



# DEPARTMENT VEHICLES

**General Order Number: 6.2**

**Effective Date: December 17, 2024**

## **POLICY:**

All Brookline Police Department personnel who operate department motor vehicles will comply with safe driving procedures herein, with particular attention paid to procedures for responding to calls for police service or engaging in pursuits. Emergency warning lights and siren shall be used in a manner consistent with safe performance of the police function and the safety of the public and police personnel.

Police vehicles are conspicuous symbols of authority on the streets, and the actions of police drivers are observed by many. This places the responsibility on each police driver to set a visible example of good driving behavior and habits.

Motor vehicle crashes are one of the most common causes of serious bodily injury and death to law enforcement officers in the performance of their duties. Officers are strongly encouraged to wear their seat belts at all times while operating department vehicles.

## **Chapter 89, Section 7-B, of the Massachusetts General Laws:**

"The driver of a vehicle of a fire, police, or recognized protective department, and the driver of an ambulance shall be subject to the provisions of any statute, rule, regulation, ordinance, or bylaw relating to the operation or parking of vehicles, except that a driver of fire apparatus while going to a fire or responding to an alarm, or the driver of a police or a recognized protective department or the driver of an ambulance, in an emergency and while in performance of a public duty or while transporting a sick or injured person to a hospital or other destination where professional medical services are available, may drive such vehicle at a speed in excess of the applicable speed limit if he exercises caution and due regard under the circumstances for the safety of persons and property, and may drive such vehicle through an intersection of ways contrary to any traffic signs or signals regulating traffic at such intersection if he first brings such vehicle to a full stop and then proceeds with caution and due regard for the safety of persons and property, unless otherwise directed by a police officer regulating traffic at such intersection."

"The driver of any such approaching emergency vehicle shall comply with the provisions of Mass. Gen. Law, Chap. 90, Sec 14, when approaching a school bus which has stopped to allow passengers to alight or board from the same, and whose red lamps are flashing."

## **PROCEDURES:**

1. **SAFE DRIVING OF POLICE VEHICLES:** The driver of any department vehicle shall operate said vehicle in a reasonable and safe manner, exercising due caution and judgment. They shall operate the department vehicle in compliance with the motor vehicle laws and traffic regulations of the Commonwealth.

***WHEN IN AN ACTUAL PURSUIT OR WHEN RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY, THEY SHALL STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE DRIVING PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED FOR THE OPERATION OF EMERGENCY VEHICLES, MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW, CHAPTER 89, SECTION 7B.***

2. **LICENSE REQUIREMENTS:** No person shall operate a department vehicle of any kind unless they have a valid license to operate such vehicle.
3. **AUTHORITY TO OPERATE:** No person shall operate a department vehicle without receiving orders or permission from a superior officer authorized to give such orders or permission.
4. **PASSENGERS:** No person shall be permitted to be an occupant or to ride as a passenger in a department vehicle, except when necessary for the performance of a proper police duty, unless otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee.
5. **SEATBELTS - POLICE OFFICERS:** All officers are strongly encouraged to wear seatbelts at all times. The use of seatbelts can have a significant effect in reducing the number of deaths and the severity of injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents. Seatbelts also assist officers in maintaining proper control of their vehicles during pursuit or emergency high speed operations. In addition, officers using seatbelts during the deployment of the air bag in a collision will be held in a position to receive maximum protection. All officers using department vehicles are strongly encouraged to use occupant safety restraining devices (safety seatbelts) during emergency responses, during pursuits, and when their speed exceeds the normal speed limit, for all but for the briefest of times.
6. **SEATBELTS - CIVILIANS:** In all cases, civilian passengers **must** wear safety seatbelts when riding and/or a passenger in a department vehicle.
7. **SICK AND INJURED PERSONS:** Sick and injured persons are to be transported by ambulance. Police officers are first responders in many instances, and as such will provide what assistance they can to sick or injured persons until the ambulance arrives.

8. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR VEHICLE:** Any member of the Department, who is assigned as the operator of a department vehicle, shall be responsible for the instant serviceability of the vehicle assigned to their use.

