

AURORA POLICE DEPARTMENT

DIRECTIVE MANUAL

08.26 RENTAL VEHICLE THEFT INVESTIGATIONS

Approved By:	Todd Chamberlain, Chief of Police
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Associated Policy:	DM 08.10, 8.37, 6.11
References:	N/A
Review Authority:	Professional Standards and Training Deputy Chief and APD Legal Advisor(s)

8.26.01 PURPOSE

This directive provides guidance for investigating rental vehicle thefts. The goal is to reduce liability and improve the efficiency of police response to these cases. The primary objective is to reduce the department's liability associated with high-risk vehicle recoveries. It also aims to avoid serving as a recovery entity for rental companies that only seek the return of their property but do not cooperate with investigations by providing the required documentation. This will ensure a more efficient and legally sound approach to handling cases of rental vehicle theft.

8.26.02 SCOPE

This directive applies to all members of the Aurora Police Department.

8.26.03 DEFINITIONS

Rental Vehicle: Any motor vehicle owned by a company or individual and provided for temporary use through a written rental contract.

Rental Agreement: A written contract between the rental company and renter that outlines the terms of use, rental rate, return date, and penalties.

8.26.04 POLICY

It is the policy of this Department to ensure the consistent, thorough, and timely handling of all reported motor vehicle thefts involving rental vehicles. Members shall recognize that rental vehicles present unique investigative considerations due to contractual obligations, delayed reporting, and potential civil disputes. Accordingly, members will assess each incident carefully to determine whether a criminal offense has occurred and take appropriate enforcement action. Rental vehicles will no longer be automatically entered as stolen unless the rental company provides the necessary documentation.

For motor vehicle thefts that do not involve rental vehicles, see [DM 06.11 - Preliminary and Criminal Investigations](#), [DM 08.10 - Reports](#), and [DM 08.37 - Case Intake Procedures](#).

8.26.05 PROCEDURE

When responding to a report of a rental vehicle theft, members will first inquire whether the rental company intends to pursue prosecution if the individual responsible is identified and the member has probable cause. If the company agrees to pursue charges, the following documentation will be required:

1. A copy of the rental agreement.

2. Identification of the individual who rented the vehicle.
3. Payment information related to the rental.
4. Documentation of attempts made by the rental company to contact the renter (phone calls, emails, registered letters). Any documented attempt is acceptable.
5. Additional information that may be requested, though not required, includes any information regarding the rental company's attempts to recover the vehicle (e.g., checking addresses where the vehicle may be located, any GPS tracking capability).

If the rental company provides the documentation and agrees to prosecute, sworn members:

1. Will complete a preliminary investigation as outlined in [DM 06.11 - Preliminary and Criminal Investigations](#).
2. Will enter the vehicle into NCIC/CCIC as stolen and complete the necessary offense report as outlined in [DM 08.10 - Reports](#).

If the rental company provides the documentation, but does not wish to press charges, and merely seeks the return of the vehicle:

1. The sworn member will complete a preliminary investigation and author a report, but will not enter the vehicle as stolen in NCIC/CCIC.

If there is an allegation of a crime, but not all the required documentation is provided:

1. The sworn member will create a general offense report and forward it to the district criminal investigations section for follow-up.
2. The reporting party will be informed that the vehicle will not be entered as stolen until the necessary documentation is supplied.

If there is no crime alleged and/or the situation is a civil matter only, the member will close the call with MDC notes.