



Charleston County Sheriff's Office Policy and Procedures Manual

Sheriff Carl Ritchie

9-02 Patrol Operations

- ☐ New
- ☐ Revised
- ☒ Reviewed

ACA Standards Reference:

CALEA Standards Reference: 1.2.3, 22.1.8, 33.5.2, 41.1.1, 41.1.2, 41.2.4, 41.3.2, 41.3.3, 82.2.5

NCCHC Standards Reference:

SCLEA Standards Reference:

SC Minimum Standards:

This policy dated 1/28/2025 replaces prior policies cited above and supersedes all previously issued directives.

I. Purpose:

To define basic patrol operations and responsibilities and establish priorities for sworn personnel assigned to patrol duty.

II. Policy:

The Charleston County Sheriff's Office will provide efficient and effective patrol operations for the citizens of Charleston County in order to create a deterrent to crime, detect and apprehend offenders, and respond to the needs and expectations of the community.

III. Definitions:

A. For purposes of this procedure, the word "deputy" applies to all agency employees with a certification classification of Class I, Class II, Class III, or Reserve Deputy, as defined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

The following terms are used interchangeably; however, they carry guidance to specific employees based on usage of the term:

1. Deputy, deputies, deputy sheriff, detention deputy, sworn employee, uniformed sworn employee, sworn administrative employee, etc., and
2. civilian, non-sworn employee.

B. *Employee*: When used without further clarification, the term employee is inclusive of all agency members (sworn and non-sworn).

IV. Procedure:

A. Administration:

1. Patrol Division is a division under the Operations Bureau and is the organizational component responsible for the patrol function.
2. The duties and responsibilities of the patrol function are carried out by 4 patrol teams called Squads (i.e., A Squad, B Squad, C Squad, and D Squad). The primary functions of these squads include, but are not limited to:
 - a. proactive patrol oriented toward the prevention of crimes and accidents and maintenance of public order;

- b. responding to calls for service from citizens;
- c. serving as a resource by directing citizens to services not provided by the agency;
- d. reporting hazardous conditions;
- e. investigating crimes and bringing offenders to justice;
- f. traffic direction and control;
- g. regulation of liquor establishments as required by law;
- h. providing emergency services;
- i. service of warrants;
- j. development of relationships between citizens, the business community, and the Charleston County Sheriff's Office; and
- k. follow-up investigations of assigned cases.

B. Watch Assignment and Rotation:

- 1. To provide 24-hour coverage within the jurisdiction of this agency, it is necessary to maintain 4 squads, A, B, C, and D, on 12-hour watches which consist of a day watch (i.e., 1st Watch) and a night watch (i.e., 2nd Watch).
- 2. Normal patrol watches are from 0600 hours to 1800 hours (1st Watch) and 1800 hours to 0600 hours (2nd Watch). In an unusual situation the Sheriff, or designee, may institute any other watch deemed necessary.
- 3. Patrol personnel are required to report to their respective patrol briefings at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the patrol watch. In the event a call for service is received at the conclusion of the off-going watch, oncoming personnel are available to respond at the discretion of a patrol supervisor. (Ref: CALEA 41.1.1 item a)
- 4. Deputy sheriffs are assigned to patrols and watches where a need exists within the patrol function. An internal lateral move (transfer)

may be made any time consistent with the best interests of the Sheriff's Office. (Ref: CALEA 41.1.1 item b)

5. Assignment of sworn personnel within a patrol squad to various districts is ultimately determined by the patrol supervisor prior to the beginning of the watch. (Ref: CALEA 41.1.1 item d)
6. The patrol supervisor or watch commander may make district assignments for segments of a watch (i.e., changing assignments during the watch or allowing for a change in district due to manpower changes during the watch). (Ref: CALEA 41.1.1 item e)
7. The patrol supervisor may include volume of activity, familiarity with the area, continuing investigative work, etc., as criteria for assignment of a deputy sheriff to a district.
8. To ensure continuous patrol coverage during watch change, the on-duty patrol will remain in their assigned areas until relieved by a patrol supervisor.
9. Deputy sheriff's assigned days off are already in place depending on which Patrol personnel are assigned. (Ref: CALEA 41.1.1 item f)
10. The Patrol Division operates on all permanent shifts, there are not any rotational shifts. Squads A and B will be permanent 1st watch (i.e., days) and Squads C and D will be permanent 2nd watch (i.e., nights). (Ref: CALEA 41.1.1 item c)
11. Patrol staffing will be reviewed as necessary and is subject to change in the interest of promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of the Sheriff's Office. Minimum manpower requirements are established by the Sheriff or designee.

