ELGIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

151 Douglas Avenue Elgin, Illinois 60120

Effective Date: 06/17/02	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE	Revised Date: 10/23/23
Chief of Police:	Driving and Patrol Operations, 41.2	

Cross Reference:	Policy Sections:
SOP 1.2 Limits of Authority and Discretion SOP 41.5 Motor Vehicle Pursuits SOP 42.4 Missing Persons SOP 46.1 Unusual Occurrences 625 ILCS 5/11-205	41.2.1 Non-Emergency and Emergency Driving 41.2.2 Pursuit Driving and Documentation 41.2.3 First Responder/Emergency Notifications

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for non-emergency driving, emergency driving, and basic patrol operations by members of the Elgin Police Department.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Elgin Police Department to drive in a safe and courteous manner. The following standards are designed to ensure overall safety. For information pertaining to vehicle pursuits, refer to Standard Operating Procedure 41.5 Motor Vehicle Pursuits.

DEFINITIONS

Catch Up-Driving: Driving where a police officer, using emergency warning devices, may use privileges set forth in Illinois Vehicle Code 625 ILCS 5/11-205.

Emergency Driving: Driving during the use of emergency warning devices or in accordance with 625 ILCS 5/11-205. For the purpose of this policy, used in situations where the officer is driving to a scene having the propensity for bodily harm or when the officer can articulate a deviation from routine driving.

Emergency Warning Devices: Oscillating lights, rotating lights, flashing lights, horn, siren or any combination thereof, located on or within police department vehicles.

Marked Police Vehicle: Any police vehicle that is identifiable by a specialized color scheme, department seal and specialized lettering.

Marked Subdued Police Vehicle: Any police vehicle that is not immediately recognized; however, the identifiers are recognizable when viewed at close range, and are reflective during nighttime hours.

Non-Emergency Driving: Routine driving, without the use of emergency warning devices, which shall generally be performed by all members.

Unmarked Police Vehicle: Any police vehicle which has no distinctive identifiable markings.

PROCEDURES

41.2.1 NON-EMERGENCY AND EMERGENCY DRIVING

A. Authorized personnel will operate marked, marked subdued and unmarked police vehicles in accordance with all traffic regulations and laws.

1. It is essential that personnel not become complacent or disregard rules of the road.

2. In general, routine incidents will not require emergency warning devices; however, they may be used in situations when officers are able to articulate a deviation from routine driving.

B. When engaged in emergency driving, state law permits officers to violate traffic regulations. However, state law does not relieve officers from their duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons. State law does not protect officers from the consequences of their reckless disregard for the safety of others.

C. Officers may reasonably exceed the speed limit when responding to an emergency; however, officers shall maintain a speed which enables them to maintain full control of their vehicle at all times and under all conditions.

D. When approaching intersections and emergency warning devices are activated, officers shall reduce speed and yield at red traffic signals and stop signs to ensure that it is safe to proceed.

E. Officers shall consider the following factors while engaged in emergency driving:

1. Weather.

2. Road traffic condition.

3. Day of the week.

4. Time of day.

5. Severity of the incident.

6. Distance from the incident.

7. Number and location of additional responding officers.

F. When engaged in emergency driving, officers shall:

1. Use emergency warning lights at all times, unless otherwise dictated by the tactical situation.

2. Use the horn, siren, spotlight or P.A. system, as needed, to expedite safe movement to the scene.

G. Except in a public safety emergency, employees may not engage in cellular communication while operating a city vehicle unless a “hands-free” device or kit is utilized. If the vehicle does not have “hands free” capability, it is the responsibility of the employee to utilize a “hands free” device. This protocol applies to all cellular communication devices, whether personally owned or department issued.

H. Except when safe to do so, employees should not operate mobile data terminals, laptop computers, or other wireless electronic communications devices while operating a police vehicle in motion; this applies to all devices whether personally owned or department issued. An exception to this rule is the use of the officer’s portable radio.

41.2.2 PURSUIT DRIVING AND DOCUMENTATION

Refer to Standard Operating Procedure 41.5 Motor Vehicle Pursuits.

41.2.3 FIRST RESPONDER/ EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

A. When approaching a dangerous or emergency situation, responding officers must cognizant of officer safety. Distance may need to be maintained in hazardous materials and other dangerous situations, which may present officer safety issues.

B. The first responder will immediately notify the Emergency Communications Division and a patrol supervisor and report on the magnitude of the emergency. During larger scale emergencies, the supervisor shall make the determination as to additional resource requirements. The protocol in Standard Operating Procedure 46.1 Unusual Occurrences shall be followed, as appropriate.

C. The department has obligations to make notification to other agencies in the event of certain emergencies. These notifications serve to meet statutory obligations, restore essential services, effect emergency repairs, resolve situations, and keep the public informed.