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|  | GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT | |  |
| | Escorts, Hazmat, Traffic Engineering & Traffic Ancillary Services | | |
| | GENERAL ORDER | 617.1 | |
| Effective Date | 03/16/2015 | | |
| Authorized by: Mark P. Sroka CHIEF OF POLICE | | SIGNATURE | DATE |

I. DEPARTMENT POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to provide escorts for vehicles, but only in limited circumstances, due to the inherent dangers involved with certain types of escorts and the need to commit resources from patrols.

Providing a request for a *non-emergency* escort is received in ample time to allow the Department to plan for the escort, and it is approved by a Supervisor or officer of higher rank, the Department provides escorts for the following:

- Funeral processions;
- Oversized vehicles or HAZMAT vehicles; and
- Other types of situations for which an escort by the police would be appropriate.

An *emergency* escort will be handled immediately by officer(s) and will be conducted in accordance with all traffic laws and Department policies and procedures governing due care, use of emergency equipment, and the procedures enumerated herein.

II. FUNERAL ESCORTS

A. Privileges Granted by Law

1. Funeral processions are governed by the provisions of TA 21-207.
2. The driver of a vehicle in a funeral procession is not entitled to these privileges unless the headlights of the driver's vehicle are on.
3. Officers will provide escorts for funeral processions beginning in the City limits, ending in the City limits or passing through the City limits, provided ample personnel are available to safely and adequately handle the escort, and if it has been authorized by the Shift Supervisor or officer of higher rank.
4. All requests for an escort should be made with as much advance

notice as possible (preferably 24 hours notice) and should include time, location (beginning and ending), number of vehicles and route of travel, and be forwarded to the Traffic Sergeant.

5. Officer(s) escorting funeral processions will:
 - Ensure that the funeral procession can safely enter and pass through the intersections that the procession approaches;
 - Not enter an intersection if the traffic signal facing the officer is red and the procession is not already in the intersection; and
 - Ensure that their police vehicle's headlights and emergency lights are activated (no siren) during the entire time of the escort.
6. If more than one officer is involved in the escort, communications among the officers is critical and an alternative radio channel should be used.

III. ESCORTS OF OVERSIZED VEHICLES/HAZMAT VEHICLES

A. Precautions and Procedures

1. Requests to escort oversized vehicles or vehicles carrying dangerous or hazardous materials are occasionally received and are honored, depending on destination, availability of officer(s), and authorization by a Supervisor.
2. Officers escorting such vehicles shall request additional assistance, if necessary.
3. The police vehicle's emergency lights and headlights will be activated during the entire escort.
4. An alternative radio channel should be considered.

IV. ESCORTS OF BLOOD, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES

A. Precautions and Procedures

1. Officers may be assigned an emergency delivery to a hospital or other medical facility by either Public Safety Communications Center or a Supervisor.
2. During this escort/delivery, the police vehicle's emergency equipment (including siren) shall be activated.

3. The officer making the delivery will ensure that a Supervisor is notified of this escort as soon as possible.

V. ESCORTS OF CITIZENS TO THEIR DESTINATIONS

A. Emergencies

1. Officers will not escort privately owned vehicles with their emergency equipment due to the obvious danger involved.
2. An officer involved in a situation where an occupant in a privately-owned vehicle needs emergency medical assistance, will follow the procedures below:
 - The officer will notify Public Safety Communications Center to have an ambulance respond to the officer's location and specify the nature of the illness or injury.
 - The officer will then provide emergency care until the arrival of rescue personnel.
 - An officer is permitted to transfer the injured/ill occupant of the privately-owned vehicle to the police vehicle and drive the injured/ill occupant to the hospital, if time is of the essence, and/or the officer is within close proximity to the hospital.
 - During this emergency situation, emergency equipment (including headlights and siren) will be activated.
 - The escorting officer will notify the on-duty Supervisor immediately of this type of escort/transport before it begins.
 - The officer will drive with due care, wear his/her seatbelt, and obey all traffic laws and Department policies and procedures.

VI. EMERGENCY ESCORTS OF FIRE/RESCUE APPARATUS

A. Escorts to Scene

1. Escorting ambulances or other emergency vehicles is authorized under the following circumstances:
 - *When the driver of an ambulance or fire apparatus*

responding to a call is unfamiliar with the route to the destination, and/or

- *When the emergency equipment of an ambulance or fire apparatus is inoperable.*
2. When escorting ambulances or other emergency vehicles in an emergency, emergency equipment (lights and siren) shall be activated during the escort.

VII. TRAFFIC ANCILLARY SERVICES

A. School Safety Patrol Program

1. Officers will assist school authorities in coordinating school safety patrol programs, as necessary. The Montgomery County Police Department takes the lead for the School Safety Patrol Program.
2. In the event an officer discovers a crossing guard missing from a location where one is normally posted and students need assistance to be crossed, the officer should assist students in crossing the street until the arrival of the crossing guard.
3. If an officer discovers a school safety patrol needing assistance in dealing with unusually heavy traffic, the officer should assist the school safety patrol as necessary to ensure the safety of the school, safety patrol and the safe crossing of students.
4. Officers should report any difficulties or problems they experience with crossing guards or school safety patrols to the assigned MCP School Safety Officer.

