inspection of a vehicle reveals that equipment or supplies are missing, the officer shall immediately notify his or her supervisor of the need to replenish the equipment or supplies and plan to acquire the item(s) from the Department Quartermaster or Fleet Vehicle Coordinator as soon as possible.
 - 4.2.5.4.1. If any vehicle lighting is inoperable or malfunctioning, personnel must immediately notify the Department Quartermaster or Fleet Vehicle Coordinator.
 - 4.2.5.4.2. Personnel requiring replenishments of first aid kit supplies shall contact the Department Quartermaster.
- 4.2.6. Shift supervisors will complete the Monthly Vehicle Inspection Form to include an inspection of the In-Car camera, if equipped, using the In-Car Camera System Testing Procedures (on page 2 of Monthly Vehicle Inspection Form).

5. Cameras and/or Computer Systems

- 5.1.1. The operators of Department vehicles equipped with in car camera and/or computer systems will operate them in accordance with:
 - 5.1.1.1. General Order 604.10 Mobile Data Computers for in car

computers; and

5.1.1.2. General Order 619.2 In-Car Camera Video Recording System.

5.1.2. In car camera and/or computer systems will be checked prior to each tour of duty to ensure an appropriate state of operational readiness. Personnel will verify that, at a minimum:

5.1.2.1. In car computer systems:

5.1.2.1.1. Have visible connecting cables checked and are not frayed, broken, or in need of repair; and

5.1.2.1.2. Startup properly and two way communication appears to be functioning normally.

5.1.2.2. In car camera systems:

5.1.2.2.1. Initialize properly and log the user on for use;

5.1.2.2.2. Are free of any visible damage and that the cameras are pointed in the proper directions;

6. Location Logging Parameters

6.1.1. Real-time location data is accessible through vehicle Cradlepoints and Axon Systems and is viewable by Public Safety Communications Center (PSSC) personnel and GPD supervisors on the P1 CAD via the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT).

6.1.2. Historical location data is logged in any vehicle equipped with a Cradlepoint which is powered on any time the vehicle is started.

6.1.3. Access to or review of historical data associated with a vehicle may be conducted only in connection with an authorized investigation or other legitimate operational need approved by the Chief of Police or designee.

6.1.4. Random or unsanctioned reviews of historical data are prohibited.

6.1.5. All reviews must be documented in writing.