Officers who operate police vehicles shall at the beginning of their tour of duty inspect the vehicle assigned to them. Failure to inspect the condition of the vehicle upon receipt by the member shall be regarded as neglect of duty. Superior Officers shall periodically spot check vehicles.

Officers who operate vehicles are to search their assigned vehicle at the beginning of the tour of duty for the presence of weapons, contraband, or other items, such as evidence. All officers shall conduct a similar search before and after transporting prisoners.

9. **CLEANLINESS OF VEHICLES:** All members of the department shall keep the interiors of department vehicles clean of litter. Any member who is assigned to a vehicle that they find to be littered shall notify their superior officer.
10. **PLACING OF ARTICLES IN TRUNKS:** No member of the department is to place any article in the trunk of a department vehicle that may cause damage to radio equipment, electrical wiring, or other authorized equipment. When in doubt, officers should request permission from a superior officer before transporting items in the trunk. Articles that might cause damage if placed in the trunk should be transported by wagon.
11. **JUMP STARTING ANOTHER VEHICLE:** No department vehicle shall be used for "jump starting" a vehicle.
12. **TOWING OF DEPARTMENT VEHICLES:** Towing of department vehicles shall be done only by towing facilities provided by the department, unless otherwise decided by the Commanding Officer - Platoon on Duty.
13. **OPERATING DEPARTMENT VEHICLE WITH A FLAT TIRE OR MECHANICAL DEFECT:** No member shall operate a department vehicle with a flat tire or an apparent mechanical defect. In the event a department vehicle sustains a flat tire, the operator of the vehicle shall notify the proper personnel. If necessary, the spare from another vehicle may be used. Officers shall note that a flat has been sustained in the Larimore Vehicle and Equipment check, and shall also note the vehicle from which a spare was taken. Any mechanical defects shall be noted in the Larimore Vehicle and Equipment check. Management of the Brookline Police Department marked, unmarked, and undercover vehicle fleet is ultimately the responsibility of the Deputy Superintendent-Traffic Division.

- 14. OPERATING DEPARTMENT VEHICLE WITH SERIOUS MECHANICAL DEFECT.** Officers shall immediately notify their supervisor upon discovery of a mechanical defect which would affect the safe operation of the vehicle or could lead to vehicle damage. A superior officer, upon receipt of such notification, shall remove the vehicle from service for evaluation and repair, if necessary.
- 15. UNATTENDED POLICE VEHICLES:**
- A.** The operator of a department vehicle shall lock the ignition and remove the keys from their vehicle upon leaving the vehicle.
  - B.** When leaving a department vehicle unattended for more than a brief period, the doors of such vehicle shall be locked.
  - C.** In responding to a call where the reasonable potential for arrest exists, the rear doors of marked cruisers may be left unlocked.
- 16. SECURING VEHICLE AT END OF TOUR OF DUTY:** At the end of their tour of duty, officers are to make certain that their vehicles are locked, windows rolled up, and lights, radio and ignition are turned off.
- 17. ACCIDENTS INVOLVING DEPARTMENT VEHICLES:** All accidents involving department vehicles can only be investigated by a superior officer. The following procedures shall be followed by all officers.
- A.** Immediately contact the Dispatcher, who shall assign a superior officer to the accident scene.
  - B.** Do not move vehicles prior to the arrival of the superior officer if personal injury or substantial property damage has occurred.
  - C.** Request appropriate assistance (Ambulance, Fire, etc.).
  - D.** Assist the injured.
  - E.** Traffic Officers shall cooperate and assist in the investigation as requested by a superior officer.
  - F.** The investigating superior officer shall conduct a thorough investigation of the accident and shall:
    - 1.** Obtain photographs of the vehicles involved and the scene.
    - 2.** Issue citations if necessary.

