



## FAIRBURN GEORGIA POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL



**CHAPTER: 16 - Patrol Functions**

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**I. PURPOSE**

- A Establishes the scope of a patrol officer's responsibilities
- B Establishes a priority system for handling calls for service
- C Establishes a standard operating procedure for responding to calls for service
- D Establishes a standard operating procedure for traffic accident investigation
- E Establishes a standard operating procedure for the management of disputes, both civil and criminal
- F Establishes a standard operating procedure for the investigation of suspicious persons and/or vehicles
- G Establishes a standard operating procedure for conducting building checks and searches
- H Establishes a standard operating procedure for managing mentally ill or intoxicated persons
- I Establishes a standard operating procedure for providing assistance for crime victims

**II. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**A General**

1. Agency Information – All newly appointed personnel shall be provided with a PowerDMS login credential that will provide accessibility to the following:
  - a) The role and responsibility of the Fairburn Police Department;
  - b) The Department's policies, procedures, rules and regulations, mission statement, and goals;
  - c) The City's Personnel Policy Handbook

The rights and responsibilities of employees are provided by Human Resources during Onboarding Orientation.

In-Service training will be provided to employees as needed outlining the Department's policies, procedures, rules and regulations. The Department will also make available to all employees written/digital copies of the Department Policy Manual.

2. Scope of the Law Enforcement Function - The function of the Agency must be broadly interpreted to include many tasks other than the enforcement of laws. The Agency is responsible for:
  - a) the protection of life, individual liberty and property;
  - b) the preservation of peace;
  - c) the prevention of crime and disorder;
  - d) the detection and arrest of violators of the law; the enforcement of state laws and City ordinances within the Agency's jurisdiction; and
  - e) the provision of public service to the community..
3. Attitude Toward Providing Service - Agency employees should recognize that service to citizens of the community is a major function of law enforcement and must be rendered by every employee of the Agency. Employees should try to assist citizens who are victims of a crime, need emergency help, need assistance, or would otherwise be inconvenienced by the Agency's failure to act. This kind of service can range from giving simple directions and advice to travelers, to providing victims of crime with reassurance and support, to referring individuals to applicable social service agencies.
4. Crime Prevention - An important, though often overlooked, function of law enforcement is crime prevention. In many ways, crime prevention is a more worthwhile function than after-the-fact investigation and apprehension activities. In addition to suppressing crime through visible, aggressive patrols, officers can accomplish long term crime prevention objectives by informing citizens of ways to protect themselves and their property. By encouraging citizens to cooperate with other criminal justice and social agencies, officers can effectively support efforts of a system-wide approach to prevent crime.
5. Maintenance of Order - Another broadly interpreted function of law enforcement might best be defined as management of social order. For example, this role includes such activities as preventing or settling family and neighborhood disputes, providing traffic escorts and directions, and assisting ill or injured persons.
6. Patrol Objectives - The patrol operation exists to:
  - a. Provide twenty – four (24) hour protection to the citizens
  - b. Prevent the occurrence of street crimes through preventive patrol
  - c. Respond rapidly to all requests for emergency law enforcement service
  - d. Improve the criminal apprehension rate by conducting thorough

preliminary on-the-scene investigations

- e. Reduce traffic congestion and accident hazard through systematic enforcement of traffic laws and ordinances
  - f. Respond to and investigate motor vehicle accidents
  - g. Aid victims of accidents
  - h. Assist citizens in dealing with legal, medical, or social problems through direct crisis intervention and/or making correct referrals to agencies equipped to deal with such problems; and
  - i. Improve law enforcement/community relations by increasing the quality and quantity of contacts between citizens and law enforcement.
7. Response to Calls - The response to, and investigation of, citizen complaints and requests for service will be given priority according to the seriousness of the situation and the availability of resources. Follow-up investigation of these incidents will be conducted, as required.
8. Prioritizing Calls for Service - It is usually possible for the Agency to respond to every call for service; however, the Agency must organize available resources to give the most efficient service possible. Priority of call assignment depends on many factors, and it is normally the responsibility of the communications operators to make these assignments. However, a patrol officer may be required to decide between continuing an assigned call and responding to a citizen's complaint or other observed event. The officer's determination should be based upon the risk to life and property. When it is impossible for an officer to respond to a citizen's complaint or an observed event, he/she shall, if circumstances permit, either give directions for obtaining such assistance or start the necessary notifications.
9. Preventive Patrol - Although the patrol officer's work is often dictated by requests for service, a considerable portion of the officer's workday is preventive patrol. To make productive use of the available time, officers should plan their patrol to focus on specific problems within their area of assignment.
10. Patrol Vehicles - Vehicles used in routine or general patrol service will be equipped with emergency blue lights, siren, and mobile radio transceiver. Officers shall routinely test the equipment at the beginning of their tour of duty to verify that it is in proper working order.
11. Knowledge of Area - Patrol officers shall know the physical characteristics of their assignments as well as the current crime problems in those areas. In addition, officers shall become acquainted with residents and businesspeople in their area of assignment. Patrol officers should be skilled in the detection of criminal activities and assertively conduct their own preliminary investigations and relay this information to others within the Agency.
12. Preventive Action - Patrol officers should be alert to conditions which may allow crime to go undetected (e.g., inoperative streetlights, overgrown vacant lots, dead ends). Additionally, officers should take the steps necessary to

reduce the opportunity for criminal activity such as advising a storekeeper of points of vulnerability, mediating a family dispute which could escalate into an assault or homicide, or managing intoxicated persons.

13. Commitment of Resources - As a public service agency, the Agency is mandated to protect the interests and safety of all citizens. Requests from individual citizens for special services (e.g., increased patrol, the use of radar, premises checks) should be carefully evaluated in terms of total Agency commitments before any promises are made. If a service is promised, the officer making the assurance shall take steps to ensure the request for service is processed. When making an assurance that a service will be provided, the officer shall inform the citizen that other demands may make its compliance difficult.
14. Radio Communication / Field Assignments - All officers engaged in field assignments shall have continuous, uninterrupted access to two-way radio communication (portable radios/walkie talkies).

#### B. Traffic Law Enforcement:

1. The purpose of traffic law enforcement is to reduce traffic accidents through preventive patrol and active enforcement. All uniformed personnel have traffic enforcement responsibilities whether or not they are assigned to the Uniform Patrol Division. To effectively carry out this function, all officers must be familiar with Georgia statutes that apply to traffic law enforcement. All traffic citations will be issued using the Uniform Traffic Citation (UTC) system. Officers and their supervisors are accountable for citations sequentially issued from their UTC book, or use of electronic ticketing system.

Directed traffic enforcement will be conducted periodically and as needed based on review of crash data, requests for traffic enforcement, Governor's Office of Highway Safety campaigns, crime data and trends, school zones, and roadway conditions, which justify the need for directed enforcement in a specific location. Directed enforcement efforts will be directed to patrol officers by their chain of command. Directed patrols will be documented on an officer's daily log sheet and documented via emails or memos if required by the chain of command.

2. Traffic enforcement techniques:
  - a) Visible traffic patrol
  - b) Stationary observation: The tendency of motorists to knowingly violate traffic laws is deterred by open and visible patrol. However, when there is an unusual or continuing enforcement problem at a particular location, officers may park in a conspicuous location and observe traffic; and
  - c) Unmarked vehicles: These vehicles will not normally be utilized for traffic enforcement activity. Sworn personnel operating unmarked vehicles are to use discretion when stopping traffic violators and are discouraged from enforcing minor violations. Unmarked vehicles must be equipped with an emergency light and siren when stopping any traffic violator. Private vehicles will not be used for traffic enforcement.

3. Speed Measuring Devices/Use, Calibration and Maintenance - Only officers that have been specially trained and certified by Georgia POST are allowed to use the Agency's speed detection equipment. The equipment will be calibrated and maintained as specified by the manufacturer and in compliance with applicable state requirements.
4. Traffic Accident Response:
  - a) The officer's response to an accident scene will be determined by the seriousness or magnitude of the accident as reported. Officers responding to the scene of any accident will drive in a safe manner with due regard for persons and property. Emergency lights and siren will be used when responding to accidents with known or probable injuries; and
  - b) Upon arrival, the officer will determine if additional assistance is required at the scene.

C. Traffic Direction and Control:

1. Manual Direction - Officers will manually direct traffic under the following circumstances while wearing the Agency issued reflective vest.
  - a) During periods of traffic or pedestrian congestion where traffic control signals are malfunctioning; and
  - b) During special events (notification should be given in advance of any planned special event)
2. Fire and Emergency Scenes - Officers directing traffic at fire and emergency scenes will ensure that all private vehicles, including firemen's vehicles, are well clear of the emergency scene and are not obstructing emergency vehicles or other traffic.
3. Disabled Vehicles and Highway Assistance - Upon observing a stranded motorist on any street or highway, the officer shall stop and determine what assistance, if any, is required. If the officer is in route to a call, the communications center should be notified to dispatch an officer when possible.
4. Emergency Escorts - Police vehicles will not be used to escort other vehicles (civilian or marked) on an emergency run. When possible, assistance should be provided at intersections.
5. Road Hazards - Officers shall report any road hazards to the Communications center. The following are considered road hazards:
  - a) Damaged or malfunctioning traffic control devices
  - b) Defective roadway lighting
  - c) Visually obscured intersections
  - d) Roadway defects; and

e) Lack of, damaged or missing roadway signs or safety devices

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-1 RESPONDING TO CALLS FOR SERVICE**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Agency cannot be aware of every circumstance where law enforcement action or assistance may be required. Citizens of the community are needed for this information. Citizens expect the Agency to respond to requests for law enforcement service within a reasonable time and to satisfactorily perform the necessary services. Professional service must be rendered in all cases.

Officer initiated activities shall be documented in the same manner as routine calls for service.

**I. RECEIVING CALLS**

- A Officers should never consider any call routine.
- B Officers should be discouraged from forming definite opinions about a call before arriving at the scene. The circumstances at the scene should determine the officer's actions.
- C When the Communications center receives a call for service from a non-English speaking individual, the Communications center will:
  - 1. Dispatch an officer to the call
  - 2. Advise the officer that the complainant may not speak English
  - 3. Advise the officer that he/she should notify the Communications center if an interpreter is needed; and
  - 4. If an interpreter is needed, one should be contacted by the communications center through the language line.

**II. ARRIVING AT THE SCENE**

Whenever possible, the law enforcement unit should be parked at a reasonable distance from the entrance to the location of a call. Officers shall:

- A Properly park his/her unit as close to the curb as possible;
- B Approach buildings from an angle to reduce the possibility of an attack from the inside.
- C In cases where the immediate presence of law enforcement is required to protect a person from possible death or injury, the first officer on the scene will enter the building after notifying the communications center of his/her intentions.
- D If the officer determines that the complainant(s) cannot speak English, the officer shall request an interpreter, and if one is not available, contact the communications center and request the language line.

### **III. PORTABLE RADIOS**

The portable radio/walkie-talkie shall always be carried.

### **IV. APPROACHING DOORWAYS**

- A When approaching a doorway, officers shall knock on the door and stand to either side of the entrance.
- B When the officer is making the initial approach to any building, he/she should take notice of any movement inside (e.g., persons, running silhouettes, or flashlight movement).