C. Shift Briefing:

1. The on-duty Patrol supervisor will brief the oncoming patrol supervisor on significant incidents that occurred during the previous watch.
2. At the beginning of each shift cycle, (i.e., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), the Patrol supervisor will provide a shift briefing to update personnel with roll call, (specified in subparagraph C(3) infra), crime analysis, intelligence information, memorandums, patrol requests, significant incidents from previous watch, end of shift reports, and

other information the supervisor believes pertinent and necessary to pass along. Shift briefings will be conducted by the patrol supervisor 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the watch unless precluded by operational priorities. (Ref: CALEA 41.1.2)

3. Roll-call items will be distributed to personnel from the Training Unit via updates on the CCSO Intranet, County e-mail, PowerDMS, paper copies, digital media, etc. (see [Policy 8-01 Training](#) paragraph O(1) *Roll-Call Training*).
4. Patrol personnel will have their vehicle fuel tanks filled and any maintenance needed will be completed prior to roll-call.
5. The oncoming patrol supervisor is responsible for the following daily duties:
 - a. briefing patrol personnel with information regarding daily patrol activity including, but not limited to: special patrol requests, special assignments, changes in the status of wanted persons, stolen vehicles, and major investigations, etc.;
 - b. disseminating changes in procedures, memoranda, special orders, and training notices/schedules;
 - c. making assignments as required; and
 - d. evaluating sworn personnel readiness to assume patrol duties.(Ref: CALEA 33.5.2 and 41.1.2)

D. Presence at and Security of Facilities:

1. Responsibility for the security of the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) and all satellite Sheriff's Office facilities rests with all agency employees.
2. Access Cards and combinations are provided to agency employees in order to gain access to agency facilities as well as other law enforcement personnel as deemed necessary by the Sheriff or designee. All other personnel must be escorted.
3. Persons not employed by the agency conducting business within LEC will sign in the log book at the front desk and receive a Visitor Badge. Arrangements will be made to escort visitors within the facility.

4. Patrol personnel will not loiter in any agency building for any extended periods. Exceptions would be writing reports, turning in evidence, etc., unless approved by a patrol supervisor.

E. Breaks:

1. All patrol personnel and supervisors will be allowed a meal break during their watch. The meal may be taken at an approved restaurant, at a deputy sheriff's residence if in their patrol district, or they may eat packaged meals at other appropriate locations.
2. Additionally, deputy sheriffs will generally be allowed other breaks during a watch as deemed necessary with supervisor approval.
3. Deputy sheriffs will notify the Charleston County Consolidated 9-1-1 Center (911 Center) of the location and type of break. Additionally, deputy sheriffs will monitor radio transmissions at all times. Ordinarily deputy sheriffs will not be called to duty during their breaks except in an emergency.
4. Breaks during the first and last hour of the watch must receive approval from a patrol supervisor.

F. Coordination with Other Components:

1. The Patrol Division will encourage and support the exchange of information with other Sheriff's Office organizational components.
2. Intra-agency coordination by the Patrol Division is facilitated by, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. supervisory staff meetings;
 - b. agency meetings attended by all personnel;
 - c. attendance of investigators at shift briefings;
 - d. posting of directives and other information on bulletin boards, watch clipboards, email distribution, and PowerDMS;
 - e. communication by formal memoranda.

G. Patrol Personnel Responsibilities:

1. Patrol personnel will familiarize themselves with the county boundaries and landmarks. Each deputy sheriff will have access to a county tract map through the agency intranet to use as a reference.
2. Radio contact will be constant; prompt response by dispatchers and patrol personnel is essential. Requests for service are to be acknowledged promptly.
3. Deputy sheriffs assigned to patrol duties will thoroughly patrol their assigned district while on duty when not otherwise engaged in handling calls for service.
4. Businesses will be checked for security.
5. Suspicious vehicles will be investigated.
6. Residential areas will be checked for crime prone conditions and persons.
7. Deputy sheriffs will be held accountable for failure to discover and/or report any criminal action, occurrence, or situation which should have been reasonably discovered by the deputy sheriff during their watch.
8. Patrol supervisors will handle calls when deputy sheriffs are otherwise engaged.
9. Sworn personnel should note and communicate to the 911 Center all traffic control devices which are damaged, missing, or obscured.
10. All nuisances, impediments, obstructions, or defects, in or adjacent to public places which tend to endanger the health, safety, or convenience of the general public should be reported to the 911 Center. Information such as location, type of problem, and urgency of needed response should be reported. The 911 Center will notify the appropriate city, county, state, or private sector department. If the situation is reported when the appropriate department is closed and the situation is not an emergency, the 911 Center will be responsible for notification during business hours. After-hour situations of an emergency nature will immediately be brought to the attention of the on-duty patrol supervisor, who will determine whether the situation requires emergency notification of the appropriate agency.

