
	GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT		
	Personal Patrol Vehicle		
	GENERAL ORDER	606.3	
Effective Date	08/23/2017		
Authorized by:	Mark P. Sroka CHIEF OF POLICE	SIGNATURE <i>Mark Sroka</i>	DATE 08/23/2017

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish policy and procedures governing the Personal Patrol Vehicle (PPV) Program to include the privilege of using an assigned PPV by officers while commuting and off duty.

II. POLICY

The Department’s Personal Patrol Vehicle (PPV) Program serves the citizens of the City by providing a higher degree of visibility and availability of personnel resources. Participation in the PPV Program is a privilege extended to personnel conditioned on satisfactory performance, available vehicles and budgetary limitations. To ensure accountability, uniformity and continuance of the privilege, participating officers agree to strictly adhere to the guidelines and procedures outlined in this directive.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Department Vehicle

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

B. Disability

Within the context of this directive, the term “disability” refers to the disability classification is applied in accordance with Worker’s Compensation Law and applicable City personnel regulations and policies.

C. Full Duty

Within the context of this directive, the term “full duty” refers to a full duty employee is able to perform all duties and meet all responsibilities required of the position to which the employee is assigned.

D. Officer

Within the context of this directive, the term “officer” is used

interchangeably with investigator, detective, or any other term that refers to a sworn member of the Gaithersburg Police Department. The term applies to both uniformed and plain clothes personnel.

E. 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 of time to a Department member.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Program Eligibility

1. Entry level officers will not be eligible to participate in the PPV program until satisfying all requirements of the field training program and demonstrating the ability to successfully perform all duties of a police officer without direct supervision. Lateral officers may be issued a PPV while in field training, upon approval of the Chief of Police.
2. Officers are not permitted to take an assigned PPV to a residence outside the State of Maryland, even if the residence is within the approved air mileage.
 - a. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, officers who would otherwise qualify may be permitted to park their PPV at an approved location within the State of Maryland.
 - b. The location must be approved in writing by the Chief of Police and be within the approved air mileage for the participating officer.
3. After July 1, 2008, a change in residence or approved location must be within 25 air miles of the corporate limits of the City of Gaithersburg in order to continue participation in the program.
4. The Chief of Police has the discretion to modify eligibility on a case-by-case basis consistent with the best interest of the City.

B. PPV Assignment & Use

1. Vehicle assignments will be made by Bureau Commanders and as approved by the Chief of Police based on work performance and other factors to include:
 - a. Seniority;

- b. Prior PPV assignments;
 - c. Disciplinary actions;
 - d. At-fault accidents;
 - e. Demonstrated ability to care for and maintain a police vehicle;
 - f. The officer's assignment within the Department; and
 - g. Collateral duties and other contributions to the agency.
2. Off duty use of an assigned PPV is allowed:
- a. Anywhere in the Montgomery County Police 6th District;
 - b. Additional off-duty use is on a case- by- case basis and approved by the appropriate Bureau Commander;
 - c. Travel to and from court and other job-related hearings or conferences;
 - d. Overtime assignments;
 - e. Travel to and from authorized training assignments;
 - f. Conducting Departmental business outside the City;
 - g. Working an approved off-duty part-time job in the City; and
 - h. Travel to and from institutions of higher learning with the specific approval of the Chief of Police.
3. Officers are permitted reasonable use to conduct personal business while traveling to and from court, their tour of duty or other authorized use so long as it is minimal and does not result in a substantial deviation from the officer's route.
4. Due to the nature and scope of their duties, command staff may have certain conditions of this policy modified, at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- a. Generally, command staff members are permitted use of unmarked vehicles within a 75-mile radius of the City of

Gaithersburg.

- b. Participating members shall respond to callbacks as may be deemed necessary.
5. The PPV will not be used to carry large or heavy loads or objects which protrude from the trunk or windows, except when required by the officer's official duties.
6. The securing of weapons in PPV's will follow General Order 600.4 Weapons.
7. Other agency-owned equipment will be removed from the passenger compartment of the PPV and secured inside the trunk of the vehicle, the officer's station locker or residence when the PPV is unattended for other than a short period of time.
8. Unattended PPVs will be locked at all times.
9. Absent exigent circumstances, only authorized agency staff are permitted to operate a PPV or handle agency-owned equipment.
10. Officers are prohibited from utilizing a PPV while engaged in any type of political activity, to include transportation to or from political rallies, caucuses, promotional events, or political fund-raisers.
11. Officers will not engage in inappropriate behavior, such as displays of affection or any type of sexual activity, while utilizing a PPV.
12. Officers will not make any changes to the PPV, such as installing or removing equipment, markings, decals, wheel covers, etc.
 - a. For any alteration, modification or installation of equipment, refer to General Order 606.1 (Department Vehicles and Equipment).
13. Officers operating a PPV will neither possess nor purchase any type of alcoholic beverage to be carried in the vehicle, except as required in the official performance of their duties. Participating officers will not utilize or park a PPV at any establishment where they intend to consume an alcoholic beverage.
14. Officers will not operate a PPV with any level of alcohol in their system or any type of drug or medication that impairs the ability to operate a motor vehicle.

