

Cocoa Beach Police Department

Standard Operating Procedure



Effective Date: October 7, 2020	Replaces: Amends: March 14, 2020	Number: 200.46
Subject: Police Vehicle Operations		Re-evaluation Date: 2022
Distribution: ALL PERSONNEL	Related Standards: 14.08M, 14.15M	

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

1. Purpose
2. Scope
3. Policy
4. Definitions
5. Procedures
6. Appendix
7. References

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the safe operation of police department vehicles by members of the Cocoa Beach Police Department. This policy shall serve as a standard for the review of the judgment exercised by employees when conducting vehicle operations.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Cocoa Beach Police Department.

3. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Cocoa Beach Police Department to ensure that its members operate vehicles in a safe and lawful manner at all times. This shall be accomplished by training, supervisory oversight, and the guidelines established in this standard operating procedure. While Florida Statute 316.072 grants the operator of an authorized emergency vehicle the right to disregard certain traffic requirements, police officers are not relieved of the duty to operate their vehicle with due care and regard for the safety of the public, as well as the violator.

4. DEFINITIONS

- A. AUTHORIZED EMERGENCY VEHICLE – any police vehicle equipped with a siren and emergency lights and designated by the Chief of Police as an authorized emergency vehicle pursuant to Florida Statute 316.003.
- B. ON-DUTY SHIFT SUPERVISOR – the police officer having direct authority and supervision of police personnel on any given shift.
- C. PATROL VEHICLE- a marked or unmarked law enforcement vehicle used primarily for patrol or traffic enforcement functions. This does not include unmarked vehicles used by sworn officers assigned to Administration or Criminal Investigations Division.

5. PROCEDURES

A. Equipment for Vehicles Used for Patrol or Traffic Enforcement

1. Vehicles used for patrol or traffic enforcement shall be equipped with the following:
 - a. Operational emergency lights and siren (CFA 14.08MA)
 - b. Properly charged fire extinguisher with current service tag or label (motorcycles exempt) (CFA 14.08MB)
 - c. Operational flashlight (CFA 14.08MC)
 - d. First aid kit containing current medical supplies including, but not limited to; various sizes of gauze, adhesive bandages, cloth tape and any additional non-expiring equipment used to treat minor injuries. (CFA 14.08 MD)
 - e. Personal protective equipment (this may range from gloves, mask or C-A-T tourniquet) (CFA 14.08 ME)

B. Operational Response

1. Calls for service received by Communications personnel or requested by other officers in the field will be responded to based upon need.

2. Situations requiring an expedited response by a police officer due to either emergency or issue of personal safety shall be categorized as a Code 1 response. A Code 1 response requires the officer to activate the emergency vehicle's emergency lights and siren and authorizes them to disregard certain traffic requirements pursuant to Florida Statute 316.072.
 3. Situations not requiring an expedited response shall be categorized as a Code 3 response. A Code 3 response requires the driver to obey all traffic laws and operate normally as would regular traffic.
- C. General Vehicle Operation
1. Members of the Cocoa Beach Police Department will operate vehicles in a safe and courteous manner, adhering to all applicable statutes of the State of Florida.
 2. Police Department employees shall operate police vehicles only when properly licensed to do so by the State of Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.
 3. Operators of police vehicles shall be responsible for proper use and care of vehicles, all accessories, equipment, and tools assigned to the vehicle.
 4. While backing, operators of police vehicles are encouraged to exercise a greater than ordinary degree of care.
 5. Smoking is prohibited in City owned vehicles.
 6. Operators and passengers of police vehicles shall use the original manufacturer's safety restraint devices at all times while operating on roadways and highways. Exception:
 - a. To avoid likely injury to themselves or the prisoner, officers are not required to attempt to seatbelt an unruly or violent prisoner in the rear of the patrol car.
- D. Emergency Vehicle Operation
1. A Code 1 response will be determined by the responding officer.
 2. The on-duty Shift Supervisor is responsible for upgrading or downgrading the response at his/her discretion and will control the number of units responding.
 3. When responding Code 1, the officer will evaluate the available information and surrounding conditions before conducting an emergency response. Consideration will be given to the safety of both the police officer and the general public as well as the urgency of the call.
 4. Prior to responding, the officer shall notify the Communications Center of their location and that they are en-route in emergency response ("10-51, Code 1").
 5. If circumstances require the responding officer to drive or travel irrespective of posted regulations and routine driving rules, the responding officer will exercise caution for the safety of other persons and property during the emergency response. This caution will include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Continuous use of emergency lights, flashers, headlights, siren, and/or any other available emergency equipment.
 - b. Stopping to ensure a clear path before passing through a traffic control device where the police officer would yield under normal driving conditions.
 - c. The police officer will maintain a speed reasonable for safe operation of the vehicle. Reasonable will include but is not limited to the following considerations:
 - 1) Existing road conditions
 - 2) Existing traffic, pedestrians and any other roadway congestion
 - 3) Time of day or night
 - 4) Probability of other assistance arriving first
 - 5) Police officer's experience and skill level as an emergency vehicle operator
 - 6) Weather conditions
 6. If a Police Department vehicle is using the center lane to pass slowing, stopped, and/or yielding vehicular traffic while engaged in emergency operations, then it will proceed at a speed not greater than 15 miles per hour with its emergency lights and siren activated. The center turning lane will be used as a last resort and in accordance with the provisions set forth above. Police vehicles being operated under non-emergency conditions will not utilize the center turning lane except for its intended purpose.
 7. Making an emergency response without use of the appropriate emergency equipment is prohibited.
 8. At no time will a police officer operate a Departmental vehicle in an emergency response mode while transporting prisoners, trustees, civilian personnel, or the general public unless granted approval for such a response from his/her on-duty Shift Supervisor. Traffic stops are not considered an emergency response unless vehicle apprehension procedures are employed as set forth in SOP 200.47 *Vehicle Apprehension*.
 9. The responding officer and the on-duty Shift Supervisor will monitor the progress of the emergency response and any changing conditions regarding the call. The emergency vehicle operation will be terminated when it no longer meets the policy requirements or other conditions render it unsafe to continue. Management and responsibility for successful emergency response operations rest with the on-duty Shift Supervisor.