### **V. BUILDING INTERIOR**

The interior of the building must be given careful consideration because:

- A More than one person may be present. Officers should keep all the people in front of them.
- B Suspects or persons placed under arrest are probably familiar with the interior of the house or building:
  - 1. Do not allow people to retrieve hats, coats, purses, etc. Retrieve only essential articles. All retrieved articles must be searched for the safety and security of law enforcement personnel.
  - 2. Do not allow the arrested person to wander around inside; and
  - 3. All persons arrested and transported will be frisked/searched, handcuffed, and placed in the rear seat of the transporting unit and, when practical, secured with a safety restraining device.
- C The first officer to arrive at the scene has specific responsibilities:
  - 1. The officer shall begin to secure the scene and cover the most likely avenue of escape.
  - 2. If difficulties or violence are encountered, the officer shall summon assistance through the Communications center by the quickest means available.
  - 3. If injuries are involved, the officer shall administer first aid and request emergency medical personnel.
  - 4. If the suspect has left the scene, the officer shall develop a description and issue a lookout.
  - 5. The officer shall take charge of and process or protect the crime scene, preserve evidence, and interview/detain witnesses present.
  - 6. If it is determined that additional help is needed, the officer shall notify the Communications center.
  - 7. The officer shall prepare the appropriate report. The first officer arriving at the scene is generally responsible for the report.
  - 8. When serious types of calls (shootings, robberies, stabbings, nature

unknown, etc.) are unfounded, the officer shall notify the communications center immediately; and

9. On calls of an emergency nature or calls which will result in the officer being out of service for an extended period, officers are to notify the communications center of the circumstances of the call as soon as possible. The on-duty supervisor shall monitor the situation, having the authority to designate duties and responsibilities and send backup assistance as needed.

#### D "Officer Needs Assistance" Call

1. Units responding to assist an officer needing help shall operate with blue light and siren.
2. If the exact situation is unknown, officers are to be particularly observant and cautious when arriving at the scene; and
3. When the situation is under control or an assisting officer's services are no longer needed, the officer shall immediately notify the communications center and return to service. Only those units directed to remain at the scene by the on-duty supervisor will do so.

#### E Calls or Incidents Requiring Presence of Patrol Supervisor at Scene:

1. There are many incidents or events that may require supervisor response or presence at the scene for purpose of assuming command.
2. Supervisors shall respond as back-up, assist at, and/or assume command at calls such as, but not limited to:
  - a. Potential risks, scenes of arrest and incidents involving use of force.
  - b. Officer injured or involved in accident.
  - c. Major crimes/crime scenes involving offenses against persons, robbery and burglary.
  - d. Search for lost or missing children.
  - e. Search and rescue situations, disasters, major structure fires or hazardous materials incident; and
  - f. Hostage or barricade situations.
3. Also refer to SOP 18 Unusual Occurrences

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-2 TRAFFIC ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

The investigation of traffic accidents is necessary, not only to determine traffic law violations, but also to obtain engineering data, protect the rights of the individuals involved, and assist in traffic education. To ensure proper and complete investigation of accidents the following procedures will be utilized:

**I. GENERAL PROCEDURE**

Upon arrival at an accident scene, officers are to:

- A Park the patrol vehicle to protect the scene and allow movement of traffic. Administer first aid and advise the communications center if rescue and/or wrecker services are needed. The officer will also advise if another officer is needed for assistance, and the officer may set flares as needed.
- B Officers should always wear the Agency issued reflective vest when working accident scenes.
- C Flares should never be used if any type of fuel is present in the area.
- D When serious bodily injury, death, or extenuating circumstances exist, then Georgia State Patrol is to be called. In this case, vehicles should not be moved unless necessary to preserve life or prevent further collisions.
- E Obtain driver's license and proof of insurance from all drivers involved in the accident.
- F Question and obtain names and addresses from any witnesses. When it is necessary for a witness to leave the scene before the investigation is complete, obtain all necessary information as quickly as possible and allow the witness to depart.
- G Investigate and determine the cause of the accident. Note the position of all vehicles involved and take measurements whenever possible.
- H After the preliminary investigation is completed, clear the roadway quickly and refrain from blocking any portion of the roadway while completing paperwork.
- I After the roadway is clear, the investigating officer should turn the unit's blue lights off as quickly as possible if this can be done without creating a hazard. This action will usually allow traffic to flow faster by attracting less attention.
- J When there are traffic violations, issue the appropriate citations and subpoena the witnesses, if any, and allow them to leave; and
- K If the driver and passengers of any vehicle involved were transported from the scene because of injuries, the officer will follow up obtaining all the information necessary to complete the investigation and report.

## II. ACCIDENTS INVOLVING SERIOUS INJURY OR FATALITY

- A. The initial officer receiving the call will arrive on the scene and park outside of the scene area.
- B. Upon determination that a fatality exists, the initial officer will advise the communications center, notifying the on-duty supervisor.
- C. The initial officer will call for Georgia State Patrol and other emergency assistance as needed. The accident scene will be protected as a crime scene. Unnecessary traffic will be diverted or directed around the scene.
- D. Any suspects at the scene will be detained by the initial officer, either at the scene, or if injured, at the medical facility for later investigation.
- E. No items such as vehicle parts, body parts or deceased persons should be disturbed or removed from the scene if at all possible.
- F. No wreckers or spectators will be allowed to enter the scene until authorized.
- G. If a fatality exists, as determined by a certified emergency medical technician, the victim shall not be removed from the scene.
- H. If different from the initial responding officer, the investigating officer shall be called by the on-duty supervisor on the scene. The initial responding officer shall make an incident report.
- I. The investigating officer will assume command of the accident scene. All pertinent information will be relayed to this investigator.
- J. The investigating officer will complete all investigative reports and will be responsible for conducting and concluding the investigation, including the initiation of any criminal charges that may be forthcoming and ordering blood or urine samples for testing.
- K. The investigating officer will be responsible for clearing the accident scene and impounding vehicles.
- L. It will also be the responsibility of the investigating officer to ensure that every effort is made in contacting the victim's immediate family before any news release occurs;
- M. The following reports will be submitted by the investigating officer concerning a fatality:
  - 1. Vehicle Accident Report;
  - 2. Incident Report, outlining in detail the complete investigation;
  - 3. Copies of Witnesses' Statements;
  - 4. Arrest Booking Report (if applicable);
  - 5. Blood Alcohol Test on Victim;

6. Blood Alcohol Test on Suspect (if applicable);
7. Warrants (if applicable);
8. Reports by Medical Examiner or Coroner; and
9. Photographs (to be attached later).

### **III. HIT AND RUN (LEAVING THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT)**

The following procedures will be used in accidents involving hit and run accidents:

A First officer to arrive on the scene shall:

1. Administer first aid (when applicable) and advise the communications center when emergency equipment or a crime scene technician is needed.
2. Obtain information and dispatch a lookout on the suspect's vehicle, if known; and
3. If the hit and run accident involves a fatality, notify an on-duty supervisor.

B The officer receiving the call will handle the investigation and report as follows:

1. Investigate and, if possible, determine the cause of the accident.
2. Obtain any other evidence that would aid in identifying the suspect's vehicle.
3. If possible, give additional information for lookout broadcast.
4. All evidence collected at the scene shall be turned over to the Evidence Custodian, in accordance with policy.
5. Complete a vehicle accident report and mark clearly on that report that the accident is a hit and run; and
6. Complete an incident report.

### **IV. VEHICLE ACCIDENTS INVOLVING INJURY TO LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL**

An investigation will be made of all circumstances involving vehicle accidents resulting in injury to law enforcement personnel and/or damage to law enforcement vehicles. All such reports will be forwarded to the Accident Review Board and the Chief of Police for review. In instances where law enforcement personnel are determined to be at fault, administrative actions will be taken.

In addition, a report will be completed by the officer or the on-duty supervisor. The review board will decide of officer responsibility for the accident.

The following procedures are to be used in reporting accidents involving law enforcement vehicles:

- A The officer shall notify the communications center of the accident, give the location and other pertinent information and request that the on-duty supervisor respond.

- B An accident report will be completed by an outside agency. An Agency generated incident report will also be completed.
- C The on-duty supervisor will contact Georgia State Patrol or other agency as appropriate to respond and investigate the accident.
- D Injured citizens will not be transported to the hospital in law enforcement vehicles.

## **V. VEHICLE ACCIDENTS INVOLVING DIPLOMATIC OR CONSULAR PERSONNEL**

If during the course of an investigation of a motor vehicle accident, it is determined that one of the vehicle(s) involved was either (1) operated by someone claiming diplomatic or consular status, or (2) bearing diplomatic or consular license plates issued by the United States Department of State, the investigating officer will immediately contact the on duty supervisor and follow the procedures in the SOP regarding Diplomatic and Consular Immunity, Request for Asylum/Defection.

## **VI. PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Accident investigations on private property shall be reported in a Private Property accident report unless involving an injury or hit and run.

## **VII. WRECKER SERVICE**

The procedure for obtaining wrecker service shall be as follows:

- A The officer requesting service shall make the request through the Communications center:
  - 1. Only the contract wrecker services approved by the city shall be used by the Agency.
  - 2. The investigating officer, not the wrecker driver, is responsible for filling out the impound slip. An impound slip will be completed on all police impound. One copy is provided to the wrecker services, and one digitally stored within the police report management system; and
  - 3. An officer will remain at the scene until the wrecker has towed the car away.
- B Private use of a wrecker service will not require an impound slip to be completed by the officer.
- C Accident victims may use the wrecker service of their choice when:
  - 1. The victim or driver is not under arrest; and
  - 2. The vehicle involved is not causing an immediate traffic hazard and will be moved within a reasonable time.
- D When a wrecker may be needed and the driver is able to communicate, the officer should determine if the driver wants a wrecker for his/her vehicle. (This is a case where there will not be an impound by the investigating officer).

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-3 MANAGING DISPUTES**

**INTRODUCTION**

The role of law enforcement officers in non-criminal, civil disputes is that of an impartial keeper of the peace. The role of law enforcement officers in criminal disputes is to restore order, quell disturbances and to make the necessary arrests for violations of the law. The purpose of this S.O.P. is to establish guidelines governing the involvement and action of Agency personnel in both civil and criminal disputes.

**I. CIVIL (NON-CRIMINAL) DISPUTES DEFINED**

A civil dispute shall mean a non-violent confrontation between two or more persons which does not involve a breach of the peace or the commission of a criminal act. The following procedures will be used for handling non-criminal disputes:

A Stand-by Situations - Often, law enforcement personnel are requested to stand by to prevent a breach of the peace in domestic situations where one or more persons may be removing personal belongings from a location (i.e., home, apartment, business). When entry into private property and/or the removal of property is denied to a claimant by another who is in possession, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. The officer shall advise the complainant that claims to personal property will not be enforced by the Agency without an order from the court;
2. Claimants may not trespass upon the property of another for the purpose of removing or recovering property without a court order empowering them to do so.

B Domestic or Neighborhood Arguments (not involving physical assault or weapons)

In domestic or neighborhood disputes, an officer shall:

1. Park in a manner that allows safe approach and an opportunity to evaluate the situation;
2. Separate and interview disputants in a calm and unbiased manner;
3. Get disputants to offer or suggest alternatives for resolving the dispute; and
4. Maintain third party neutrality while restoring normal communications between disputants.

C Orders of the Court - Officers of the Agency shall enforce only local and current orders of the court which specifically direct the Sheriff or his duly constituted deputies and/or police officers to execute the order of judgment:

1. After a local order of the court (e.g., restraining order) has been served, violations of the order which occur after the order is served must be reported by the complaint to the court which issued the order;

2. Enforcement of violations of a local court order must originate from the court with an arrest warrant. Officers shall not make warrantless arrests for violations of civil court orders; and
3. A conditional order of the court which orders the arrest of a person shall not be executed unless the order is current, and verification of the order and its provisions can be established at the time of arrest.

