



## GENERAL ORDER

**Number: F.1**

**Issue Date: October 2011**

**TO:** All Personnel

**SUBJECT:** Operation and Care of Department Vehicles

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to state the duties and responsibilities of members of the department regarding the operation and care of department vehicles.

### **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Annapolis Police Department that members shall operate department vehicles in a careful and prudent manner. Members shall obey all laws of the State of Maryland, General Orders, Standard Operating Procedures and any other policies of the department pertaining to such operation. Members shall set a proper example for other persons by their operation of the vehicle.

#### **I. Driving Policies**

The following regulations apply to all operators of department vehicles.

- A. Members shall possess a valid Maryland Drivers License for the class of vehicle which they operate, except when exempted by the Maryland Annotated Code.
- B. Any member whose driver's license is revoked, suspended or expired shall report this to their supervisor immediately. The report shall be in writing and shall state the reason for the revocation, suspension or expiration.
- C. All members shall carry their Maryland Drivers License with them while on duty, except when working in an undercover capacity.
- D. Members must operate department vehicles in a legal, safe, courteous and non-negligent manner. When not engaged in an emergency response, members will observe all traffic and parking laws. No one will drive, use or park department vehicles on or off-duty so as to reflect unfavorably on the department.
- E. Only authorized persons are allowed to ride in department vehicles unless or otherwise directed by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. Lieutenants and above

may grant permission for persons to ride-along as long as a record check is completed. No one with a criminal record or known psychological problem will be allowed to participate in the program. The Annapolis Police Department Agreement and Release Form must also be completed and signed. The completed and signed form will be forwarded to the Commander of the Administrative Services Division. Drivers are responsible for the behavior of any passengers.

- F. Department vehicles shall not be used to push or tow any other vehicle.
- G. All members are prohibited from operating a City vehicle while, or after consuming alcoholic beverages or under the influence of any mind altering drug.
- H. Members operating department vehicles and all passengers will use seat belts and other available occupant safety restraining devices i.e., child safety seats etc., while the vehicle is in motion.
- I. Members operating radio equipped vehicles will not transmit within 50 feet of electronic blasting areas or electronic dynamite caps. Explosives will not be transported in department vehicles. This does not apply to K-9 explosive training aides being transported to and from training sites by the APD K-9 trainer or explosive dog handlers.

## **II. Maintenance of Department Vehicles**

- A. Members shall ensure that vehicles assigned to them are properly maintained. If the vehicle is shared by more than one member, each member is held jointly responsible for the inspection, servicing and equipping of the vehicle.
  - 1. Members shall ensure that all fluid levels are normal;
  - 2. Members shall ensure that tires have adequate tread and are properly inflated;
  - 3. Members shall ensure that the emergency bar lights, siren, all headlights, brake lights, turn signals, four-way flashers, and windshield wipers are working properly;
  - 4. Members shall ensure that both the interior and exterior of the vehicle are clean.
  - 5. Members shall ensure that any defects, damage or loss of equipment are reported.
- B. Any maintenance problems shall be reported to the officer's supervisor and to Fleet Maintenance. If personnel from fleet maintenance are not available and the maintenance problem constitutes a safety hazard, upon the supervisor's authorization the vehicle shall be taken out of service, until the maintenance problem has been resolved.
- C. If any defect, damage, or loss of equipment is discovered, the operator will report this to their supervisor prior to placing the vehicle in service. If the defects are such that further operation of the vehicle might cause greater damage, the vehicle will not be moved and an Administrative report will be written explaining the damage. Any

unreported defect, damage or loss after the vehicle has been inspected and placed in service will be considered to have occurred during the tour of duty of the reporting member. It is important that all employees assigned to operate department vehicles make careful, daily inspections for any defect, damage or absence of equipment before placing the vehicle in service.

- D. If a mechanical defect occurs while a vehicle is being operated, the operator will immediately notify their immediate supervisor. If the defect is such that further operation is unsafe, or might cause greater damage, the vehicle will not be moved. Vehicles that cannot be moved will be towed to either the department garage or a designated repair facility. If the designated repair facility has a tow truck, it shall be used. If no tow truck is available from the designated facility, one of the tow companies which has tow contracts with the City will be used. Vehicle damage that does not affect the efficient and safe operation of the vehicle will be reported, however, the vehicle will be kept in service until scheduled for repairs. In all instances an Administrative Report will be written indicating the circumstances of the damage. The report will be forwarded to the member's immediate supervisor.
- E. The supervisor will indicate on the member's Administrative Report whether any further action is necessary and then date initial/sign the report.
- F. Damage that occurs to a vehicle requires an Administrative Report by the officer and a City of Annapolis, Maryland Property Damage Report completed by the supervisor. The type of damage includes but is not limited to a prisoner damaging the vehicle, or when returning to your vehicle after answering a call for service and the vehicle window(s) is smashed/broken out.
- G. The City of Annapolis, Maryland Property Damage Report and/or Administrative Report will be reviewed as outlined in section IV of this policy.

### **III. Operation and Use of Department Vehicles**

- A. Members shall thoroughly inspect the exterior and interior of their assigned vehicle prior to the beginning and end of their tour of duty. The interior inspection shall include, but is not limited to the glove box, floors, the area beneath all seats, and the trunk Refer to **General Order C.18**.
- B. All trash shall be removed and discarded. Any weapons, CDS, or other contraband, and other miscellaneous property discovered during the inspection shall be reported in writing to the member's supervisor detailing the description of the recovered item(s), the vehicle from which the item was recovered, and the location of the item within the vehicle. All such recovered items shall be properly tagged, logged, and placed into the Property Section.
- C. Prior to the beginning of their tour of duty, members shall ensure that their assigned vehicle has a functional spare tire and jack, a box of flares and any other equipment as required by policy. All deficiencies, defects in these areas shall be reported to the member's supervisor and the vehicle shall be restocked.