- G. The officer operating the department vehicle shall submit a complete report to their Commanding Officer, who shall forward this report to the Chief of Police.
  - H. The superior officer assigned shall submit a report to their Commanding Officer. They shall set forth their findings and recommendations relative to the responsibility or negligence on the part of the operator(s).
  - I. The department vehicle shall be removed from service and taken to the DPW fleet maintenance facility to be checked out by the DPW. Fleet Maintenance personnel must clear the vehicle in order for it to be placed back into service.
18. **USE OF SIRENS AND BLUE LIGHTS:** Officers operating Department vehicles are to activate sirens and blue lights as necessary and appropriate. Officers are to exercise good judgment in the use of sirens when approaching nursing facilities and hospitals, having regard for established quiet zones.
19. **PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS:** All marked vehicles have a public address system capability which may be used to broadcast emergency messages or to hear radio transmissions while out of the vehicle for an extended period. Care must be taken that appropriate volume levels are maintained.
20. **ALLEY LIGHTS AND SPOT LIGHTS:** All marked cruisers are equipped with spot lights and alley lights. Officers are to use these lights as appropriate, but in doing so must make certain that their use does not create a hazard by blinding or interfering with the vision of operators of approaching vehicles.
21. **HAZARDOUS WARNING LIGHTS (EMERGENCY FLASHERS):** When stopping a cruiser in a potentially hazardous location, operators are to activate their emergency flashers and any other lights necessary to maximize the vehicle's visibility.
22. **RESPONSE TO CALLS FOR SERVICE:** **A response level is inappropriate when the response itself creates a greater danger to the safety of the community than the situation being responded to.** The purpose of the following procedures is to provide guidelines for the evaluation of the urgency of a police response to a given situation. While these policies and procedures are designed to guide an officer in the manner in which they will respond to a call, it also serves as a guide for the dispatcher when assigning calls and response priorities. For the purpose of this policy, consistent with the law, the prioritization levels shall be defined as follows:
- A. **LEVEL ONE RESPONSE:** Involves the use of both emergency blue lights and siren. This response should be made as quickly as possible, and should be made by the closest units in a quick but safe manner, taking into consideration the traffic conditions, the safety of the officers and the general public. Units

responding to Level One calls should be attentive to their radio, as the situation may quickly change to a more or less serious incident.

A Level One Response is indicated when an officer is needed at the scene and an immediate response is essential. Conditions that will warrant a Level One Response include:

1. Any apparent threat to life or danger of serious physical injury or major property damage.
2. Any on-going felony or misdemeanor that involves violence and may result in injury.
3. Any felony or violent misdemeanor that has just occurred, and there is reason to believe the suspect is still in the area.
4. Any incident that involves exigent or unique circumstances that demand an immediate police response.
5. An "Officer in Trouble" call.
6. **EXCEPTIONS TO THESE PROCEDURES MAY BE APPROPRIATE WHEN THE SAFETY OF THE OFFICERS AND THE PUBLIC WARRANTS A SILENT RESPONSE.** Example: To avoid precipitating a hostage-taking situation.
7. **THIS EMERGENCY RESPONSE DOES NOT RELIEVE THE OFFICER FROM THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DRIVE WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL PERSONS, NOR DOES IT AFFORD PROTECTION FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF RECKLESS DISREGARD FOR THE SAFETY OF OTHERS.**

- B. LEVEL TWO RESPONSE:** This response should be made by the closest units in a quick but safe manner. Units responding to Level Two calls should be attentive to their radio, as the situation may quickly change to a more or less serious incident which may or may not require the use of lights and/or sirens.

A Level Two Response is indicated when an officer's presence is needed at the scene but the need is not immediate. Situations that will warrant a Level Two Response are:

1. Any incident that does not represent a significant threat to life and property (such as disorderly groups) or a felony that has occurred without injury and the suspect has fled the area.
2. Any in-progress incident that could be classified as a possible crime (a suspicious person, vehicle, etc.).