## **II. CRIMINAL DISPUTES DEFINED**

A criminal dispute is any confrontation between two or more persons involving breaches of the peace, incidents of misdemeanor assaults, as well as related felonies. Procedures for handling criminal disputes (assaults and disturbances) are:

- A In violent or felony disturbances, or when weapons are involved, an assisting patrol unit will be dispatched. When an assisting patrol unit is unavailable for dispatch, a supervisor shall be sent, when possible;
- B In violent or felony disturbances, or when weapons are involved, responding patrol units should coordinate a simultaneous arrival;
- C Responding units will park in a manner that allows safe approach to the incident location;
- D Responding officers should attempt to observe disputants and evaluate the nature and extent of the incident before making their presence known, when possible;
- E Officers shall separate and calm disputants and attempt to establish normal speaking conversation;
- F Officers should maneuver themselves into a position where disputants are facing away from each other while officers are facing each other. In this position, each officer can then see the front of one disputant, and the back of the disputant who is facing the second officer;
- G Officers shall determine if there is cause for an arrest without a warrant:
  1. When evidence exists that a crime has been committed, an arrest shall be made; and
  2. Disputants will be notified of procedures for initiating criminal prosecution when there is insufficient evidence to make an arrest.
- H Officers may attempt to bring disputants back together to develop alternatives for conflict resolution, or to obtain further aid or counseling;
- I When a dispute cannot be resolved and the potential for violence continues to exist, officers shall attempt to persuade one of the disputants to leave the premises.
- J If an act of family violence occurs, the responding officer shall decide as to whether an arrest is necessary as stipulated under the Family Violence Act.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
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**S.O.P. 16-4 INVESTIGATION OF SUSPICIOUS PERSONS/VEHICLES**

**INTRODUCTION**

Officers are unable to predict which persons may react violently when confronted by law enforcement officers. Therefore, caution must be exercised in each confrontation.

**I. INVESTIGATION OF SUSPICIOUS PEDESTRIANS**

- A The officer shall notify the Communications center of the situation including:
  - 1. The location, the number of persons, race, sex, and approximate age and physical description of the persons before the investigation begins;
    - a) Avoid making the investigation in a crowd (if possible)
    - b) When contact is made at night, attempt to direct the car headlights and or spotlight on the suspects.
  - 2. If necessary and appropriate, the names and dates of birth for each person shall be checked through the GCIC/NCIC computer.
- B If two or more pedestrians need to be investigated, another officer should be called to assist.
- C During the interview, officers are to treat suspects in a courteous manner and inform them of the reasons for being stopped and questioned. Officers are never to question any suspect while remaining seated in the law enforcement vehicle with the suspect outside of the vehicle.
- D If officers determine the suspect is to be released, they are to obtain the information necessary to complete the incident report.

**II. VEHICLE CHECKS - SUSPICIOUS VEHICLES - FELONY STOPS**

- A When making felony stops, officers are to adhere to the following procedures:
  - 1. An officer may receive a call, or may observe a suspicious vehicle, moving or parked, which is believed to be/have been involved in a felony. The officers should request a tag check on the vehicle.
  - 2. Officers will notify the Communications center when they are following a vehicle they wish to investigate. Officers shall give the communications center the location, the license number, a description of the vehicle, the direction of travel (if moving), the number of occupants, sex and race;
  - 3. The on-duty supervisor will ensure a second unit is sent as back-up, when possible;

4. The initiating officer will give information on the direction of travel and approximate location as often as possible;
5. Upon arrival of the assisting officer, the communications center shall be notified;
6. When stopping the vehicle:
  - a) If possible, the officer should stop the vehicle in a well-lighted area. In addition, officers should avoid stopping the vehicle at an intersection or in a heavily congested area; and
  - b) If the vehicle stops unexpectedly and the occupants attempt to exit the vehicle, the officer is to direct them to remain in the vehicle. When a backup unit is in route, and circumstances permit, the officer will remain with his/her patrol unit until the arrival of the backup unit.
7. When a decision is made to make a felony stop, the officer is to activate the unit's blue lights and when necessary, the unit's siren;
8. The initiating officer should, if possible, stop his/her unit approximately twelve (12) feet behind and to the left of the suspect's vehicle;
9. At night, the initiating officer will turn the patrol unit's lights to high beam and focus the unit's spotlight on the interior of the suspect's vehicle. Backup units are to stop approximately two (2) feet to the rear of, and directly behind, the first patrol unit. The backup unit's headlights should be turned off and the blue lights should be left on.
10. While standing behind the open driver's door of the patrol unit and via the unit's public address system, the initiating officer should direct the suspects to exit the vehicle from the driver's side. The backup officer is to maintain this position until the officer is reasonably sure all occupants are out of the suspect vehicle. Once the suspects are out of their vehicle, the backup officer is to conduct a visual inspection of the suspect vehicle;
11. Suspects are to be directed to line up side by side facing away from the initiating officer (when possible), and directed to keep their hands clearly visible;
12. The backup officer is to assume a position at the right rear bumper of the first law enforcement unit, (being sure not to stand directly between the bumpers of first and second units). If practical, the backup officer should seek a position to the right of the law enforcement units, provided the seeking of this position can be made without endangering the officers. When approaching the suspect vehicle, the backup officer should attempt to keep an object between himself/herself and the suspect vehicle without obstructing his/her view;
13. After the interior of the suspect vehicle has been checked, the backup officer shall handcuff the suspects' hands behind their backs and starts a frisk search of the suspects;
14. After the search is complete, the suspects shall be advised why they are under arrest, if being questioned, read their rights under Miranda, and placed

in the back seat of one of the patrol units;

15. If a vehicle search is warranted, the backup officer is to initiate the search;

16. The officers shall request the communications center run a computer check on all suspects;

B If an officer is going to investigate a vehicle without assistance, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Once an officer identifies a vehicle to stop, the officer is to notify the communications center of the vehicle's location, the vehicle's license number, description, sex/race of the driver, and their approximate location;

2. The officer is to use the unit's blue light and, when necessary, the siren to stop the suspect vehicle;

3. When the suspect vehicle pulls over, the officer is to position his unit approximately twelve (12) feet behind and to the left of the suspect vehicle (when appropriate);

4. As the officer stops the patrol unit, the unit's blue lights should be left on. When appropriate, the officer should focus the unit's spotlight through the rear window of the suspect's vehicle;

5. When approaching the suspect vehicle, the officer is to walk up on the driver's side or passenger's side and visually check its interior. If the driver is the only occupant of the vehicle, the officer is to assume a position clear of the door approximately one foot to the rear driver's/passenger's door.

6. If a visual check reveals other occupants in the vehicle, the officer will order every one out of the vehicle, if appropriate;

7. Once the suspects have been removed from the vehicle, they are to be handcuffed (hands behind back) and frisked.

8. Once frisked, the suspects shall be advised why they are being stopped. The suspect is placed in the back seat of the patrol unit if further questioning is desired, or the subject is placed under arrest. If the Miranda warning is required, it shall be read at this time;

9. If the officer has probable cause to conduct a search/inventory of the suspect's vehicle that cannot be conducted at the scene, the officer shall implement steps to obtain a search warrant;

10. Officers shall check the suspect(s) and vehicle through the GCIC/NCIC computer;

C Safety Measures to be Taken by Officers During Vehicle Stops:

1. When practical, the stop will not be initiated until a backup unit is immediately available;

2. The assisting unit will, when possible, avoid arriving head-on to the vehicle being checked, by driving to the rear of the initiating officers vehicle;

3. Officers shall not make a vehicle check without advising the Communications center;
4. Use blue lights and when necessary, the unit's siren when stopping a vehicle;
5. If at all possible, officers should not give suspects too much warning of the intention to stop them. Officers should not follow too closely;
6. Advance notice will allow a suspect to plan an attack, create an alibi, or dispose of evidence before an officer approaches the suspect vehicle. Officers must never drive alongside a suspect vehicle and talk to the suspect from the police unit. If the person warrants investigating or interviewing, the officer shall conduct the check in the appropriate manner stated above.
7. For officer safety, all suspects in the process of being checked should be frisked before they are interviewed;

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-5 BUILDING CHECKS AND SEARCHES**

**INTRODUCTION**

One method of reducing the threat of burglary is through law enforcement initiated building inspections. By checking buildings thoroughly, the officer can lessen the probability of an occurrence or quickly determine that a crime has occurred. If a crime has been committed, a search would then allow officers to collect significant data on the method of operation, the point of entry and exit, the time frame, and other information needed for the timely reporting of the preliminary investigation.

**I. CHECKING BUILDINGS AS A PART OF PATROL**

- A When leaving the patrol unit to check a building, officers are to notify the communications center:
  - 1. Of the address or location of the building to be checked; and
  - 2. Of the need for additional officers if it is suspected that a prowler is in the building or in the vicinity.
- B When checking a building, officers should always carry a flashlight and radio, to be used as stated below:
  - 1. The flashlight should be carried in the non-reactionary hand leaving the weapon hand free; and
  - 2. An attempt should be made to maintain a continuous beam from the flashlight. Intermittent flashes of light should not be made because it will adversely affect the officer's night vision.
  - 3. Officers shall ensure that they have in their possession a mobile radio when conducting building checks. The radio volume should be turned as low as possible to still be heard without announcing the officer's presence.
- C All doors and windows should be thoroughly checked by:
  - 1. Depressing the latches or turning the knobs when checking doors. Padlocks should be inspected for signs of tampering or defects; and
  - 2. Inspecting the windowsills for pry marks and disturbance of dirt particles.
- D Officers should make an effort to be familiar with the normal appearance of the building and inspect for unusual conditions in the structure, e.g., lights not turned on as usual, window shades drawn, and safe or office furniture moved.
- E Check for items (ladders, barrels, boxes, etc.), against the wall of the building which may indicate the possibility of the presence of prowlers.
- F Be alert for "lookouts" in the vicinity:

1. Lookouts are usually in a place where they can observe an officer's movements and be seen by associates on the inside;
  2. The lookout should be apprehended immediately only if it appears he/she will flee before assistance arrives; and
  3. Be observant of people with cell phones or radios as they may be used as warning devices.
- G Be alert for unusual noises;
- H If time permits, officers should check buildings more than once during a shift; and
- I Officers should be conscious not to develop a pattern or habit of checking a building at the same time during each patrol shift.

## **II. PROCEDURE WHEN AN OPEN OR UNLOCKED DOOR OR WINDOW IS DISCOVERED**

- A In the event officers discover an open or unlocked door, they are to immediately notify the communications center of the building's address, what has been detected and request assistance.
- B An officer shall not enter an unsecured building until assistance arrives.
1. While waiting for back-up officers to arrive, the officer should be in a location to monitor the most likely avenues for escape; and
  2. When the back-up officer arrives, the officer at the scene should disclose his/her location to the back-up officer.
- C The ranking officer at the scene will oversee the building search. If no ranking officer is present, the officer receiving the call or discovering the condition, will be in charge;
- D Officers will be posted outside the building to prevent possible escape of prowlers before the building is entered by the search party, if resources permit;
- E When going through doorways officers should use extreme caution;
- F Buildings with two or more floors will be searched from the bottom up. Elevators and stairways should be secured and controlled, if possible;
- G In the event that a security guard may be working in the building, the officer must be careful not to mistake the security guard for a prowler;
- H When the search of the building is complete, the investigating officer will notify the communication center. The communications center is to call the owner to advise him/her of police findings. Once the owner has been notified, the investigating officer is to be informed if the owner is coming to the building;
- I Prior to departing the scene, the building shall be secured as well as possible; and
- J Once complete, the necessary reports will be prepared by the investigating officer.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-6 DEALING WITH PERSONS DISPLAYING/EXHIBITING SIGNS OF MENTAL  
ILLNESS**

**I. PURPOSE**

To provide field officers with the essential tactical and processing skills necessary to effectively deal with persons with mental illness in a manner to provide the required professional assistance these persons need, to protect the community, to safeguard the officers involved in the encounter and to reduce liability.

**II. POLICY**

This policy does not require officers to make a diagnosis of whether the individual is mentally ill or what form of mental illness/disorder the subject may have but rather to use reasonable judgment according to the observable conditions manifested in the presence of or reported to the officer and whether said behavior appears to be outside the norm where a person may pose a danger to himself/herself or others because every community can expect its law enforcement officers to encounter persons with mental illness. This group of special needs persons presents field officers with different and often complex issues. These persons, whether from intoxication, suicidal tendencies, medical complications or mental illness, present field officers with a wide range of behaviors very different than those exhibited by most members of the community or persons involved in criminal activities. Persons with mental illness may display conduct that is bizarre, irrational, unpredictable and threatening. They may not comprehend commands or other forms of communication in the manner that the officer would expect. They often do not respond to authoritative persons or a display of force. It is the primary task of the field officers confronting these persons to resolve the encounter in the safest manner possible. It is the task of the officer to bring these types of persons to professional resources, when necessary. It is not the mission of the field officer to diagnose the root cause for the person's behavior. Officers are expected to control the incident. Proper tactical and intervention techniques can assist in resolving the immediate situation and hasten the intervention by medical and/or psychiatric professionals and/or professional resources.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A Developmental disability: means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that: 1) is attributable to a significant intellectual disability, person's need for a combination of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services or supports, or other forms of assistance which are of lifelong or extended duration, or any combination of a significant intellectual disability and physical impairments, 2) is manifested before the individual attains age 22, 3) is likely to continue indefinitely, 4) results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activities- self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, and/or capacity for independent living.
- B Mental Illness: means a disorder of thought or mood which significantly impairs judgment, behavior, capacity to recognize reality, or ability to cope with the ordinary demands of life.
- C Professional resources: Sources available to the police agency such as mental health professionals, emergency medical facilities, and detoxification centers.