- D. All patrol vehicles will remain in their assigned posts unless authorized by the Watch Commander or Platoon Supervisor. Exceptions include but are not limited to being dispatched to a call for service, responding to a request for emergency assistance from another officer or a vehicle pursuit.
- E. Police vehicles shall not leave the City limits except when involved in a vehicle pursuit, when authorized by a supervisor or when operated by a supervisor, detective or officer working in an undercover capacity.
- F. Police vehicles shall not be dispatched for the purpose of providing members with transportation to and from work unless specifically authorized by the member's supervisor.
- G. Civilians shall not accompany members in their assigned department vehicles unless: participating in a ride-along program authorized by the Chief of Police, requesting immediate police assistance such as a bank escort, the civilian is a victim/witness or suspect of a crime being investigated, the civilian is in custody of an officer, or when specifically authorized by the member's supervisor. The operator of the vehicle shall always advise Communications of their post number, location, starting point, destination, and beginning and ending mileage when transporting a civilian. Exceptions include when functioning in an undercover capacity.
- H. When leaving the department vehicle, operating members shall take their portable radio with them and shall call in and out of service, except when functioning in an undercover or administrative capacity.
- I. When leaving the department vehicle, the operating member shall ensure that it has been locked and is properly secured. Only in extreme emergency situations should this ever be avoided. Such a practice will prevent the theft of the vehicle and equipment as well as prevent vandalism and tampering which could threaten the safety of the member.

#### **IV. Supervisor's Responsibility**

Supervisors in all levels of command are held responsible for the periodic inspection of department vehicles to ensure compliance with all requirements concerning vehicles and equipment. Supervisors will conduct both scheduled and unscheduled inspections of all vehicles in their command. At least one formal, documented inspection will be performed each month. This inspection shall be documented on the Department Inspection Form.

#### **V. Collisions Involving Departmental Vehicles**

- A. The operator of any department vehicle involved in a collision must report the collision immediately to his or her supervisor. The supervisor will then investigate the collision, or assign the investigation to another officer who is also in a supervisory capacity or to a member of the Traffic Safety Unit. Refer to **General Order E.2**. Photographs of the collision will be taken.
- B. The operating member shall provide the investigating supervisor or member all necessary information for the completion of the investigation and collision report.

- C. A member shall report in writing any injury sustained by them in the collision to their immediate supervisor at the time which the injury is initially discovered. The member will complete a City of Annapolis Employee First Report of Injury. If the member is incapacitated, the Employee First Report of Injury will be completed by the supervisor.
- D. Each member of the department involved in an automobile collision while operating a department vehicle shall submit an Administrative Report, detailing all facts of the collision, to their immediate supervisor prior to the end of their tour of duty, unless specifically exempted by the supervisor
- E. The investigating supervisor/member's supervisor shall conduct an investigation to determine fault. The investigating supervisor/member's supervisor shall complete a MAARS report, Vehicle Accident or Damage Report and a Supervisor Accident Investigation Report. If the member was injured the investigating supervisor/members supervisor shall also complete a Supervisor's First Report of Injury.
- F. Upon the completion of the investigation, a summary of the collision, determination of fault will be submitted on an Administrative Report by the investigating supervisor. After receiving all of the reports, the supervisor of the officer involved will make the necessary discipline recommendations. All reports will be forwarded to the section supervisor/commander (Vehicle Accident or Damage Report, etc.). If the collision investigation is extensive and may not be complete by the end of the supervisor's tour of duty, the following reports **still** need to be submitted by the end of the supervisor's tour of duty:
1. Vehicle Accident or Damage Report;
  2. Supervisor Accident Investigation Report; and
  3. If injuries, Employee First Report of Injury and Supervisor's First Report of Injury
- G. The section supervisor/commander will then review all reports to ensure that department policies were followed. Each section supervisor/commander will then date and initial/sign the supervisor's Administrative Report before forwarding it to the Division commanders with any comments.
- H. The Division Commander will review all reports and supervisor's/commander's comments to ensure that department policies were followed. The Division Commander will then date and initial/sign the supervisor's Administrative Report before forwarding it to the Chief of Police.
- I. The Chief of Police will review all departmental collision reports; supervisor/command comments and either concur or not concur with the comments. The Chief of Police will date and initial/sign the report and forward a copy to the Administrative Services Division and to the Internal Affairs Section.
- J. At any stage of the Administrative Review process the section supervisor/commander, division and/or the Chief of Police may initiate an investigation if department policies were not followed.

- K. If a member of another unit/section conducts the investigation, the involved member's supervisor is responsible for completing all the internal City forms, as well as any disciplinary recommendation.
- L. The Administrative Services Division will ensure that a copy of the entire package of reports are forwarded to Risk Management and ensure that Fleet Maintenance also receives copies of all Departmental Accident Reports.
- M. All members involved in a collision while operating a department vehicle shall be subject to the Maryland Vehicle Law.

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Michael A. Pristoop  
Chief of Police

References
1. Accreditation Standards 41.3.3, 53.1.1, 81.2.5 2. General Order C.18 Prisoner Transport, E.2 Collision Investigation by the Traffic Safety Unit

**Revision:** This General Order replaces General Order F.1 Care and Operation of Vehicles dated November 2008.