3. Any incident that represents a significant obstacle to the flow of traffic.
4. Any incident that requires a prompt, non-emergency response.
5. Officers calling for non-emergency assistance (a backup unit, potential but not a present problem).
6. Officers holding a prisoner and requesting transport would receive a Level Two Response unless special circumstances dictate otherwise.
7. **THIS EMERGENCY RESPONSE DOES NOT RELIEVE THE OFFICER FROM THE DUTY TO DRIVE WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL PERSONS, NOR DOES IT AFFORD PROTECTION FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF RECKLESS DISREGARD FOR THE SAFETY OF OTHERS.**

C. **LEVEL THREE RESPONSE:** Involves no emergency lights or siren. It is a normal traffic speed response, such as:

1. A call for service.
2. To take a report.
3. Transport of prisoners.

**23. SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES:** The special purpose vehicles utilized by the department are the Patrol Wagon, Bicycles, SRT Rapid Deployment Vehicle, Special Response Team Tactical Intervention Vehicle, Animal Control Vehicle, EMT Pickup Truck, Accident Investigation Vehicles, Motorcycles, Meter Collection Van, the Crime Scene Response Vehicle and Seized Vehicles.

**AUTHORIZATION FOR USE:** Special purpose vehicles shall be used only by authorized members who have received the necessary training in their use. If a member wants to utilize a special purpose vehicle for a function other than authorized in these procedures, they must first obtain the permission of a commanding officer.

**VEHICLE INSPECTIONS:** Special purpose vehicles shall be inspected monthly unless the Division Commander, who is responsible for that vehicle, states otherwise. The inspection will be conducted by an officer assigned by the Division Commander. The inspection shall document any missing or damaged equipment assigned to that vehicle. Any missing or damaged equipment shall be reported to the Division Commander through the chain of command. The inspection will be documented in Larimore under the "Vehicle and Equipment Check" function.

- A. PATROL WAGON:** The Patrol Wagon is a box-type vehicle that serves many functions.

**NOTE: MGL c119 s34 states that children will not be transported in a patrol wagon. You must use a suitable vehicle.**

**1. Purposes:** The Patrol Wagon serves the following purposes:

- a.** Prisoner Transport: The Patrol Wagon is most frequently used to transport groups of prisoners or individual prisoners who, due to their physical condition or behavior, should not be transported by cruiser.
- b.** Mobile Command Post: The Patrol Wagon may serve as a mobile command post when necessary, in times of disaster or other emergency.
- c.** Property Evidence Transport: The Patrol Wagon may be used to transport bulky items of evidence or property that would be difficult or impossible to transport by cruiser.
- d.** Emergency Communications Center: The Patrol Wagon may be utilized as the emergency communications center in the event that the communications console fails.

- 2. Equipment:** The Patrol Wagon shall be equipped with blue lights, siren, radio, and a camera system to monitor the detainee during transport. The vehicle will also be equipped with a first aid kit, AED and extra large handcuffs.

- B. BICYCLE:** The Commanding Officer – Patrol Division shall ensure that officers assigned to bicycle patrol have the training and ability necessary to perform the required functions assigned to these units.

**1. Purpose:** The bicycle patrol unit serves the following purposes:

- a.** Traffic safety and enforcement;
- b.** Parking enforcement;
- c.** Investigation of routine calls for service, patrolling business districts, ponds and river ways, parks, and elderly and other housing developments in the town.
- d.** Mutual aid request for the patrol bike unit to assist another jurisdiction will be approved by the Patrol Bike Unit Commander.



2. **Equipment:** The bicycle shall be equipped with lights (front and rear), siren, saddlebag/trunk bag, water bottle and holder, first aid kit, and any equipment authorized by the Chief of Police.

**C. ANIMAL CONTROL VEHICLE:** The Commanding Officer-Patrol Division shall ensure that the designated Animal Control Officer has the training and qualifications necessary to operate the designated Animal Control Vehicle.

1. **Purpose:** Vehicle is a pick-up based platform with a capped bed that allows for transport of animals and equipment in an area that is separate from the driver and passenger area. This separation allows for safe transport of sick, injured or dangerous animals. This unit carries cages of various sizes as well as protective equipment used by the Animal Control Officers to capture dangerous animals or to assist injured animals.
2. **Equipment:** The Animal Control Vehicle shall be equipped with blue lights, siren, radio, a medical bag and AED, a vehicle lockout tool, and the following equipment specific to its purpose: 12 gauge shotgun (stored in safe), snake hook, Ketch-all pole, shovel, cones, microchip scanner, infrared thermometer, animal crates (various sizes), muzzles, "Have a Heart" traps, Humaniac Gloves, coveralls, leashes, nets, an animal grasper and additional equipment maintained for the purpose of safely and humanely responding to calls related to animals.