- D Voluntary and involuntary commitments: Provisions within the State which the Agency can use for the civil commitment of persons requiring professional psychological intervention.
- E Prosecution guidelines: It is the policy of this agency to evaluate the necessity for, and method of, prosecution when dealing with a person with mental illness. Normally misdemeanor violations by the person committed during the police control phase of the incident will not subject the person to a physical arrest. The decision to cite or request a filing by the prosecutor will be determined by the on-duty supervisor. The supervisor will evaluate other crimes committed upon non-agency personnel to determine whether a physical arrest is warranted. The ultimate mission of the Agency is to encourage professional resource intervention for the person with mental illness. Physical arrest should be considered a last resort.

#### IV. PROCEDURE

Field control tactics: The ultimate mission of law enforcement when encountering a person with mental illness is to control the encounter, then determine the best course of action for the subject person. This field tactical response can be segmented into four (4) distinct tactical responses: Containment, Coordination, Communication and Time.

- A Containment: Before any reasonable control and defusing techniques can be used, the subject must be contained:
  - 1. Two (2) officers shall be dispatched to an incident involving a person with mental illness. Should an officer find himself/herself in a situation with such a person, the officer shall request back-up, when possible, before attempting to intercede.
  - 2. Responding officers should avoid the use of emergency lights and siren when responding to this type of call for service. Experience has demonstrated that this may agitate the response by the subject of the call.
  - 3. The officers shall devise a plan that separates the subject from other civilians. This containment should respect the comfort zone of the subject in order to reduce any unnecessary agitation. Officers should convince the subject that it is not necessary to change locations. Officers should continuously evaluate this comfort zone and not compress it, unless absolutely necessary.
  - 4. It is important for officers to ensure that on-lookers and family members are not in a position to become involved either verbally or physically in the control methods.
  - 5. Effective containment reduces the elements of agitation, such as large groupings of persons/officers, emergency vehicles/equipment, loud police radio transmissions, and/or multiple persons directing communications to the subject. Containment is meant to reduce these outside influences and sources of agitation.
  - 6. Officers should move slowly.
- B Coordination: This is essential for control of the encounter and is the foundation for the development of an effective plan and use of personnel and resources:

1. One officer at the scene, not necessarily the senior officer, shall be designated or assume the position of being the lead officer.
2. A perimeter shall be established to ensure that outside persons and/or family members do not become involved.
3. Officers shall limit observable indications of force. If firearms are drawn, they should be maintained in the low ready position and not displayed by officers who are attempting to establish communication with the subject.
4. The lead officer shall designate an officer to gather intelligence regarding the subject being encountered. This type of information can come from people at the scene, neighbors and/or family. This information can become important in determining the further tactical approaches to the subject and the most appropriate form of referral.
5. The lead officer is responsible for determining what resources should be requested. These may include additional police personnel, specialized weapons, professional resources and/or staged medical personnel.
6. A command post, if necessary, should be out of sight of the subject.

C Communication with the person with mental illness should be planned and controlled:

1. One officer shall be designated as the command voice and other officers shall refrain from becoming involved. The command voice should not have a weapon drawn when attempting to communicate with the subject.
2. Verbal communication should be non-threatening. Whenever possible, use open-ended questions designed to facilitate the subject's participation. If the subject does not respond, use other communication techniques. It may be necessary to change the person designated as the command voice and determine whether that might be beneficial.
3. Sharp, authoritative commands should be avoided. Officers should use calming communicative attempts.
4. It has been found that threatening to arrest or use force is not productive when dealing with persons with mental illness. Reassure the subject that the police are there to help them.
5. Be truthful at all times.
6. Officers must constantly analyze what effect, if any, their efforts are having on the subject. This is essential to identify areas that appear to agitate the subject and should be avoided.
7. Normally, family members should not be used to establish communications. This frequently exacerbates the situation.

D Time is the concept of elongating the encounter, rather than hastening it:

1. History has shown that the longer the encounter is allowed to occur, the better the chance for a successful resolution.

2. Increasing the time of the encounter and using defusing techniques allows the subject to reflect upon his/her predicament.
  3. Creating time also allows for the field units to be supported by the deployment of additional police personnel, specialized equipment and/or medical support personnel.
  4. Time improves the ability to communicate and create a relationship between the subject and the command voice.
- E Commitment procedures: Emergency admission based on physician's certification or court order; report by apprehending officer; entry of treatment order into patient's clinical record; authority of other personnel to act under statute; annual reporting.
1. Doctors/Physicians
    - a) Any physician within this state may execute a certificate stating that he or she has personally examined a person within the preceding 48 hours and found that, based upon observations set forth in the certificate, such person appears to be mentally ill person requiring involuntary treatment.
    - b) A physician's certificate shall expire seven (7) days after it is executed
    - c) Any peace officer, within 72 hours after receiving such certificate, shall make diligent efforts to take into custody the person named in the certificate and to deliver him or her forthwith to the nearest available emergency receiving facility serving the county in which the patient is found, where he or she shall be received for examination.
  2. Appropriate Courts
    - a) The appropriate court of the county in which a person may be found may issue an order commanding any peace officer to take such person into custody and deliver him or her forthwith for examination, either to the nearest available emergency receiving facility serving the county in which the patient is found, where such person shall be received for examination, or to a physician who has agreed to examine such patient and who will provide, where appropriate, a certificate consistent with state law to permit delivery of such patient to an emergency receiving facility pursuant to state law.
    - b) Such order may only be issued if based either upon an unexpired physician's certificate or otherwise consistent with state law pertaining to involuntary commitment.
    - c) Upon the affidavits of at least two persons who attest that, within the preceding 48 hours, they have seen the person to be taken into custody and that, based upon observations contained in their affidavit, they have reason to believe such person is mentally ill person requiring involuntary treatment.
    - d) The court order shall expire seven (7) days after it is executed

### 3. Law Enforcement

a) Any peace officer taking into custody and delivering for examination a person, as authorized by state law, shall execute a written report detailing the circumstances under which such person was taken into custody. The report and either the physician's certificate or court order authorizing such taking into custody shall be made a part of the patient's clinical record.

#### F Transportation of Mentally Ill Individuals

1. Prior to taking custody of a mentally ill individual, the transporting officer must make certain that he/she is informed in detail as to the following:

- a) Type of mental disorder and exact type of abnormal behavior displayed by the individual
- b) Detailed knowledge of any words, statements, or actions that might trigger any abnormal behavior
- c) The possibility of violence that may suddenly be displayed toward the officer or the individual
- d) The name, relationship, and location of any person perceived as a threat by the individual, and why that other person is perceived as a threat
- e) The name and location of any previously visited mental health care facility
- f) The type, location, and last time known to have taken any medications
- g) The relative ability of the individual to communicate coherently and follow instructions
- h) Any real or imagined physical injuries
- i) The circumstances bringing the individual into police custody
- j) Anything that might have soothed the individual in the past
- k) The name of any police officer that may have had contact with the individual in the past and any information that may have been gained from that encounter.

2. When transportation is provided by a peace officer, law requires that the responding and/or transporting officer complete a written report detailing the circumstances under which the individual was taken into custody for mental health transportation. The following observable conditions must be documented by the reporting officer:

- a) Made threats to harm self
- b) Made threats to harm others

- c) Knew where he/she was
- d) Knew who he/she was
- e) Appeared calm
- f) Appeared upset
- g) Was cooperative
- h) Was combative
- i) Unable/refused to speak
- j) Attempted to injure or injured self
- k) Attempted to injure or injured someone else
- l) Knew the approximate time and date

- G Restraining Mentally Ill Individuals: The transporting officer must take care and the time to make certain that the method of restraint chosen is appropriate to any potential conditions that may be presented by the individual. Many forms of mental illness can cause behavior that varies widely and instantaneously. The transporting officer must know the extent to which the mentally ill person may become violent, produce a loss of muscle control, cause a desire to injure himself or cause convulsive behavior. The officer must then provide appropriate restraints to minimize the chance for injury to the individual, fellow officers, and the public.
- H Transportation Vehicle for Mentally Ill Individuals: When deciding what type of restraint is appropriate, the officer should also consider what type of transport vehicle would be most appropriate. In most cases, the transport vehicle will be a marked patrol car, a prisoner transport van, or an ambulance.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 09/21/2010**

**S.O.P. 16-7 VICTIM / WITNESS ASSISTANCE**

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of this policy to emphasize the needs of victims of criminal and non-criminal incidents and the responsibilities of officers to provide support, information, and guidance to these individuals.

**II. POLICY**

Law enforcement officers are often in a unique position to provide assistance to victims of crime and other traumatic incidents that may have immediate and long-term impact on their emotional well-being. Also, victims who feel that they were treated with understanding and concern for their hardships and suffering more frequently become enthusiastic about cooperating with an investigation and assisting in the prosecution. Therefore, it is the policy of the Agency to enhance the treatment of victims and survivors of criminal and non-criminal crisis situations by providing the assistance and service necessary to speed their physical and emotional recovery and enable them to interact with the criminal justice system.

**III. PROCEDURES**

**A Safety and Security:**

1. Officers are responsible for securing the crime or incident scene to protect lives and ensure safety.
2. Officers shall render emergency aid to individuals who have suffered physical injuries and summon any necessary medical assistance.
3. Where physical injuries are not apparent, victims shall be asked if they are injured and whether medical attention is required.
4. To reduce fright and promote victim communication, victims should be informed as soon as appropriate that they are no longer in immediate danger.
5. Recognizing that victims often suffer physical and/or emotional shock, officers shall assist them in making decisions and keep them informed of police actions and requirements.
6. Whenever possible, police officers should not leave a distraught victim alone. Arrangements should be made to have a relative, friend, family or Agency clergyman join the victim for emotional support and comfort. If needed, arrange for transportation of the victim to a friend, family member or other appropriate service provider.

**B Providing Emotional Support - In order to calm and assist the victim in regaining composure, officers shall:**

1. Allow the victim a reasonable period of time in which to express feelings and emotions while describing what happened during the incident;

2. Express empathy for the victim and understanding for emotional reactions;
3. Provide reassurance that the victim's feelings are normal and understandable;
4. Not be overtly judgmental of the victim's feelings, emotions, judgments, or actions;
5. Help redirect any self-blame and responsibility for the criminal act from the victim to the perpetrator; and
6. Emphasize your commitment and the commitment of the Agency to assist and work with the victim.

C Information and Referral - Before leaving the scene it is important that officers take the steps necessary to meet the needs of the victims. These include:

1. Giving information to the victim/witness about applicable rights and services (e.g. counseling, medical attention, compensation programs, emergency financial assistance, victim advocacy, etc.) and the phone number of the County Victim Assistance Program.
2. Advising the victim/witness about what to do if the suspect or the suspect's companions or family threatens or otherwise intimidates him or her.
3. Informing the victim/witness of the case number (if known by the officer) and subsequent steps in the processing of the case.
4. Providing the telephone number and name of the investigator (if known by the officer) and telephone numbers that the victim/witness can call to report additional information about the case or to receive information about the status of the case (status of the case refers to open, suspended, inactive, or closed).