B. Participation on Traffic Related Committees

1. The Chief of Police designates members of the Department to serve on various committees related to traffic safety or transportation system planning as part of the City's Strategic Direction on traffic safety.

C. Provision of Assistance to Highway Users

1. Officers will provide assistance to motorists that is reasonable for the given situation and circumstances.
 - Assistance considered *reasonable* can range from providing direction to radioing for a tow truck to tow a disabled vehicle, to taking a motorist to get fuel, to changing a flat

tire.

- However, officers are not required to perform repairs personally and, under normal circumstances, police vehicles should not be used to "jump-start" a privately-owned vehicle.
2. Officers providing assistance to highway users will be aware of possible dangers to motorists stranded in isolated or heavily traveled areas and should take appropriate steps to reduce these dangers by taking the motorist to a safer location or by setting out flares to warn other motorists.
 3. Officers will assist a citizen locked out of his/her vehicle in the following instances:
 - If the vehicle is in a location that poses a threat to the public safety, or
 - A small child is locked in the vehicle.
 - An animal is locked in the vehicle in warm temperatures.

D. Stranded Motorists

1. In the event an officer encounters a stranded motorist who is not from the area and has no money to pay for lodging, once the vehicle is secured, the officer should provide protection to the motorist in the following manner:
 - Consider transporting the motorist to a friend's residence for shelter, assistance, etc.;
 - Consider transporting the motorist to the police facility to provide a telephone for use by the citizen(s);
 - Consider transporting the motorist to a nearby hotel or motel; and
 - If children are with the motorist and /or the motorist has non-life-threatening medical conditions, consider contacting the Crisis Center.

E. Use of Buddy Bumpers

1. An officer may use their police vehicle's "buddy bumper" to push a

disabled vehicle out of traffic. Absent the presence of exigent conditions, the officer must first have the person operating the vehicle (or its owner, if present) complete a **Consent and Waiver** form (GPD Form #66.1.1C).

- Consent and Waiver Forms will be turned in at the end of a respective officer's tour of duty in the same manner as s(he) turns in reports.

F. Requesting Tow Trucks for Motorists

1. When an officer determines that a tow truck is needed, the procedures below will be followed when making a request for the tow truck:
 - Requests will be made to Public Safety Communications Center advising of the tag number, vehicle make and model, its color, exact location, and the specific problem, if known.

VIII. OFFICERS FINDING DEBRIS/HAZARDS IN ROADWAY

A. Removal Procedures

1. Officers finding hazardous debris in the roadway shall safely remove it, if possible.
2. If the officer is unable to remove the debris or hazard or it requires specialized equipment for removal, the City of Gaithersburg Public Works Department, County Roads, or State Roads shall be notified.
3. Defects in City streets shall be reported to Public Works as soon as possible if it is a threat to the public safety, or needs immediate attention.
4. Defects in County roadways or State roadways will be reported as soon as possible to the respective agency maintaining the roadway in question, either through Public Safety Communications Center or by the officer notifying the agency.

IX. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CONTROL AND REMOVAL

A. Precautions and Procedures

1. Generally, the clean-up of hazardous materials spills/leaks will be

handled by a State-licensed contractor, under the supervision of a representative from the Environmental Protection Agency.

2. At the scene of a hazardous materials incident, the Fire Department Incident Commander will be in command of the scene and will make the request through his/her dispatcher for the clean-up assistance.
3. Prior to the arrival of the Fire/Rescue personnel, officers arriving on the scene of a hazardous materials incident will follow the below listed procedures:
 - Approach the scene from an upwind direction, if possible.
 - Move and keep people away from the scene.
 - Refrain from walking into or touching any spilled materials.
 - Avoid inhaling fumes, smoke and vapors, even if no hazardous materials are involved and do not assume that gases or vapors are harmless because of lack of smell.
 - Rescues of contaminated persons should be left to appropriately equipped rescuers.
 - By radio and/or other means, request assistance and, if at all possible, be specific as to what is needed.

X. ACTIVITIES RELATED TO TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

A. Procedures

1. As directed by the Chief of Police, members of the Department will assist City and other traffic engineering authorities by:
 - Collecting and compiling selected traffic data;
 - Conducting or assisting with the conduct of traffic surveys and/or studies;
 - Analyzing traffic collision reports and/or the selective traffic enforcement program progress report; and/or
 - Preparing special statistical reports and/or making recommendations concerning the efficient use of traffic control devices.

2. The Traffic Sergeant will ensure that the City's Traffic Engineer (and other appropriate officials) are provided copies of ACRS Reports, print-outs, and/or statistical summaries that describe or document traffic collisions resulting in a fatality(s) or serious injury(s) upon request.
3. Any complaint, suggestion, comment or hazard coming to the attention of the Department concerning engineering deficiencies will be forwarded to the appropriate agency having jurisdiction, for evaluation and/or corrective action(s).