**D. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM PICKUP TRUCK:**

1. **Purpose:** The Department's Emergency Management Coordinator is responsible for this unmarked pickup truck which is to be used as a "prime mover" for the EMT's human shelter, pet shelter, emergency dispensing site and communications support trailers, as well as our generators, variable message boards and light towers. All assets are shared within the Metro-Boston Homeland Security region.
2. **Equipment:** This EMT pickup truck is equipped with blue and red lights, siren and a radio, as well as:
  - a. Orange cones
  - b. Orange barricades
  - c. Crime Scene Tape
  - d. Extension Cord
  - e. CERT Kit and Red Cross Kit
  - f. Large cooler

- g.** First Aid Kit

**E. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION VEHICLE(S):** The Commanding Officer - Traffic Division shall ensure that officers assigned to the accident investigation vehicles have the training and ability necessary to perform often complex accident investigations.

1. **Purposes:** The accident investigation vehicle(s) serves the following purposes:

- a.** Accident Investigation
- b.** Traffic Safety and Enforcement
- c.** Parking Enforcement
- d.** Fatality Investigation

2. **Equipment:** The Accident Investigation Vehicle(s) shall be equipped with blue lights, siren, radio, the same emergency equipment stored in all cruiser trunks, and the following:

- a.** Portable hand-held radar or laser gun, or mounted radar;
- b.** 100 foot measuring tape;
- c.** 25 foot measuring tape;
- d.** A portable wheeled measuring unit;
- e.** Marking crayons;
- f.** Accident investigation template kit;
- g.** Camera.

**F. MOTORCYCLE:** Motorcycles offer considerably more maneuverability in traffic than automobiles, and as such constitute an important part of the department's fleet. Officers assigned to a motorcycle must have a valid motorcycle license, and have successfully completed a Municipal Police Training Committee (or equivalent) course on the safe operation of the motorcycle.

The Commanding Officer – Traffic Division shall not allow motorcycle patrol during any weather condition that would adversely affect the safe operation of the motorcycle.

1. **Purpose:** Motorcycles serve the following purposes:

- a.** Patrol
- b.** Traffic safety and enforcement

- c. Accident investigations
- d. Parking enforcement
- e. Traffic control
- f. Escorts

2. **Equipment:** Motorcycles shall be equipped with the following:

- a. Emergency lights and siren;
- b. First aid kit;
- c. Radar unit.

**G. METER COLLECTION VAN:** The Commanding Officer - Traffic Division shall ensure that the civilian staff assigned to the meter collection van have the training and ability necessary to operate the vehicle safely.

1. **Purpose:** The Meter Collection Van shall be used in the performance of collecting monies from parking meters and kiosks.

2. **Equipment:** The Meter Van will be marked with civilian parking control lettering, yellow emergency lights, a siren, and a police radio as well as equipment used for the purpose of repairing broken meter equipment.

**H. CRIME SCENE RESPONSE VEHICLE:** The Commanding Officer-Detective Division shall ensure that designated members of the Crime Scene Unit have the training and ability necessary to deploy the Crime Scene Vehicle.

1. **Purposes:** The purpose of the Crime Scene Vehicle is to respond to major crime scenes and to provide resources and equipment to aid investigators in the processing of the crime scene.

1. **Equipment:** The Crime Scene Vehicle is a commercial style van equipped with blue lights, siren, radio, and the following:

- a. Crime scene processing kit
- b. Impression casting materials
- c. Body suits, booties, gloves and masks
- d. Crime scene tape
- e. Folding crime scene processing table
- f. Canopy style tent
- g. Tarps
- h. Cones
- i. Brookline Police Crime Scene signs

- j. Plug-in portable lighting
- k. Extension cords

**I. SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM RAPID DEPLOYMENT VEHICLE (RDV):** The Commanding Officer-Patrol Division shall ensure that designated members of the Department's SRT have the training and ability necessary to deploy the RDV.