D Follow-up - A victim/witness shall be re-contacted periodically by the investigating officer, if, in the opinion of the investigating officer, a supervisor, or the Chief of Police, the impact of the crime has been unusually severe upon a victim/witness. The purpose of this contact is to determine if needs are being met and/or additional assistance is needed.

1. An investigating officer shall explain to the victim/witness the procedures involved in the prosecution of the cases and their role in those procedures. Caution should be used to explain in such a manner as not to endanger the successful prosecution of the case.
2. Scheduling line-ups, interviews and other required appearances should be at the convenience of the victim/witness whenever feasible. Factors which should be considered in this scheduling include the physical, financial and emotional well-being of the victim/witness. If necessary, the Fairburn Police Department will provide transportation to and from the police station for the victim/witness.
3. Whenever possible, victim/witness property taken as evidence by the department will be promptly returned (with the exception of contraband, disputed property, and weapons used in the crime). Officers should consult

with the solicitor, prosecutor, and Georgia Revised Code whenever questions of law or rules of evidence are in doubt.

4. Whenever there is a traumatic incident such as a rape, child abuse, sexual assault, or other incident which requires more than the average amount of victim/witness assistance, the victim/witness should be given information on a victim advocate, such as the department's Victim Assistance pamphlet, to assist them during the follow-up investigation.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-8 FAMILY VIOLENCE INCIDENTS**

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Agency to fully investigate and accurately report family violence complaints brought to the attention of the Agency, to arrest offenders where lawful and appropriate, to provide protection and assistance to victims of family violence, and to inform involved parties of the various services that may be available to them within the criminal justice system, from social service agencies and other community resources.

**II. DEFINITION**

The use of the term "family violence" in this SOP will be defined by Georgia law.

**III. RESPONDING TO A FAMILY VIOLENCE INCIDENT**

**A Communication**

1. Upon receipt of a call for service, the communications operator should determine as quickly as possible whether or not the call concerns an incident of family violence. If so, the communications operator should get as much information as possible from the complainant (e.g., injuries, weapons involved, whether minor children are present/involved, the exact location, whereabouts of perpetrator and other relevant information).

If a call for service is received by someone other than law enforcement and then transferred to the Agency or if an untimely report is received by the Agency, the officer receiving the call should immediately contact his/her supervisor. The supervisor shall then cause an investigation as described below to be conducted.

2. Once the information has been received, the communications operator shall immediately designate one primary unit and whenever possible, a backup unit. The responding officers shall be provided with all available information by the communications operator upon initial dispatch. Each officer shall approach family complaints with caution and discretion.
3. The communications operator shall notify a supervisor whenever the incoming call involves violence or a threat to life and/or bodily harm (i.e., weapon involved). The officer will call a supervisor to the scene if after arriving, the officer(s) find these conditions. When possible, supervisors should monitor the radio traffic involving the family violence complaint and proceed to the scene of the incident to assist the officer(s) as necessary.

**B Patrol**

1. When dispatched, officers should respond immediately to the location. If the officer finds the disturbance to be in progress, he/she should notify the communications operator about the following: location of the problem, nature of the disturbance, and the necessity of a back-up unit and/or supervisor. If

the disturbance is not in progress, the officer should immediately attempt to contact the complainant and proceed with the investigation.

2. Officers responding to family violence complaints will coordinate their arrival at the scene without delaying the response time. Upon arrival at the scene of family violence, the responding officers will advise the communications operator of the location of the complainant if different from the original dispatch location. Officers should park their vehicles in a readily accessible position. The vehicles should be locked and secured.
3. If the disturbance is at a private residence, the officers should attempt to contact the complainant before proceeding further. Officers should not enter a private residence except on the direct invitation of the owner or resident, unless probable cause exists to make an arrest or a confrontation is in progress.

Officers should make every effort to speak to every occupant of the residence before leaving.

4. Once the officer(s) has entered the residence, they should prudently attempt to separate the parties in conflict and calmly listen to each person to determine the cause of the conflict and to gather additional information (e.g., who was the primary aggressor).
5. Officer(s) should avoid "taking sides" with either party in the dispute. These family violence complaints should be handled as criminal incidents. Reconciliation or divorce should never be suggested or discussed with the parties involved. Officers should be prepared to offer referrals to the victim concerning the location of shelters, victim witness assistance programs, counseling, etc.

The existence of probable cause and the elements of a crime shall be the sole factors that determine the proper method of handling the incident. Factors that should not influence the officer's course of action in family violence include: the relationship or marital status of the suspect and the victim; sexual orientation; speculation that the complainant may not follow through with the criminal justice process or that the arrest may not lead to a conviction; the complainant's history or prior complaint; whether or not the suspect lives on the premises with the complainant; the complainant's emotional state; injuries that are not visible; verbal assurances that the violence will cease; the location of the incident, (i.e., public or private); the potential financial consequence of arrest; or the lack of a temporary restraining order or other protective orders.

6. An arrest should be made in the event there is probable cause to believe that a felony has occurred. All suspects arrested should be taken into custody. If an officer has probable cause to believe that a felony has occurred, an arrest should be made.
7. Suspects should be arrested in the event that a misdemeanor family violence incident occurs in the officer's presence, or if the officer has probable cause to believe that an act of family violence has been committed. Such situations include, but are not limited to: an officer who witnesses an act of family violence, a violation of a restraining order, or illegal possession of a weapon.

8. In the event the officer does not have the probable cause or necessary evidence to make an arrest, he/she shall make a good faith effort to inform the complainant of his/her rights to appear before a magistrate to seek a warrant for arrest. When possible, such discussion should be held out of the presence of the suspect. An officer should not encourage nor dissuade complainants from attempting to obtain a warrant from a magistrate.
- C Investigation of Family Violence Cases - Officers arriving at a family violence scene should conduct a thorough investigation and submit objective reports of all incidents of violence and all crimes related to family violence. The Family Violence Reporting form should be completed and processed in accordance with law.

#### 1. Arrival at Scene

- a) Determine location and condition of victim and suspect;
- b) Determine if any weapon(s) are involved or within the home;
- c) Provide appropriate level of aid to injured parties;
- d) Separate suspect, victim and witness (victim should be out of suspect's view); and
- e) Take photographs of the victim, suspect, and scene.

When possible, follow-up photographs should be made for injuries that will become more noticeable over time (i.e., bruises).

#### 2. Preliminary Investigation

- a) Interview everyone separately - victim, suspect, children, other witnesses;
- b) Ask victim and suspect if they have pain even if there are no visible injuries;
- c) Document victim's and suspect's condition. For example, torn clothing, disheveled appearance, evidence of injury, and disarray in house;
- d) Document size relation of victim and suspect, keeping in mind that larger is not always stronger;
- e) Determine which of the parties involved was the primary aggressor, by investigating the following:
  - (1) Did one of the parties appear to be in actual fear of the other?
  - (2) Did one party escalate the level of violence (e.g., did a man react to a slap by striking the woman several times?).
  - (3) Was a party physically larger and/or stronger than the other?
  - (4) Does relevant documented history include the following?

- Physical violence;
- Sexual violence;
- Destruction of personal property;
- Violence against others.

(5) Which of the parties has been documented as the aggressor in previous situations?

(6) Did any injuries appear to be defense wounds?

- f) If victim has a restraining order or temporary protective order against suspect, obtain a copy of the order and valid proof of service. If not, inform victim how to get an order.
- g) If victim has a restraining order or other protective order that has not yet been served on suspect, inform the suspect of the order and note in the report that this was done. The officer should also enforce the applicable provisions of the order (e.g., "stay away" provisions). If victim has an extra copy of the order and the suspect has not been served with a copy of the order, the officer should serve the extra copy on the suspect and fill out proof of service.
- h) If a suspect is taken into custody:
- (1) Advise suspect of Miranda rights;
  - (2) Take statements if and when Miranda is waived;
  - (3) Document spontaneous voluntary statements; and
  - (4) Prevent communications between suspect and victim/witnesses.
- i) Evidence gathering should include:
- (1) Document condition of crime scene (disarray of physical surroundings);
  - (2) Photograph crime scene, if applicable;
  - (3) Ensure that victim's/suspect's injuries are photographed; and
  - (4) Impound and/or photograph weapons and other evidence of the crime.
- j) Medical treatment investigation should include:
- (1) Obtain authorization for release of medical records from victim, if possible;
  - (2) Document extent of injuries/treatment if known;

- (3) Obtain names, addresses and phone numbers of fire, ambulance or paramedic personnel treating the victim.
- k) In making a permanent record of the incident and subsequent investigation, the following should be included as part of the reporting procedure:
- (1) Maintain objectivity in reporting - avoid personal opinions regarding comments from victim/suspect;
  - (2) Ensure that elements of all involved crimes are included in the report;
  - (3) Document any injuries victim/suspect have sustained;
  - (4) Document past history of violence;
  - (5) Document statements of victim, suspect and all witness;
  - (6) Document physical evidence obtained; and
  - (7) Document probation/parole status.
- l) Officers should not advise victims of family violence that they can "press" charges or "drop" charges. If a victim spontaneously states that prosecution is not desired, the victim should be told that the decision to prosecute is made by the District Attorney or Solicitor. Again, victims should be given information regarding the availability and location of shelters, victim/witness assistance programs, etc.

Officers should refrain from giving opinions and use discretion regarding the information and statements made to or about victims.

#### D Follow-up Investigation

1. All family violence reports prepared by officers should be reviewed and given follow-up investigation as needed. Whenever possible, review should be conducted by officers with family violence training.
2. Follow-up investigations should be geared to the requirements of the prosecuting office's family violence unit or the particular prosecutor handling the case.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 01/19/2010**

**S.O.P. 16-9 USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS - OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (OC SPRAY)**

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Agency to provide training, certification, use, decontamination, maintenance, and storage of Oleoresin Capsicum aerosol spray by employees of the Agency.

The Agency provides officers with OC spray (pepper spray) so that officers may successfully defend themselves from combative, resisting, and/or violent individuals while reducing the risk of inflicting or receiving injury. OC is not necessarily a replacement or substitute for other authorized devices and techniques. Therefore, OC should only be used when the officer believes it is the best choice for the circumstances. As with any use of force, officers are accountable for the use of OC. The use of OC is classified as a response to resistance. Consequently, officers will complete a response to resistance report any time OC is used. (See S.O.P. 11-3 Use of Non-Deadly Force/Internal Procedures.)

**II. AGENCY APPROVED OLEORESIN CAPSICUM AEROSOL SPRAY**

Spray issued by the agency will be the only personal size pepper spray authorized by the Agency for officers to carry.

**III. TRAINING**

Officers must successfully complete the Agency approved OC training and have an exposure prior to being issued OC spray.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

- A Utilization Procedures - Trained officers may utilize OC when physical force is necessary under the prevailing circumstances. The following are examples of situations when OC may be used:
1. Where verbal direction is ineffective or inappropriate;
  2. Where passive resistance techniques have failed and officers may have to use physical force to maintain control;
  3. Where the officer could reasonably use an impact weapon as a striking tool and not merely as a restraint device; and/or
  4. Where the officer could reasonably use deadly force.

OC may be used to affect the removal of a person(s) from a vehicle who refuses to exit when lawfully commanded to do so by an officer and physical resistance is used by the person(s).

Officers should avoid the use of OC areas where the use could reasonably and foreseeably cause panic. OC spray will only be used as a control and compliance measure and shall never be used for any illicit or unlawful purpose.

B Decontamination Procedures - After control has been established and/or resistance ceased, the officer will make reasonable efforts to allow the OC affected subject relief from the discomfort associated with the application.

1. After the suspect has been brought under control, restraints applied, and the suspect no longer presents a threat to the officer or others; the officer will then render appropriate first aid to the suspect;
2. Arrange for professional medical attention (EMS) as soon as practical;

The EMS personnel should determine if the suspect needs to be transported to a hospital or other medical facility for further medical evaluation.

3. If reasonable, the person will be transported immediately to the police department, sheriff's department, city jail or county jail. If this is not reasonable, the person should be moved to an area with fresh air;
4. Keep the person calm by explaining the anticipated effects;
5. Instruct the person to blow his/her nose;
6. Allow affected person to flush eyes and affected area with water; and
7. Open doors and windows as soon as practical after usage inside a building or vehicle.