E. Ride-along Program

1. The ride-along program is a valuable public relations and recruitment tool for the Police Department. It is essential that Department personnel recognize the inherent risks and liabilities associated with this activity and limit it to that which serves the Department's interest.
2. Participation Requirements: (CFA 14.15MA)
 - a. Candidates for ride-along include:
 - 1) City of Cocoa Beach employees
 - 2) Prospective candidates in the selection process for police officer
 - 3) On-duty law enforcement acting in the performance of their duties
 - 4) Military personnel acting in the performance of their duties
 - 5) Other civilians as approved by the Chief of Police or designee
 - b. A national fingerprint based background check shall be completed for each candidate prior to the ride-along, as per SOP 305.00 *Information Services Security* and must be approved by the Department's FALCON Application Access Administrator
 - c. An individual's request to participate in a ride-along may be denied due to the results of the criminal history check or any reason that may increase the liability to the agency. Applicants with any felony convictions ever, any pending criminal charges, misdemeanor convictions within the past five (5) years or outstanding warrants are not eligible to participate.
 - d. Juveniles are not eligible to participate in the ride-along program unless approved by the Chief of Police or designee.
 - e. Candidates must complete level one (1) CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Services) Security Awareness Training prior to the ride-along.
 - f. With the exception of sworn law enforcement personnel or City of Cocoa Beach employee, a *Hold Harmless and Indemnification* Agreement (Appendix) must be completed and signed prior to the ride-along.
3. Approval Process: (CFA 14.15MB)
 - a. A request to ride along may be initiated at any level by submitting a *Hold Harmless and Indemnification* Agreement through the chain-of-command to the Deputy Chief or designee.
 - b. The Deputy Chief or designee will coordinate with the Communications Manager or designee and the Records Division to ensure the completion of a national fingerprint-based background check and the level one (1) CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Services) Security Awareness Training.
 - c. Once all requirements above have been met, the Chief of Police or designee will make the final approval and notify a Lieutenant/Watch Commander to schedule the ride along.
 - 1) The Chief of Police or designee may approve a candidate not listed in section E (2)(a) above.
4. Officer Responsibilities: (CFA 14.15MC)
 - a. Each participant is under the direct control of the officer to whom they are assigned and shall obey all lawful directions by the assigned officer or any other member of the Department.
 - b. The assigned officer shall ensure that the participant (other than sworn law enforcement officers) is not in possession of weapons of any kind.
 - c. The assigned officer shall strictly prohibit the participant from becoming involved in any investigation in any way. If in the judgment of the assigned officer, they are entering a dangerous situation, they may at their discretion, leave the participant in a safe place. If the participant is left, the officer shall advise dispatch of the location.
 - d. Assigned officers shall prohibit participants from entering private residences if a resident objects to the participant entering the residence.
 - e. The assigned officer shall ensure that the screen to the MDB is closed at times when the participant is left unattended in the vehicle.
 - f. The assigned officer shall advise the Communications Center of the presence of a ride-along and include the race and sex of the participant.
 - g. If the officer believes that a ride-along should be terminated, he/she will notify the on-duty supervisor who will determine if the ride-along should be terminated.
5. Supervisor Responsibilities: (CFA 14.15MD)
 - a. It shall be the on-duty supervisor's responsibility to ensure that all standards of the ride-along program have been met prior to the participant riding.
 - b. The on-duty supervisor shall assign an officer for the participant to ride with
 - c. The on-duty supervisor or the participant may terminate the ride-along at any time. If the on-duty supervisor terminates the ride-along, he/she will complete an email explaining the reason for the termination to the Lieutenant/Watch Commander by the end of the shift.

- d. The on-duty supervisor shall ensure that the assigned officer is following all responsibilities of this program while assigned a participant for ride-along.
 - e. The on-duty supervisor shall ensure that the participant is dressed appropriately in business casual attire. Shorts, tank tops, tee shirts, sandals, sneakers and or flip-flops are not acceptable. Clothing will be free from any type of graphic designs or wording.
6. Limitations: (CFA 14.15ME)
- a. The Chief of Police or designee reserves the right to deny a ride-along at any time
 - b. Participants shall follow all rules and directions of the assigned officer and or supervisor, failure to do so shall result in immediate termination of the ride-along
 - c. A ride-along shall not exceed more than an 8-hour period
6. **APPENDIX**
Hold Harmless Agreement – <https://powerdms.com/link/IDS/document/?id=313535>
7. **REFERENCES**
Florida Senate (2019). Florida Statute 316.003- Definitions. Retrieved February 29, 2020 from: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2019/316.003>
Florida Senate (2019). Florida Statute 316.072- Obedience to and effect of traffic laws. Retrieved February 29, 2020 from: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2019/316.072>



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