



Approved:  
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Subject:

# 281. Foot Pursuits

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## 281.1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines on the initiation and continuation of the pursuit of suspects on foot.

## 281.2: POLICY

**It is the policy of the Albany Police Department to exercise good judgment in the decision to initiate or continue a foot pursuit, weighing the necessity of capturing a fleeing suspect versus the safety of the public, officers, and the suspect.**

## 281.3: PURSUIT INITIATION

Officers may be justified in initiating a foot pursuit of any individual who the officer reasonably believes is about to engage in, is engaging in, or has just engaged in criminal activity. The decision to initiate a foot pursuit of a suspect must consider the safety of the public, the officer, and the suspect.

When deciding whether to initiate a foot pursuit, officers should consider the following:

- a. Mere flight by a person who is not suspected of criminal activity shall not serve as justification for engaging in an extended foot pursuit without the development of reasonable suspicion regarding the individual's involvement in criminal activity or wants by law enforcement;
- b. Risk to officers or the public;
  - 1) No officer or supervisor shall be subject to discipline or criticism for the decision not to initiate or to terminate a foot pursuit because of perceived risk.
- c. Other options which may be available to apprehend the fleeing suspect. These may include:
  - 1) Establishing a perimeter;
  - 2) Saturation of the area with law enforcement officers, including assistance from other agencies;

- 3) Police Canine search;
- 4) Thermal imaging or other sensing technology;
- 5) Drone deployment;
- 6) Apprehension of the suspect at a later time if the identity of the suspect is known or there is information available that would likely allow for later apprehension, and the need to immediately apprehend the suspect does not appear to reasonably outweigh the risk in continuing the pursuit.

### 281.3.1: PURSUIT TERMINATION

When reasonably practical, officers should **discontinue** foot pursuits when:

- a. Ordered by a supervisor to terminate the foot pursuit;
- b. The availability of assistance from other officers is hindered by loss of communication with dispatch or other personnel;
- c. The officer is unsure of their location and direction of travel;
- d. The officer is pursuing multiple suspects and it is not reasonable to believe the officer would be able to control the suspect(s) should a confrontation occur;
- e. The physical condition of the officer renders them incapable of controlling the suspect if apprehended;
- f. The suspect enters a building, structure, confined space, isolated area or dense or difficult terrain, and there are insufficient officers to provide backup and containment;
- g. The officer becomes aware of unanticipated or unforeseen circumstances that unreasonably increases the risk to officers or the public;
- h. The officer loses possession of their firearm or other essential equipment;
- i. The officer or a third party is injured during the foot pursuit, requiring immediate assistance, and there are no other emergency personnel available to render assistance;
- j. The suspect's location is no longer **reasonably** known;
- k. The officer's ability to safely continue the foot pursuit is **substantially** impaired by inclement weather, darkness, or other environmental conditions.

### 281.4: RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility of Albany Police Department personnel involved in or assisting with foot pursuits is the safety of officers and the public. If any member involved in or assisting with a foot pursuit becomes aware

of a previously unforeseen or unanticipated hazard, they should communicate that hazard as soon as practical to other involved personnel.

#### **281.4.1: INITIATING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Unless relieved by another officer or supervisor, the initiating officer shall be responsible for the following during foot pursuits:

- a. Coordinating the progress of the pursuit and containment;
- b. Broadcasting via radio, at a minimum, the following information:
  - 1) Call sign identifier;
  - 2) Location and direction of travel;
  - 3) Reason for the pursuit;
  - 4) Number of suspects;
  - 5) Description of suspect including name, if known;
  - 6) Any known hazards, such as if the suspect is known or believed to be armed;
- c. If the pursuing officer is unable to promptly and effectively broadcast this information, the foot pursuit should be terminated and alternative efforts for containment should be considered.
- d. Notify the Communications Center upon termination of the pursuit of their location and status of the pursuit (e.g., suspect in custody, suspect lost, etc.).
- e. Direct further actions as necessary, such as the securing of vehicles and/or equipment, requests for medical aid, or other assistance.

#### **281.4.2: ASSISTING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a. Whenever any officer announces that they are in a foot pursuit, all other officers should minimize non-essential radio traffic to permit the involved officer(s) maximum access to the radio channel.
- b. Any officers who are in a position to intercept a fleeing suspect, or who can assist the primary officer with the apprehension of the suspect, shall act reasonably and in accordance with department policy, based upon available information and their own observations.
- c. Officers arriving to assist in apprehension of a suspect at the termination of a foot pursuit should consider relieving the primary pursuing officer as necessary.

#### **281.4.3: SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a. Upon becoming aware of a foot pursuit, the supervisor shall make every reasonable effort to ascertain sufficient information necessary to direct responding resources and to take command, control and coordination of the foot pursuit.

- b. The supervisor should respond to the area whenever possible; the supervisor does not, however, need to be physically present to exercise control over the pursuit. The supervisor shall continuously assess the situation in order to ensure the foot pursuit is conducted within established department guidelines.
- c. The supervisor shall terminate the foot pursuit when the danger to pursuing officers or the public appears to unreasonably outweigh the objective of immediate apprehension of the suspect.
- d. Upon apprehension of the suspect, the supervisor shall, if available, promptly proceed to the termination point to direct the post-foot pursuit activity.

#### **281.4.4: COMMUNICATIONS CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Upon being notified or becoming aware that a foot pursuit is in progress the dispatcher is responsible for:

- a. Clearing the radio channel of non-emergency traffic;
- b. Coordinating communications of the involved officers;
- c. Broadcasting pursuit updates as well as other pertinent information as necessary;
- d. Ensuring that a supervisor is notified of the foot pursuit;
- e. Notifying and coordinating with other involved or affected agencies as practical;
- f. Logging all relevant pursuit updates and information in CAD.

#### **281.5: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- a. The initiating officer shall complete the appropriate crime/arrest reports documenting, at a minimum:
  - 1) Date and time of the foot pursuit;
  - 2) Initial reason for and circumstances surrounding the foot pursuit;
  - 3) Course and approximate distance of the foot pursuit;
  - 4) Whether a suspect was apprehended as well as the means and methods used;
  - 5) Any property or equipment damage;
  - 6) Name of the supervisor handling the incident.
- b. Assisting officers taking an active role in the apprehension of the suspect should complete supplemental reports as necessary or as directed.

- c. The supervisor reviewing the report will make a determination whether the pursuit appears to be in compliance with department policy or if additional review and/or follow-up is needed.