C Documentation Procedures - On each occasion of OC use, a written Response to Resistance Report will be completed. See S.O.P. 11-3 Use of Non-Deadly Force/Internal Procedures.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-10 RIDE - ALONG POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the agency's mandates with respect to citizen ride along.

**II. POLICY**

In an effort to enhance the mutual respect of police officers and the community we serve, this agency hereby establishes a ride-along program. This program will provide its participants with a greater understanding of law enforcement in our City. At the same time, through interaction between our officers and members of the community, lines of open communication will be established.

**III. PROCEDURES**

A Who can participate in the ride-along program:

1. All participants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age and must have signed the Police agency waiver form.
2. Community members who are interested in broadening their knowledge of the police function within the city. This would include members of civic organizations, college students who are interested in the law enforcement field, (citizens' police academy participants, if implemented), and any other person authorized by the Chief of Police. (Or another designated person)
3. Media representatives who wish to conduct a ride along for the purpose of developing a news story or other documentary. This category includes print and electronic media. Media representatives must complete all documents required of any other participant. In addition, members of the media must have express written authorization from the office of the chief of police before recording, by any means (audio, video, film, photo), any portion of the ride-along.

B Application Process:

1. Applications for ride-along shall be available at police headquarters. Personnel assigned to the headquarters should inform anyone who receives a ride-along application that they should return the application to the agency once it is completed. Applicants must provide a photo-identification for verification when they return their completed application.
2. Completed applications shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police or his/her designee for review.
3. Application Review will include a record check and NCIC inquiry. An applicant who has a felony record or a misdemeanor record that involves moral turpitude or dishonesty may be excluded from participation.

4. Once approved, the applicant shall be notified (phone or mail option) and assigned a date for the ride-along.
5. Participants shall only be allowed to participate in this program once every twelve (12) months unless given written authorization from the Chief of Police.
6. Ride-along guests will not be allowed to ride during the scheduled tour of duty of an officer who is, in some way, related to the guest.

C Reporting for Ride-along:

1. The ride-along program shall be scheduled between the hours of 0800-1600 hours, unless otherwise approved by the Chief or his /her designee.
2. Participants should report to the police headquarters fifteen (15) minutes prior to their scheduled participation.
3. The supervising officer shall meet with the ride-along participant. The ride along participant and the supervising officer shall review and sign the liability waiver form. The supervising officer must sign as a witness. Any participant who decides not to sign the liability waiver form shall not be allowed to participate in the program.
4. The supervising officer shall review the rules of the ride-along program with the participant. In this review, the participant should be reminded that they may be called as a witness in court, if they observe a police event which becomes subject to court action.

D Duties of the Participant:

1. Participants shall play no active role in the police function. They must only act as an observer unless otherwise directed by their host-officer.
2. Participants shall not be allowed to operate any police equipment unless directed to do so by a police officer in an extreme emergency.
3. Participants must always remain in the police vehicle until directed otherwise by the host officer.
4. Participants must not speak to victims, witnesses, prisoners or other persons associated with a police event. Should a witness, prisoner, victim or other person speak to the participant, the participant should politely direct the person to speak to one of the officers present.
5. Participants shall not bring cameras or any recording devices without the express written permission of the office of the Chief of Police. (Option-Some other Superior or designee)
6. Participants shall not enter any person's home while participating in the ride-along unless the host officer has asked and has been granted express permission from the homeowner/occupant to allow the ride-along participant entry. (This can be an outright ban on entry-but this language is essential based on Wilson v. Layne.)

7. Participants shall always follow the instructions of the host-officer during the ride-along.
8. Participants shall not be allowed to carry any firearm or other weapon, even when otherwise authorized by law, while participating in the ride-along program.
9. Participants should be dressed in comfortable, casual but conservative clothing during the ride-along. (Pants and shirt/jacket for men, Pants, and blouse/jacket for women) Participants who are inappropriately dressed, as determined by the supervising officer, shall not be allowed to participate in the program on the assigned date.

E Duties of Host Officer:

1. No duty to participate - spelled out in waiver. Waiver should spell out the inherent dangers of the program and should not indicate that the host officer will provide any protection to the participant.
2. Host officers shall conduct their activities in a manner consistent with the efficiency of the police agency as if the rider was not present.
3. Officers have a primary obligation to the welfare and safety of the ride along participant. Officers shall not respond to priority 1 calls until initial responding officers have determined the scene to be safe.
4. Distinguish, civilian from news media, allowing the media to assume the risk of more dangerous activities.
5. Give the host officer complete discretion to determine the level of dangerousness to the ride-along participant.
6. Host Officers, in their discretion, may drop a participant off in an area of safety while responding to a dangerous police event to avoid exposing the participant to danger.
7. Host officer shall be allowed to rove the entire City to enhance the experience of the participant.
8. Host officers may allow the participant to leave the police vehicle in order to better observe the police activity; however, where a participant has been allowed to leave the police vehicle, host officers shall maintain close supervision of the participant and not allow the participant to involve him or herself in the police activity.
9. Host officers must never allow a participant to enter the home of any person unless the officer has first obtained the consent of the homeowner/occupant. In obtaining consent the officer must specifically notify the homeowner/occupant that the participant is a "ride-along participant" and there is "no legal obligation" to allow the participant inside the dwelling .

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-11 COURT SECURITY**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for security of the Fairburn Municipal Court.

**II. POLICY**

Court Services is a separate department and comprised of the Court Clerk and Assistant Clerks. The Court Clerk will be responsible for all court papers, deposits of monies to the City of Fairburn, all bind-overs from court and all requirements of the City Court Judge. A calendar must be posted for each court date and a copy provided to each officer with a pending case. Officer will be notified of cases needing their appearance through email, or through their chain-of-command. The officer is responsible for contacting the court clerk and their shift supervisor if they are unable to appear in a particular court session for any reason.

**III. PROCEDURE**

- A COURT PROCEDURES - Court/Arraignment dates shall be scheduled by the Court Clerk. When appearing in any court, officers will appear at the stated time on the subpoena and will be dressed in uniform or appropriate civilian dress. Any officer not appearing in court at a scheduled time or not having all proper paperwork in a timely manner is subject to disciplinary actions. Officers not on duty during court hours will be compensated for their court time.
- B COURT OPERATION - The Court Services Clerk handles court records, preparation of court calendars and dispositions and findings of the court. All of these will be entered into the Court Services computer system. Court personnel will be required to run criminal histories, driver's license checks, and other information for the prosecution of cases.
- C COURT SECURITY - The Fairburn Police Department shall be the sole provider of security for the Fairburn Municipal Court. All officers assigned to this function have the authority to screen and disarm anyone entering the Fairburn Municipal Court in order to ensure the safety of all in attendance. These officers shall also have the authority to remove anyone from the courtroom who may pose a threat.

The Reserve Officer Unit will be in charge of courtroom security. If no Reserve Officer is available, a sworn officer or the COPS unit will assume that responsibility.

- 1. SECURITY SCREENING STATIONS - The purpose of Security Screening is to disarm people before they enter the Fairburn Municipal Court. To accomplish this objective everyone must be screened. Persons seeking entry to the Fairburn Municipal Court are deemed to have given their consent to a limited search for administrative purposes. Any person who refuses to surrender a suspicious object or container, or to submit to a search themselves or containers in their possession, will be denied access to the

Fairburn Municipal Court.

Security Screening shall take place in the lobby of the courtroom. All persons shall be checked with a metal detector and all bags shall be opened to allow a visual search.

## 2. COURTROOM SECURITY

- a) A thorough, documented search of the courtroom should be completed by the officer assigned to court security prior to each court session. This will ensure that there are no weapons, contraband, or other items that may affect the security and operation of the court.
- b) Do not allow attorneys or anyone else who is not part of staff to go back to the Judge's chambers without first clearing it with the Judge or his/her staff.
- c) At least one (1) officer shall remain in the court room when the court is open for business.
- d) The officer's primary responsibility is to protect the judge and to control the conduct of all persons within the courtroom. Therefore, the officer should be positioned to carry out this responsibility.

## D EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### 1. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

When arriving at the scene of any medical emergency, decide the extent of the injury, and notify Communications of the information by radio. Communications will contact appropriate medical help.

### 2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION - FIRE, GAS LEAK, BOMB, ETC.

In the event of a declared emergency:

- a. The courtroom must be secured. This includes securing evidence.
- b. Inmates, employees, and visitors will be evacuated.
- c. Reentry will be prohibited until the proper authority permits.

### 3. BOMB THREATS/SEVERE WEATHER

In the event of a bomb threat or severe weather, the officer tasked with providing security must then execute the safe and speedy evacuation of employees and visitors, when requested to do so by the presiding judge.

### 4. HOSTAGE SITUATIONS/CIVIL DISTURBANCES

These shall be handled in accordance with Agency policy.

## E REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

The courtroom shall be stocked with the following required equipment at all times

and it shall be the duty of the assigned court security officer to ensure that all items are present and in working order before court.

1. Fire Extinguisher.
2. Handheld magnetometers.
3. Stationary magnetometer.
4. Communications Equipment;
5. First Aid Kit; and
6. Restraining Devices.

#### F OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Every three (3) years, a survey of this policy will be conducted. The survey shall be completed by a Lieutenant or higher. The survey shall include a check of compliance with policy, the functionality and applicability of required equipment used for courtroom security, as well as an inspection of the courtroom to include, but not limited to the doors, windows, lighting, alarms, key control access, ADA accessibility, and secure/restricted areas. The survey should be submitted to the Chief of Police with any recommendations for changes to policy.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**EFFECTIVE: 11/21/08**

**S.O.P. 16-12 ROAD SAFETY CHECKS**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and directions for the safe operation of Road Safety Checks; for the initiation or discontinuation of safety checks; and to address the responsibility of participating officer's and supervisors.

**II. DEFINITION**

Road Safety Check - A Planned event on a roadway to provide for the safety of the motoring public by detecting and deterring specific traffic/safety violators. Officers may check and monitor driver condition, driver's licenses, vehicle equipment, vehicle registrations and other state motor vehicle and operation requirements. It cannot be set up for the sole purpose of deterrence or crime control.

**III. ROAD SAFETY CHECKS**

- A. No road safety check will be initiated unless road and weather conditions allow visibility in both directions for a minimum of 500 feet.
- B. All Road Safety Checks will be planned by the Shift Commander, but shall receive approval from the Division Commander or higher authority. A Pre-Approval Safety Checkpoint form must be submitted and signed prior to implementation. All approved forms will be maintained in accordance with state retention laws.
- C. Officers assigned to a road safety check will wear their body armor and reflective traffic vest at all times. Officers will activate their Body Worn Camera for the duration of the event
- D. When conducting a road safety check, there will be no less than two officers and one supervisor assigned to the location. The supervisor is to remain at the location at all times during the road safety check. One marked unit will be monitoring traffic for any vehicles using evasive action to avoid the road safety check. A minimum of two marked units will be at the road safety check locations with blue lights activated
- E. During the road safety check the following areas will be examined
  - 1. All persons operating a motor vehicle on the streets and highways of the City of Fairburn must have a valid driver's license. A license, which appears to be valid on its face, should be considered Prima Facie evidence that the driver is in compliance with state law
  - 2. All vehicles being operated on the streets and highways of the City of Fairburn must have a current license plate/tag displayed on the vehicle being operated
  - 3. All vehicles operated on the streets and highways of the City of Fairburn must be in safe operating condition at all times. This includes tires, windshields, exhaust systems and lighting equipment.
  - 4. Officers are to be alert for any signs that the driver of a vehicle being checked is under

the influence of drugs or alcohol

- F. If the checking officer believes the driver to be in violation of the law he will send the driver to a second screening area for further investigation. The exception is if the officer believes the subject to be under the influence, the driver will not be allowed to operate his vehicle past the original stop point
- G. The Supervisor on scene will be responsible for the opening and closing of the road safety check. The road safety check may be closed prior to the scheduled time due to the number of arrests, inclement weather, or any other reason the Supervisor on site decides is appropriate
- H. The road safety check should abide by the following established points:
  - 1. Supervisor must be on scene for the duration of the safety checkpoint
  - 2. All vehicles must be stopped and checked, rather than stopping random ones. If the roadblock causes an extensive traffic delay or hinders driver safety, the officers must shut the checkpoint down and resume only once the congestion has cleared
  - 3. The existence of the safety checkpoint should be clearly identified, such as the use of signs, emergency lights active, use of traffic cones, officers in reflective traffic vests and use of flashlights
  - 4. The screening officers must have sufficient training and experience and understand which motorists require field sobriety assessments
  - 5. Initial interaction with a driver must be brief unless articulable reasonable suspicion exists for further investigation

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
EFFECTIVE: 09/01/2011**

**S.O.P. 16-13 RESERVE OFFICER UNIT**

**I. PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of the Fairburn Police Department Reserve Unit shall be to provide a source of qualified, POST certified Law Enforcement personnel to assist in the normal functions of the Fairburn Police Department. Fairburn Police Department Reserve Unit members serve on a voluntary basis in the Department or on any special detail assigned by the Chief of Police or his designee.