15. Officers operating a PPV will monitor the police radios:
 - a. For the MCP district in which they are located; and
 - b. The City radio while within the City limits.
16. Members will utilize the police radios in a professional manner, and only for official business.
 - a. The officer will notify the Public Safety Communications Center if responding to a call or with pertinent information.
 - b. The officer will use established radio procedures to denote that they are off-duty when using the radio in that capacity.
17. Officers must relinquish marked PPVs to the Fleet Coordinator upon being placed on light duty or disability status. If available, and considering the limitations of the officer and best interests of the agency, the Chief of Police may authorize the temporary use of unmarked vehicles by officers in a light duty status.

C. Adherence to Rules/Laws

1. Officers are responsible for adhering to Department rules, obeying traffic laws and representing the Department in a professional manner at all times while operating their PPV, on and off-duty.
2. Participating officers shall acknowledge receipt of and responsibility for all agency-supplied equipment upon being assigned a PPV. Participating officers will fill out a vehicle inspection form with pictures of the current condition of their newly issued PPV to be retained by the Fleet Coordinator.
3. Officers will review this directive prior to issuance of a PPV.
4. Officers will acknowledge and report the physical appearance and mechanical condition of their issued vehicle during regular vehicle inspections, and at any time that mechanical issues or physical damage is discovered.
5. An officer's privilege may be suspended from the PPV Program, at the discretion of the appropriate Bureau Commander for substandard performance of any kind, and specifically for failing to adhere to requirements of this written directive. All suspensions from the program will be documented in writing via the appropriate Bureau Commander.

D. Response to Calls/Handling Incidents Off-Duty

1. Participating officers operating PPVs are required to respond to serious incidents or calls for service in the City that come to their attention on-view. Officer's response for serious calls via reports from citizens or monitored from the police radio should be based on their best judgment and their present condition (i.e. in uniform, out of uniform, fully equipped etc.).
2. Officers operating PPVs may respond to calls in the City that are of a less serious nature at their discretion, and will handle and clear minor incidents encountered.
3. When incidents of a more serious nature are encountered while off-duty and in the City, the officer will request an on-duty officer to respond. If no on-duty officer is available, the off-duty officer will handle the incident in accordance with established reporting procedures.

E. Transporting Civilians

1. Officers operating PPVs are responsible for the safety of passengers. When transporting passengers, participating officers will be cognizant of the dangers involved transporting civilians.
 - a. Consideration should be given to dropping off any civilian passenger in a safe area before proceeding to calls or incidents that could potentially place the civilian in danger.
 - b. Under no circumstance will an officer become involved in a pursuit situation with a civilian passenger.
2. Occupant restraints will be worn by the driver and all passengers riding in a PPV.
 - a. Infants or children required by law to be in a child safety seat shall be appropriately restrained while being transported.
 - b. Under no circumstances will a safety seated child be placed in a seating position that is airbag equipped.
 - c. Infants and children will never be left unattended in a PPV.
3. Excepting the transport of in-custody persons, or in exigent circumstances, officers will not allow civilian passengers to ride in

the rear seat of a vehicle equipped with a safety barrier.

- a. This prohibition applies to the entire rear seat area of any Department vehicle that has been specially equipped for prisoner transport whether that entire area, or merely a portion thereof, has been partitioned from the rest of the passenger area by a safety barrier.
- b. As a point of clarification, officers shall not use vehicles that are equipped in this manner to transport infants or children in any rear seating location.

F. Officer Attire

1. Participating officers operating PPVs shall be considered ready for duty at all times and shall be suitably equipped with:
 - a. A Department issued handgun or approved off-duty weapon;
 - b. At least one (1) pair of handcuffs or similar approved restraint device;
 - c. A flashlight;
 - d. Official badge and Department issued police credentials; and
 - e. Some type of attire to make them readily recognizable as police officers, such as a Department issued baseball cap, "raid jacket" and/or yellow arm band.
2. Officers and their passengers will be attired in a manner that maximizes officer safety and promotes a positive image of the Department.
 - a. Minimum acceptable attire shall consist of long pants or "Cargo type" shorts, a shirt with sleeves, and shoes or sneakers.
 - b. Officers are prohibited from wearing open-toed shoes or shoes with a heel of more than a one inch (1") while operating a PPV.

G. Care and Maintenance

1. Participating officers shall be responsible for adherence to the

maintenance schedule and for the care of issued PPVs as determined by the Fleet Coordinator.

2. Any participating officer who is away from their residence for more than seven (7) continuous days or off from work for more than ten (10) continuous days will park their assigned PPV in a secure manner at a City facility, unless otherwise approved by the appropriate Bureau Commander after consultation with the Chief of Police.
3. PPVs parked at City facilities are not for general fleet use unless specifically authorized by a supervisor. In the event that a PPV is utilized as a fleet vehicle, it will not be taken by an officer for off-duty use unless specific authorization is given by the PPV officer's Bureau Commander.
4. In the event of a shortage of police vehicles for patrol occurs, the appropriate Bureau Commander will determine which officers will be notified to return their assigned vehicle to the police facility for on-duty patrol use.

H. Administration of the P.P.V. Program

1. Daily administration of the PPV Program rests with the department's Fleet Coordinator. Duties of the Fleet Coordinator include:
 - a. Ensuring that PPVs are maintained properly and serviced in a timely manner; and
 - b. Inspecting the vehicle and all equipment prior to issuance.
2. When a PPV is initially issued to new hires, the Training Coordinator will ensure the recipient is familiar with the content of this and other directives relating to personal patrol vehicles.

I. Officer Compensation

1. Officers performing police duties while off-duty in a PPV are not eligible for overtime compensation unless expressly authorized by the appropriate Bureau Commander.