



Colorado Springs Police Department

General Order

1065 Motor Vehicle Thefts

Section 1000 – Patrol Functions

Effective Date: 4/14/2025

Supersedes Date: 9/27/2023

.01 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the responsibilities associated with the processing and return of stolen vehicles.

.02 Cross-Reference

[GO 1320 Towing and Impound Procedures](#)

[GO 1400 Collection of Physical Evidence](#)

[DL-1400-01 Visual Recording of Evidence](#)

[DL-1400-07 Administrative Hold Vehicles](#)

.03 Discussion

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.04 Policy

Personnel who respond to incidents involving stolen vehicles and their recovery are responsible for proper reporting and notification. Personnel will place and remove vehicle pick-up requests as soon as practical, but no later than the end of their shift.

.05 Definitions

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.10 Stolen Vehicle Pick-up Process

Stolen vehicles are often used in a variety of other crimes, making the timely entry of stolen vehicles into the appropriate law enforcement database a critical component to the investigative

process. In the interest of safety to the community and department personnel, personnel who initiate a case report for a stolen vehicle will complete an online vehicle pick-up request upon determining the vehicle qualifies as stolen and prior to completing the call for service. This is to ensure other officers do not unknowingly make contact with a stolen vehicle that has not yet been entered into an appropriate database.

The vehicle pick-up request must be filled out completely to ensure law enforcement databases will accept the entry. Personnel will cross-reference any suspects associated with the stolen vehicle on the vehicle pickup submission. Upon receipt, the Records and Identification Section personnel will immediately enter the pick-up information in all applicable law enforcement databases.

.15 Processing of Recovered Stolen Vehicles

Personnel recovering a stolen vehicle will process it and its contents for evidence in accordance with [agency directives for evidence collection and processing](#) and will document these actions in a supplemental report. Processing includes taking photos of the vehicle (including its VIN number), uploading the images into the [agency digital tracking system](#), and attempting fingerprints from surfaces likely to indicate control over the vehicle such as the interior driver-side area. Collection of touch DNA from the gearshift and steering wheel is not required; however, collection of fluid samples such as blood and saliva, along with articles of clothing likely worn by the offender such as gloves and facemasks should be considered for potential DNA analysis.

.20 Attempts to Contact Case Victim

Personnel recovering a stolen vehicle will make reasonable attempts to notify the owner and will document their efforts in a supplemental report. Personnel will request that the owner respond to the scene to recover the vehicle unless the vehicle needs to be impounded for further investigative purposes (e.g., used in a crime and is a key piece of evidence) [as outlined in DL-1400-07 Administrative Hold Vehicles](#). If no contact is made with the victim or the victim is unable to respond to claim the vehicle, the vehicle will be impounded.

.25 Releasing or Towing a Recovered Stolen Vehicle

Prior to releasing the vehicle, personnel will obtain documents from the owner that verify proof of ownership.

Personnel will secure the owner's signature on a Receipt for Returned Property form before releasing the vehicle [and will attach this to the case file as long as the vehicle has not been entered into EvidenceOnQ \(EoQ\)](#). If the vehicle has been entered into EoQ, the officer will also forward

the Receipt (or a copy) to the Impound Unit via email or interoffice mail (do not submit as evidence).

Personnel will not leave the stolen vehicle unattended at the location of the recovery, even at the owner's request. If the owner cannot respond, the vehicle will be impounded.

.30 Stolen Vehicle Inventory

Personnel will conduct an inventory search of the vehicle for the safety of personnel and citizens, to collect any necessary evidence, and to remove hazardous, valuable, and/or illegal items that do not belong to the vehicle owner.

Items not considered evidence, hazardous/illegal, do not have significant value, and/or not PII will be the responsibility of the vehicle owner to dispose.

- Hazardous, illegal items, and firearms (not belonging to the owner), will be removed and submitted as **property**, or as **evidence** (if they are considered evidentiary).
- Hazardous/perishable items which are safe to dispose of, may be disposed of by the officer/CSO along with indication in the report and on the Car Card of what was removed and manner of disposal.
- Items with apparent serial numbers and/or identifiable markings (business names on tools, items of value with a name on them, documents in other owner's names, etc) will be removed and submitted to the EU as **property**, or as **evidence** (if they are considered evidentiary).

If the vehicle is impounded, the vehicle owner will be allowed to discard items that do not belong to them into a secure dumpster upon claiming the vehicle.

.35 Vehicles Recovered in an Outside Jurisdiction

Personnel will not be dispatched to process vehicles stolen in CSPD's jurisdiction but recovered in another jurisdiction. The recovering agency will process the stolen vehicle, unless otherwise arranged by an officer with the recovering agency (e.g., a vehicle held for evidence in a CSPD criminal investigation). If the recovered vehicle has been impounded by another law enforcement agency, that agency shall be directed to contact NCIC to confirm the validity of the steal. Once confirmed, Records and Identification personnel will cancel the pick up noting information received by the recovering agency. The recovered vehicle will be left in the custody of the recovering agency. If the recovering agency has not contacted the victim, NCIC personnel will attempt the victim contact.

.40 Impounding Recovered Vehicles

Once a stolen vehicle is impounded, personnel will not place a hold on the vehicle unless such action is required (e.g., evidence recovery requiring the execution of a search warrant) and it is approved by a supervisor. Once approved for a hold, personnel will enter the recovered vehicle into EoQ. Ensure the owner information is included in EoQ, as well as the original case report number and agency information (if not CSPD).

If a reported stolen vehicle was impounded by a towing company that is not the department's contracted towing company, and the owner did not request the tow, personnel will respond to the towing company's location with the department's contract towing company. The department's contract towing company will impound the vehicle.

The towing company that originally towed a reported stolen vehicle may seek reimbursement for the tow by emailing a copy of the original tow invoice to the Impound/Evidence Manager. The Impound/Evidence Manager will research and determine the validity of the reimbursement request.

.45 Motor Vehicle Theft – Outside Recovery

When personnel recover a stolen vehicle that was reported as stolen to another law-enforcement agency, the personnel making the recovery will process the vehicle and complete a case report titled, "Outside Agency Assist" with the Occurred Incident Type being "Outside Agency Assist."

Officers responsible for recovering a vehicle that was reported stolen to another law-enforcement agency will confirm the vehicle's stolen status with NCIC, complete an Outside Agency Assist report, and submit a vehicle cancellation form to the Records and Identification Section. NCIC will then notify the originating agency of the recovery. The officer is also responsible for notifying the victim.

.50 Canceling Pickups for Recovered Stolen Vehicles

Personnel who complete a report on a stolen motor vehicle recovery will:

- **Cancel** the pickup by completing the online vehicle cancellation request as soon as practicable, but no later than the end of their shift **unless approved by a supervisor**. Upon receipt, Records and Identification Section personnel will immediately remove the entry in all applicable law enforcement databases.
- **Complete the supplement.**
 - **Include the MO and vehicle damage in the supplement (e.g., puffer, key in vehicle, ignition damage, etc.)**

- The Property Vehicle tab **must be completed**. Copy this information from the case report so that you are not creating a new vehicle in this supplement. In this tab, complete **the following**:

- Property Type Code (IBR)
- Property Type (IBR)
- Property Value (IBR)
- Recovery Info
- Any other mandatory field.

RELATE PROPERTY TO ANY/ALL OFFENSES...	RELATE PROPERTY TO ONLY 1 VICTIM	OR	ENTER OWNER IF NOT LISTED AS CASE SUBJECT	RECOVERY INFO
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