**II. ORGANIZATION**

The Fairburn Police Department Reserve Unit serves under the direction of the Support Services Division. The Reserve Force members take direction from the Support Services Lieutenant, or his/her designee, while assigned to assist with Divisional duties.

**III. DUTY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Reserve Force members shall work assignments that require police officer security. Assignments include City Council meetings, Planning and Zoning meetings, and Court Services security during court sessions.
- B. Each Reserve Force member shall work a minimum of twelve (12) hours per month, or equivalent two (2) separate City sponsored meetings/events that require security personnel.
- C. Reserve Force members shall serve in any special operation undertaken by the Fairburn Police Department as may be needed and requested by the Chief of Police, or his/her designee.

**IV. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The Reserve Force of the Fairburn Police Department shall be governed by the rules, regulations and standard operating procedures of the Fairburn Police Department and all chapters, sections, and sub-sections of this manual. All Reserve Force members are, therefore, subject to the same requirements for compliance as full-time paid employees of the Fairburn Police Department. All Reserve Force members are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination for violation of the said rules/procedures.

**A. Satisfying Commitments**

Reserve Force members scheduled to work in a particular Division, detail or special event are responsible for being on time and satisfying said commitment. Exceptions will be granted under extreme conditions with proper documentation.

**B. Part-Time Employment**

Members of the Reserve Force of the Fairburn Police Department will be required to obtain permission, in writing, from the Chief of Police in order to participate in outside employment related to their status as a police officer. All part-time employment must

meet the requirements set forth in the Off Duty Employment Policy of the Fairburn Police Department.

## **VI. QUALIFICATIONS FOR RESERVE STATUS**

Participation in the Reserve Force of the Fairburn Police Department shall be open to all who are United States citizens and residents of the State of Georgia regardless of race, creed, sex, age, religion, or national origin, except as noted below with respect to minimum age, individual suitability, potential conflict of interest, and providing the applicant is a Georgia POST Certified Peace Officer. All reserve officer applications will be processed in accordance with SOP Chapter 3, Hiring Practices. The ultimate decision on each applicant will be made by the Chief of Police.

Minimum age for the Reserve Force as a Certified Sworn Peace Officer shall be established in conjunction with the Fairburn Police Department and in conformance with the minimum age restriction stated in the current county liability policy. Currently the minimum age is twenty-one (21).

Individual suitability shall be determined by the Fairburn Police Department. No applicant shall be complete without all of the following:

1. Criminal record and driving record background check.
2. Documentation from Georgia POST or Regional Police Academy showing compliance with the minimum (20 hour) annual training requirements and Current Peace Officer Certification.
3. Psychological examination
4. Polygraph examination
5. Drug screen
6. Personal interview.

The standard for determining individual suitability shall be as stringent as those used for employment as a full-time paid officer.

Potential conflict of interest situations may be identified at any stage of the processing. Unless waived by the Chief of Police, the following categories of applicants shall not be eligible to join the Reserve Force.

1. Employees of any Federal, State, or Local Government agency which prohibits acceptance of appointments as an officer.
2. Officials serving in any elected office.
3. Candidates for elected office.
4. Owners or employees of any Private Detective Agency, Private Security Agency, Repossession Business, or Bonding Company.
5. Persons employed as a Peace Officer, Detention Officer, or in a Private Guard/Security position.
6. Others in circumstances presenting the potential for conflict of interest

comparable to the above categories.

#### A. RESERVE UNIT FTO PROCESS

Reserve Force members do not complete a formal FTO Program since no member of the Reserve Unit works patrol or investigative duties.

However, the COPS Sergeant is responsible for ensuring that every new reserve officer receives proper training and instructions for each specific security detail prior to release on his/her own. Instructional training will be submitted on inter-office letterhead to the Support Services Lieutenant and documented within the Reserve Officer's personnel file.

#### B. EQUIPMENT/UNIFORM

Reserve Force members will be required to wear the same equipment and uniforms as full-time sworn officers, as outlined in the agency SOP, Chapter 7 Uniform-Dress Code.

#### C. TRAINING

A minimum of twenty (20) hours of in-service training is required of all sworn personnel each year. Any sworn officer failing to meet these minimum requirements will be removed from enforcement duties and is subject to disciplinary actions under city policy. Additionally, all reserve officers are required to attend all mandatory annual in-service training.

#### D. LIABILITY/WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Reserve Force members will be provided with public liability protection equal to that provided to full-time officers. Reserve Force members will also be provided coverage under workers' compensation through the GMA workers' compensation self-insurance fund.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 08/14/09**

**S.O.P. 16-14 CANINE (K-9) UNIT**

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the authorization, conditions and limitations on the usage of Canine Units to include, but not limited to:

- A system for scheduling and supervision of canine units
- Procedures and guidelines for use and specific duties/tasks
- Guidelines for: Uniforms, Records and Reports, Training, Canine injuries, Canine maintenance, and Treatment/Conduct of Officers around Canines.

**II. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Fairburn Police Department to use canine teams as an additional investigative tool in drug detection, electronic detection, vehicles searches, building searches, property searches, criminal apprehension, participation in educational services and public relations. The application and use of a canine unit provide a highly visible and positive deterrent to criminal activity. The canine unit provides an additional tool to further the objectives and goals of the Fairburn Police Department in serving the community.

**III. DEFINITION**

**CANINE OFFICER/HANDLER-** Police officer charged with the deployment of police canine; shall be specially trained in the use, application and handling of police canines, as determined by the appropriate division commander.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

**A. Canine team utilization for location/apprehension of suspects**

1. The deployment of a police canine for the location and apprehension of a suspect is a response to resistance that must be consistent with this Agency's principles of escalation and de-escalation of force
2. Decisions to deploy a canine shall be based upon the following:
  - a) The severity of the crime
  - b) Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others.
  - c) Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest at the time
3. Canine teams are available on a 24-hour, on-call basis. Their use includes but may not be limited to:
  - a) Conducting building searches for what are believed to be suspects in hiding
  - b) Assisting in the arrest or prevention of the escape of offenders

- c) Protecting officers or others from death or serious injury and engaging in assignments not listed here with the approval of the canine team supervisor
4. Canine team assistance may be requested from any officer through an immediate supervisor. That supervisor shall contact the canine unit's Unit Commander, or Division Commander, and provide detailed information of the incident.
5. Canine teams may assist other agencies, outside of our jurisdiction only after approval from the canine team's supervisor.
6. Canine teams should not be used to apprehend anyone suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol if no other crime is involved, nor the mentally disturbed if no other crime is involved
7. Where a tactical deployment is justified by agency policy, the tactical measures used shall be at the discretion of the canine handler and must be objectively reasonable.

## B. Team Qualifications and Training

1. Applicants for police canine teams must have:
  - a) At least two (2) years of uniform patrol experience with satisfactory work performance, disciplinary and medical leave records.
  - b) At least one (1) year with the department, excluding FTO time
  - c) A willingness to remain with the unit for an extended period of time as prescribed by this department
  - d) Willingness (together with other family members) to care for and house the canine at the officer's residence with a secure outdoor area for the canine that conforms to departmental requirements.
  - e) A strong desire to work with canines and a willingness to care for and train the animal and the ability to pass designated physical fitness and agility tests related to the tasks of canine handling.
2. The Deputy Chief and Investigations Commander shall be responsible for selection of canine handlers in accordance with established departmental procedures.
3. The canine handler shall maintain records that document all canine team training. A canine unit team member (that was present) should date and sign the records every month, acting as a witness to the records' existence, or the canine team's direct supervisor. A copy should be made for the Unit Commander and the original retained by the handler.
4. All departmental canines must meet established department certification requirements. Untrained canines may not be used for canine duty.
5. New canine handlers or handlers taking on a new dog must complete the prescribed canine training course and successfully meet all course requirements. Course requirements set by the Alabama Canine Law Enforcement Officers Training Center.

6. It is duty of the Unit Commander to ensure that canine team training is conducted. Training consists of individual and team training.
  - a) Individual Training- Each handler is required to work with his/her assigned canine at least once during their tour of duty as time permits. The training time during the normal tour of duty is for maintenance training that the handlers can conduct by themselves or with the assistance of a volunteer from the handler's unit or division.
  - b) Team Training- Canine unit training will be held to ensure each team receives ongoing training. Unit training will address canine teams' strengths and weaknesses. It will focus on maintaining high performance proficiency standards to reduce liability. Unit training will include legal update and case law review as applicable to canine handlers. Unit training shall consist of a minimum of twelve (12) hours a month for single purpose (drug, electronic) teams and minimum twenty-four (24) hours a month for dual purpose canine teams.
7. Canine teams must complete recertification every year, or when established based on the canine team specialty (electronic K9). It is the responsibility of each handler to notify the Unit Commander when the team needs to be re-certified. Canine handlers are required to demonstrate team abilities to the Unit Commander upon request.
8. Failure to participate in or qualify under established training standards will result in decertification of the canine team. The team may not be deployed until re-certified.

#### C. Canine Bites and Injuries

1. Use of specially trained police canines for law enforcement responsibilities constitutes a real or implied use of force. In this as in other cases, officers may only use that degree of force that is objectively reasonable to apprehend or secure a suspect as governed by the department's response to resistance policy.
  - a) Whenever a canine has bitten or scratched an individual or has alleged to have done so, whether or not in the line of duty, the handler shall perform the following:
    - i. Notify direct supervisor of the incident as soon as possible
    - ii. If no arrest is made, an offer will be made to the individual to provide medical care and treatment by a qualified medical professional
    - iii. If an arrest is made the individual will be provided with medical attention in accordance with agency policy on transporting and booking the offender
    - iv. The officer shall take color photographs of the affected area if possible prior to and following medical treatment
    - v. Prepare and submit a BlueTeam entry for a Response to Resistance
  - b) Whenever a canine is deployed or a person is injured, a written report shall be made detailing the circumstances surrounding the incident, the identity of the individual involved and any witnesses, whether the canine located the

suspect, the extent of any injuries if known, and measures taken in response to the incident.

