

	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER</p>	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	<b>5.20</b>
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		5/21/19	11/23/19
<p>Order Title:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWING MOTOR VEHICLES</b></p>		Accreditation Standard: POSTC: 2.5.17b, 2.5.18b,	Section
		5	
		Section Title	
		PATROL FUNCTIONS	
Rescinds: 2.3.10		<b>Armando J. Perez, Chief of Police</b>	

*This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting*

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and procedures to the Bridgeport Police Department for the towing of motor vehicles.

## II. POLICY

Bridgeport Police Officers shall tow motor vehicles from highways or other areas when such vehicles are determined to be abandoned or inoperable based its condition or the status of the operator.

## III. PROCEDURE

### A. Accident Scenes

1. Under normal circumstances, officers shall request a tow truck from the rotating approved tow list to respond within a reasonable amount of time. A reasonable time shall be that time as determined by the officer on scene accounting for such factors as:
  - a. Time of day
  - b. Road/weather conditions
  - c. Effect on area traffic
  - d. Presence of additional hazards; etc.
2. If the wrecker does not respond within a reasonable time, the next rotation wrecker on the list will be requested.

3. All vehicles involved in fatal or serious accidents that are registered will be towed by Accident Tow List and impounded for evidentiary and inspection purposes.
4. All vehicles involved in fatal or serious accident that are not registered will be towed by the Truck 1 Tow List and impounded for evidentiary and inspection purposes.

**B. Recovered Stolen/Wanted Vehicles**

1. Where a stolen or wanted vehicle used in connection with a criminal offense is recovered, the investigating officer will:
  - a. If determined to be necessary and feasible, arrange for the vehicle to be processed at the scene for evidence.
  - b. If the vehicle cannot be processed at the scene or must be retained as evidence, it may be towed to the police department and stored in a secure location.
2. Towing shall be performed by Truck 1 rotation wrecker service.
3. Impounding and inventory shall be performed in accordance with the guidelines of 6.05, Evidence and Property Control.

**C. Snow Tows**

1. Vehicles may be towed pursuant to Bridgeport City Ordinance 10.12.100 as it relates to the plowing and/or removal of snow and ice, and to prevent the obstruction of traffic in time of snow and/or ice accumulation upon the public streets of the city, as declared by the mayor.
2. The removal of said vehicles shall be made only after:
  - a. A request has been made by the Bridgeport Department of Public Works to have the vehicles removed for actual snow removal or sanding operations, or
  - b. In effect during a declared parking ban established by the Office of the Mayor.
3. Officers will make an attempt to contact the owner to have the vehicle removed prior to towing.
4. All vehicles towed for snow-ban violations shall be ticketed.

#### **D. Emergency/Hazardous Situations**

1. In cases of major storms or incidents resulting in downed wires, trees, etc., or other hazardous situations, vehicles may be towed (Truck 1 List) if the owner is unavailable and circumstances dictate immediate removal.

#### **E. Illegally Parked Vehicle**

1. If a vehicle is blocking a private driveway or school access, the officer will attempt to make contact with the owner to move vehicle within reasonable time.
2. If unsuccessful, the vehicle may be towed or impounded (Truck 1 List) utilizing the wrecker rotation system.
3. All vehicles towed for illegal parking violations shall be ticketed in accordance with 5.09, Traffic Enforcement.
4. Vehicles parked in fire lanes will not normally be towed unless creating an immediate hazard.
5. Officers receiving a report of an improperly parked vehicle on private property will investigate to determine if the vehicle is stolen or imposes a hazardous condition. If the vehicle is not stolen, creating a hazardous condition, or involved in a criminal matter the officer will advise the complainant that they need to call their own wrecker to have the vehicle removed from the property.

#### **F. Motor Vehicle Stops**

1. Certain offenses prohibit violators from legally driving their cars from the scene. These offenses include, but are not limited to:
  - a. DWI
  - b. Operating under license/registration suspension, revocation
  - c. Misuse of plates
  - d. Unregistered MV
  - e. Uninsured MV
  - f. Operating without a license
  - g. Canceled registration due to insurance lapse
  - h. Equipment violations constituting reckless driving.
2. A vehicle will be towed (Truck 1 List) during a motor vehicle stop if:
  - a. The operator is taken into custody and no licensed person is on scene who has direct/indirect permission of owner to operate the vehicle.

- b. The vehicle is illegally parked or in hazardous location and cannot be moved by an operator on scene.
- c. The vehicle cannot be legally moved, e.g. registration canceled, suspended, etc.

#### **G. Safety Considerations**

1. Officers should remain, if feasible, with a disabled or hazardous vehicle until assistance has arrived and the vehicle has been towed.
2. The officer shall offer to assist the operator and/or occupant(s) in securing transportation to a reasonably safe location. Officers may transport the occupants after notifying the shift Supervisor. Officers shall note the disposition of the operator/occupants in the CAD record.
3. Officers will not provide mechanical assistance to a motorist such as changing tires unless the activity is cleared with the supervisor.

#### **H. Reporting**

1. The towing officer will provide dispatch with the registration number and state, Vehicle Identification Number, year, make and model of the vehicle being towed.
2. Dispatch personnel will enter the information into the CAD system.
3. Dispatch personnel will make an entry into the Criminal Justice information System (CJIS) Tow File of all vehicles towed by the department.
4. The towing officer will provide dispatch with information they deem pertinent to the towing of the vehicle (i.e. need for a flatbed, specialized equipment, how best to access the scene, etc.)
5. Dispatch will arrange and coordinate with the tow company for the proper response to the location. Dispatch will ascertain a tow company's response time in those instances when a non-police authorized tow company is being used to conduct the tow. Dispatch will update the towing officer if there is a delay or other circumstances dictate.
6. The towing officer is responsible for completing and verifying the information contained in the Tow/Abandoned Vehicle record log.
7. The towing officer will assure that notification is made to other affected law enforcement agencies that have primary jurisdiction over the location where

the vehicle was towed from if the owner/ operator or person having control of the vehicle has not been informed of the towing.