(Ref: CALEA 41.2.4)

11. Undesirable conditions which another community agency might be responsible for should be reported to the on-duty patrol supervisor.
12. Deputy sheriffs will remain within the boundaries of their assigned districts unless in close pursuit, or upon authorization by a patrol supervisor. Patrol supervisors will be informed immediately when a cruiser leaves its district, for whatever reason, and of its return. Deputy sheriffs will not leave their district to provide assistance unless in an emergency or if cleared by a patrol supervisor.
13. Deputy sheriffs assigned to the patrol function will serve as an extension of the Warrants Unit by serving warrants during their regular watch.
14. Deputy sheriffs will not refuse to provide service to persons who request it or appear in need. If unable to answer a question, they will refer the matter to a supervisor, or to the appropriate authority.

H. Incident Response:

A single unit will generally be dispatched to handle routine calls for service. However, the nature of some calls may require additional units to be dispatched for safety, as well as for the more effective handling of a situation. Any additional units dispatched to a call are expected to clear the scene as soon as it has been determined that their presence is no longer needed to deal with the situation. Two or more units will be dispatched on the following types of calls:

1. any crime in progress;
2. open doors or windows;
3. calls involving a weapon;
4. calls involving mentally ill subjects;
5. alarms;
6. domestic situations;
7. an assault on a deputy sheriff or a deputy sheriff's request for assistance;

8. an on-scene arrest for a violent crime;
9. any auto accident involving injuries or in which the vehicles are blocking moving lanes of traffic;
10. disturbances involving intoxicated or disorderly persons;
11. fleeing suspects;
12. neighbor troubles with a known or suspected potential for violence;
13. use of force incidents;
14. any crime having just occurred where there exists a need to check the area for suspects (one unit should respond directly to the scene, while the other unit checks the area for suspects); and
15. any call where, in the judgment of the dispatcher, supervisor, or deputy sheriff, there exists a need to send two units because of the known serious nature of the call, insufficient information, and/or for deputy safety. (Ref: CALEA 81.2.4 item e)

I. On-Scene Supervision:

1. Ordinarily patrol supervisors may use discretion as to when to respond to a scene; however, incidents of a serious nature, such as the following, normally require the presence of a patrol supervisor at the scene:
 - a. any crime of violence which involves serious injury or death, traffic fatality, or any other death case;
 - b. armed robbery;
 - c. vehicle accidents involving agency vehicles;
 - d. injury to an agency employee while on duty;
 - e. the scene of any natural or man-made disaster (i.e., tornado, hazardous material incident, etc.);
 - f. at any scene where the assistance of support personnel (i.e., Criminal Investigations, Forensic Services, etc.) is requested;

- g. any other incident that is deemed necessary by the on-duty supervisor or where the authority of a supervisor is needed to deal with a situation;
 - h. hostage/barricaded gunman; and
 - i. any other incident as directed, dispatched, or requested.
- 2. The on-duty patrol supervisor may request the call-out of agency specialized and/or tactical response units to any scene.
- 3. The on-duty patrol supervisor, coordinating as necessary with agency specialized units, will ensure that the 911 Center notifies the Coroner's Office of all deaths within the agency's jurisdiction regardless of the cause.
(Ref: CALEA 41.2.4)
- 4. Supervisors should be aware of available community resources such as the Mobile Crisis Program and the Coastal Crisis Chaplaincy which work collaboratively with law enforcement agencies. Any supervisor identifying the need for Mobile Crisis or chaplaincy assistance may activate them through the 911 Center.
- 5. Each patrol supervisor will periodically respond to calls for service assigned to subordinate personnel in order to properly evaluate the performance of those personnel.
- 6. If any supervisor or command officer feels it necessary to call out the agency Public Information Officer (PIO) to handle media inquiries or to disseminate information to the news media, the 911 Center will notify the PIO. If the supervisor or command staff is not sure whether the PIO should respond or not, the 911 Center should notify the PIO and involve them in the decision. The PIO is available for call-out to any scene where their services are needed; however, if the PIO is unable to respond or their presence is deemed unnecessary, supervisors or command staff personnel may handle the situation.
(Ref: CALEA 41.2.4)

J. Telephone Reporting:

- 1. The Duty Officer (O.D.) may take certain categories of reports from citizens by telephone in lieu of an on-scene response by a deputy sheriff when:
 - a. no injuries are involved;

- b. crime scene processing is not required;
 - c. the suspect is not at the scene; and
 - d. the citizen agrees that it is acceptable to file the report by telephone.
- 2. In all other cases, sworn personnel will respond.
- 3. A list of types of calls that can be reported by telephone is as follows:
 - a. larcenies;
 - b. obscene, harassing, or nuisance phone calls;
 - c. animal complaints;
 - d. stolen vehicles;
 - e. traffic complaints;
 - f. civil disputes (verbal); and
 - g. other calls if approved by a supervisor and acceptable to the complainant/victim. (Ref: CALEA 82.2.5)
- 4. Whenever a deputy sheriff has telephone contact with the public, the deputy sheriff will remain professional at all times. When using the telephone to communicate with the public, the agency's name will be announced and the deputy sheriff will identify themselves by rank and name. Badge number will be provided upon request. (Ref: CALEA 22.1.8 item c)