1. **Purpose:** The Special Response Team RDV is van based platform that is designed to carry a large number of SRT Officers and specialized equipment. The vehicle is equipped with emergency lights and siren but is unmarked and appears as a civilian commercial vehicle. The vehicle is also equipped to support SRT Officers during extended deployments, emergency call outs or on a stand by basis.
2. **Equipment:** The RDV shall be equipped with blue lights, siren, radio, a medical bag and AED, breaching tools, portable cameras systems, portable lighting, secure storage lockers, ballistics shields and personal protective gear.

**J. SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM TACTICAL INTERVENTION VEHICLE (TIV):** The Commanding Officer-Patrol Division shall ensure that designated members of the Department's SRT have the training and ability necessary to deploy the TIV.

1. **Purpose:** The Special Response Team TIV is a Chevy Tahoe designed to transport SRT members and specialized equipment. It is equipped with emergency lights and sirens and provides armored protection. The TIV can tow a trailer or other towed equipment and is ideal for setting up a hasty command post.
2. **Equipment:** The TIV is equipped with blue lights, a siren, a radio, medical equipment, and other specialty equipment as designated by the Commanding Officer-Patrol Division.

**J. SRT CROSSOVER UTILITY VEHICLE ("Gator"):** The Commanding Officer-Special Response Team shall ensure that designated members of the SRT have the training and ability necessary to deploy the Crossover Utility Vehicle.

1. **Purpose:** The SRT's crossover utility vehicle will be utilized during high profiled events, such as the Marathon and July 4<sup>th</sup>. Beyond these events, this unit will also be used by the SRT for multi-discipline force protection within the UASI region.

2. **Equipment:** The “Gator” is a Crossover Utility Vehicle equipped with blue lights, a siren and a first aid kit.

**K. Patrol K9 Cruisers:**

1. **Purpose** - The Patrol K9 vehicles are a patrol vehicle designed to transport the canine safely and effectively by the canine handler or designated employee. The vehicle is equipped with emergency lights and sirens, heat monitoring system, a canine cage/kennel, and door popper.
2. **Equipment** - The Patrol K9 vehicle shall be equipped with blue lights, sirens, radio, heat monitoring system, canine cage/kennel, med bag, AED, K9 med bag, detection lead, tracking lead, harness, prong collar, nylon collar, K9 specific reward, and muzzle. Additional equipment as needed by the K9 handler shall be approved by the unit supervisor.

**L. Community Resource Comfort Dog Cruiser**

1. **Purpose** - The Comfort dog vehicle are a marked patrol style vehicle designed to transport the canine safely and effectively by the canine handler or designated employee. The vehicle is equipped with emergency lights and sirens, heat monitoring system, a canine cage/kennel, and door popper.
2. **Equipment** - The Comfort Dog vehicle shall be equipped with blue lights, sirens, radio, heat monitoring system, canine cage/kennel, med bag, AED, K9 med bag, muzzle for medical purposes, tracking lead, harness with appropriate patches, gentle leader, nylon collar, K9 specific reward, and K9 water bowl. Additional equipment as needed by the K9 handler shall be approved by the unit supervisor.

- M. SEIZED VEHICLES:** On occasion, the Department will utilize vehicles for undercover operations that have been acquired in accordance with MGL 94c §47. The Deputy Superintendent- Detective Division will be responsible for the assignment of these vehicles to specifically designated personnel.

**25. EMERGENCY/ACCIDENT POLICE VEHICLE EQUIPMENT:** The following emergency equipment shall be carried in all marked police vehicles:

- A. Complete first aid kit and AED
- B. Water rescue equipment (certain designated marked units);

C. Vehicle Lock out tool (certain designated marked units);

**26. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE EQUIPMENT:** The following equipment will be included in every unmarked car assigned to the Detective Division:

A. Evidence bags;

B. Crime scene tape