K. Online Reporting:

- 1. The Charleston County Sheriff's Office allows certain type of incidents to be reported online through the agency's public website.
- 2. The type incidents that may be reported online are specified on the public reporting web page and will not include, among other things, violent crimes, incidents where injuries are involved, crime scene processing is required, or the suspect is on scene. (Ref: CALEA 82.2.5)

L. Field Interviews/Investigations:

1. Field investigations of suspicious persons have been proven effective to deprive actual and potential criminal offenders of some of their initiative to select the time, place, and circumstances for the commission of crimes. This public contact will be documented on a *Written Warning/Field Interview Form (CCSO form-125)* and will include the reason of the field investigation and description of suspicious circumstances.
2. There is nothing to prevent a deputy sheriff from approaching and talking to an individual on the street. The usual test separating a street encounter from a *Terry Stop* is whether an individual is detained. Street encounters do not, however, obligate an individual to comply with the deputy sheriff's request to remain stationary or provide information. A deputy sheriff may not detain a person for the sole purpose of completing a *Written Warning/Field Interview Form*.
3. A protective pat down search is permitted for weapons only after a lawful stop and the deputy sheriff has a reasonable suspicion the suspect is armed and dangerous. At a minimum, the Field Information on the Analysis copy of the *Written Warning/Field Interview Form* will be accomplished to document a protective pat down search. If further information is required, an *Incident Report* will be accomplished in lieu of the *Written Warning /Field Interview Form*.
4. When determining the suspicious nature of any person, deputy sheriffs will not rely on any given characteristic such as race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression of the person. Deputy sheriffs may however rely on a list of characteristics in determining if a person is suspicious in specific actions when the deputy sheriff has reasonable belief that the action is merited under the totality of the circumstances.
5. *Field interviews* of suspicious persons will be documented utilizing a *Written Warning/Field Interview Form*, and accompany an incident or OCA number, which will be turned in to the deputy sheriff's supervisor at the end of the watch to be forwarded to the Crime Analysis Unit.
6. A *Written Warning*, in lieu of a Uniform Traffic Ticket, that is handwritten and not entered through the South Carolina Collision and Traffic Ticket System (ReportBeam) will be turned in to their

supervisor at the end of the deputy sheriff's watch to be forwarded to the Crime Analysis Unit. ReportBeam is only for traffic collisions and enforcement. (Ref: CALEA 1.2.3 item a)

M. Patrol Vehicle Equipment:

All patrol vehicles must be equipped with certain items that enhance the effectiveness and safety of patrol personnel. The following items are issued to deputy sheriffs and it is incumbent on each deputy sheriff to conduct a daily inventory of these items to determine serviceability. In the event a piece of equipment becomes unserviceable, the deputy sheriff must report this to the Logistics Center as soon as possible so appropriate referrals for repair or replacement of the equipment can be made by Logistics personnel. The following items will be maintained in the patrol vehicle at all times:

1. permanently mounted 800 Mhz radio with integrated siren system;
2. agency-issued mobile data terminal, properly secured to the permanently mounted stand;
3. fire extinguisher;
4. agency-issued patrol rifle with issued ammunition;
5. agency-issued .12 gauge shotgun with issued ammunition;
6. ankle chains;
7. full-size spare tire;
8. several copies of all agency forms required for field reporting;
9. Emergency Response Guide;
10. bloodborne pathogen kit, to include:
 - a. 2 N95 respirators;
 - b. 1 box non-latex gloves (or hypoallergenic gloves);
 - c. 2 pair shoe covers;
 - d. 1 pair goggles/safety glasses w/side shields;

- e. biohazard bags;
- f. 2 sets Tyvec coveralls/gowns;
- g. 1 CPR microshield;
- h. biohazard decals;
- i. eye flush solution;
- j. no-rinse antiseptic gel; and
- k. 1 pair utility style gloves. (Ref: CALEA 41.3.2)

N. Occupant Restraining Devices:

All Charleston County Sheriff's Office patrol vehicles will be equipped with manufacturer-installed seat belts in both the front and back seats. All occupants must utilize the seatbelts while operating or occupying a Sheriff's Office vehicle. Deputy sheriffs may not alter the restraint systems in any way and any additional equipment mounted in the vehicle must be approved by Logistics personnel to determine if the item can be safely mounted without obstructing the air bag systems in the vehicles. (Ref: CALEA 41.3.3)