#### D. Building Searches and Suspects in Hiding

A primary use of departmental canines is for locating suspects in buildings or related structures. These searches should be governed by the following:

1. The building perimeter shall be secured by police personnel
2. Whenever possible the building's owner should be contacted to determine whether there may be tenants or others in the building and to ascertain the building's layout.
3. When a canine building search is anticipated, a preliminary search by officers should be conducted.
4. The supervisor shall also take the following steps in preparation for the canine search:
  - a) Evacuate all tenants' workers or others from the facility
  - b) Request that all air conditioning, heating, or other air-blowing systems be shut off so as not to interfere with the canine's scent.
5. Upon entrance to the building, all exits should be secured, and communications limited to that of a tactical nature.
6. The canine may be unleashed during a building search unless there is an imminent risk of injury to innocent person(s) within the facility. Generally, the canine should be released once a backup officer is available to work with the canine team.
7. Unless it would otherwise increase the risk of injury or escape, a clear audible warning should be made prior to release of police K-9.
  - a) A reasonable amount of time shall be allowed for the suspect to respond. This warning shall be repeated on each level of all multi-level structures
  - b) Where there is a reasonable belief that the suspect speaks a language other than English, an officer or other individual fluent in that language should be summoned to the scene if available and exigency of the situation permits
8. When apprehending suspects, the canine shall be commanded to disengage as soon as the suspect is subdued or readily complies with officer direction.
9. Arrestees shall not be transported in the same vehicle with a police canine unless alternative transportation is not available and immediate transport is essential for safety or security reasons

#### E. Crowd Control

Canine teams may be used upon approval of the Chief of Police, or his/her designee, to protect life or property during a riot or other major unlawful assembly after an order to disperse has been made.

#### F. Use of Narcotic-Detection Police Service Dogs

A narcotic-detection trained police service dog may be used in accordance with current law to:

1. Assist in the search for narcotics during a search warrant service
2. Obtain a search warrant by using the detection police service dog in support of probable cause
3. Search vehicles, buildings, bags and any other articles deemed necessary
4. A narcotic-detection police service dog will not be used to search a person for narcotics
5. Once on scene, the handler should ask the officer to articulate his/her suspicions of narcotic activity.
6. If officers have already searched for narcotics prior to the canine team's arrival, then the canine is not needed. The canine handler may provide back up.

#### G. Use of Electronic Detection Police Service Dogs (ESD K9)

1. An electronic-detection trained police service dog may be used to assist in the search for electronic evidence during a search warrant service
2. Used to search vehicles or buildings if supported with a search warrant
3. May be used to assist in conducting searches at a prison/jail, if requested by the host agency

#### H. Perimeters and Tracking

Since moving subjects are extremely difficult to catch, the quick establishment of a perimeter is necessary to contain the subject by forcing him or her to stop moving and conceal himself. When we make the subject hide, we control these important things:

1. Area: We will make the search area smaller, therefore quicker and easier to search with or without the K-9
2. Time: We have more time to find the subject because the subject won't or can't leave until we do
3. Scent: We cause the subject to emit human scent in a large area around him
4. Setting up perimeters
  - a) The supervisor shall respond to all incidents and establish the perimeter locations. Perimeter units should advise exact locations
  - b) Activate your vehicle lighting if this does not impair your vision
  - c) Position your vehicle at an intersection or corner of the perimeter and shine your headlight in one direction and the spotlight in another direction

- d) The distance the perimeter is to be set up will be determined by time and by where the subject was last seen. If there has been a twenty-minute time lapse in setting up the perimeter there is no need in setting up a perimeter four to five blocks around the area. If we set up a perimeter and the subject has already traveled out of the area, we have wasted our time and missed the opportunity to catch the subject.
- e) Perimeter units should be outside of your vehicle looking in all directions and should only move if ordered by a supervisor. **DO NOT WALK INTO THE AREA TO SEARCH ON YOUR OWN**
- f) Perimeter units should be prepared to become mobile should the perimeter need to change or expand due to subject movement. The furthest unit(s) leapfrogs the closest perimeter unit(s)

#### I. Preservation of Scene

1. Establish a perimeter (as covered in perimeter section)
2. Upon arrival, begin to consider the use of the K-9. If a physical check of the scene is made remember which area was contaminated by you and make the K-9 handler aware of it.
3. Attempt to establish direction of travel. Ask witnesses where they saw the subject. If you engage the subject in a foot pursuit and lose him, mark the location where you stopped
4. Be prepared to provide as much information as possible to the K-9 handler

#### J. Canine Use and Canine Vehicle

1. Any handler of a patrol or dual-purpose canine should have canine in muzzle when in contact with any and all persons unless the performance of duty dictates otherwise, excluding ESD K9.
2. Any officer or employees of the Fairburn Police Department if approached by department canine should stand still, excluding ESD K9. Any sudden movement may cause canine to respond in an aggressive manner
3. Teasing, agitating or roughhousing with a police canine is strictly prohibited unless performed as part of a training exercise
4. Handlers shall not permit anyone to pet or hug their canine, excluding ESD K9. Should a civilian express a desire to do so, he or she should be informed that police canines are serious working dogs and not pets.
5. Police canines shall not be used for breeding, participation in shows, field trials, exhibitions or other demonstrations, on or off-duty employment unless authorized by the Chief of Police
6. Officers shall maintain their canine both on and off duty in a safe and controlled manner. Police canines shall never be allowed to run loose unless engaged in agency authorized training or exercise
7. Canine Housing/Kennel

- a) This agency shall provide canine officers with proper housing for their dog and will conduct periodic inspections to ensure that the housing is properly maintained. Handlers will utilize the kennel provided; Canines are not house pets. The electronic K9 is the only authorized canine that is expected to be housed inside the handler's home.
- b) All handlers will be issued an American Aluminum Kennel run and a kennel crate for housing at their residence, excluding electronic K9 who must be housed indoors. All Fairburn Police Department canines must be housed in one of these kennels when off duty. Kennel inspections will be conducted annually and documented on a canine inspection form
- c) Canine handlers are personally responsible for the daily care and feeding of their animal to include:
  - i. Maintenance and cleaning of the kennel and yard area where the canine is housed, food, water, and grooming. Handlers are to be compensated with forty-five (45) minutes maintenance/cleaning time per day, that shall be submitted on the respective payment portal, and approved by the Shift/Unit Commander.
  - ii. In the event of a canine injury or death, the handler is to seek immediate medical assistance for the canine. The handler will immediately notify the unit supervisor
  - iii. In the event that the injury was caused by the intentional act of another while the canine was involved in the performance of its duty, the subjects involved will be treated as described in O.C.G.A. 16-11-107, injuring or killing a police dog
  - iv. If a canine handler is injured and is unable to control his canine. A handler from the unit should be called to come and take control of the canine. Depending on time and circumstances, animal control may also be utilized.
- d) Vehicle Procedures during Extreme Temperatures:
  - i. The vehicle is to stay running with the air conditioner on while canine is in the vehicle
  - ii. Auxiliary fans are mounted to canine inserts and are to be used in extreme heat
  - iii. The windows are tinted to reduce sunlight coming into the vehicle
  - iv. A canine heat alarm has been installed in each vehicle which should activate an alarm when temperatures reach 92-degrees inside the vehicle. The K-9 handler should also have a pager or cellular device that should be carried at all times on duty which should notify him/her of the heat alarm activation. The units should be tested several times each month
  - v. All canine unit handlers should keep assigned vehicles operational. It is their responsibility to keep their unit clean and in good working order and have regularly scheduled maintenance completed. K-9

handlers should immediately notify a supervisor of any equipment failures

- vi. It will be the responsibility of the handler to secure their assigned unit whenever it is left unattended. Physically check to ensure that doors are locked and not solely rely on keyless entry.

All handlers are expected to maintain a high level of proficiency at all times. Canine units are required to be proactive and should realize that there are additional responsibilities that come with the job "Canine Handler". Any Canine handler who fails to comply with any of these policies is subject to disciplinary action.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 01/19/2010**

**S.O.P. 16-15 USE OF TASER ENERGY WEAPON**

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of this Agency to provide training, certification, use, decontamination and maintenance of Taser Energy Weapons.

The Agency will provide officers with an approved Taser so that officer(s) may successfully defend against combative, resisting, and/or violent individuals while reducing the risk of inflicting or receiving injury. The Taser is not necessarily a replacement or substitute for other authorized devices and techniques. Therefore, Taser should only be used when the officer believes it is the best choice for the circumstances. As with any use of force, officers are accountable for the use of force. The use of a Taser is classified as a use of force and officers will complete an incident report any time a Taser is used. (See S.O.P. 11-3 Use of Non-Deadly/Internal Procedures.)

**II. AGENCY APPROVED TASER ENERGY WEAPON**

Tasers issued by the agency will be the only energy weapon authorized by the Agency for officers to carry.

**III. TRAINING**

Officers must successfully complete the Agency approved Taser training and tased once prior to being issued any device. A Tasing from a previous agency is sufficient. The Agency Training coordinator or Armorer will maintain the serial numbers of the device and cartridges issued to each officer on the appropriate website. Appropriate training will be conducted on an annual basis to ensure proper use and efficiency of the Taser Energy Weapons.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

- A Function Check Procedures - Only a properly functioning and charged Taser shall be carried in the field. In order to insure the proper functioning, officers will conduct a test at the beginning of their tour of duty. Below is the proper Taser testing procedure:
1. Remove the Taser from the holster, finger off of the trigger;
  2. Activate the Taser using the safety switch and pressing the arc switch to activate the unit (1–2 seconds only), observing that the unit is arcing and discharging (This will be done away from any other persons and while the device is pointed away from anyone so as to avoid an accidental contact);
  3. Upon completion of the test, the officer will deactivate the Taser with the safety switch and holster the device (the officer will not place fingers on the trigger during this phase).
- B Defective/Damaged Unit - If at any time an officer or supervisor determines that a Taser or any part of the device is defective and/or damaged the unit shall be taken out of service immediately. Once out of service, no part of the defective unit shall be used until such time as it has been repaired and/or replaced by the Agency Armorer.

Officers will not carry the Taser and holster on the firearm side of their body. It will be secured in a cross-draw fashion for weapon hand deployment or carried to be drawn by off hand, and will remain holstered at all times unless it is being tested or being used to respond to an incident.

C Utilization Procedures – A Taser shall only be used in accordance with established Agency procedures as instructed during the training/certification session(s). Trained officers may utilize a Taser under appropriate circumstances.

1. The following are examples of situations Taser may be used:

1. Where verbal direction is ineffective or inappropriate;
2. Where passive resistance techniques have failed and officers may have to use physical force to maintain control;
3. Where the officer could reasonably use an impact weapon and/or;
4. Where the officer could reasonably use deadly force.

Taser Energy Weapons may be used to affect the removal of a person(s) from a vehicle who refuses to exit when lawfully commanded to do so by an officer and physical resistance is used by the person(s).

Prior to use, when practical, a warning to the subject(s) and other officer(s) should be given.

2. The following are examples of situations Taser may not be used:

- a. For punitively or coercion purposes;
- b. To intimidate an individual into compliance with simple requests or directives by an officer;
- c. To escort or prod subjects;
- d. To awaken unconscious or intoxicated subjects;
- e. When the officer knows the subject has come in contact with explosive materials, liquids, or vapors (vapors include gases found in methamphetamine labs);
- f. When the subject is in a position where a fall may cause substantial injury or death;

D Procedure for Use - Aim at center mass of the back, or the abdominal and pelvic region (also called “splitting the belt”), if possible. Avoid the chest area. The Taser should not be aimed at and/or discharged at the eyes, genitals or face of a subject.

E Use of the “Drive Stun” – The Drive Stun is discouraged except in situations where the “probe” deployment is not possible. As with the “probe” deployment, if initial application is ineffective, the officer(s) will reassess the situation and consider other available options.

1. Unless exigent circumstances are present an officer shall not “drive stun” a subject in the head, throat, back of the neck or groin region or chest.
  2. No more than three applications of the “Drive Stun” method shall be administered to an individual.
- F Decontamination Procedures - After control has been established and/or resistance ceased, the officer will make reasonable efforts to allow the affected subject relief from the discomfort associated with the application.
1. After the suspect has been brought under control, restraints applied, and the suspect no longer presents a threat to the officer or others, the officer will render appropriate first aid to the suspect;
  2. Arrange for professional medical attention (EMS) as soon as practical. The EMS personnel should determine if the suspect needs to be transported to a hospital or other medical facility for further medical evaluation.
  3. The Taser prongs should be removed at the earliest opportunity. Prongs shall only be removed by officers who have completed agency approved training;
  4. Prongs that have struck the face, eyes, neck, genitals or female breasts, shall only be removed by fire/rescue or medical personnel.
1. Taser prongs that have struck a person’s body shall be treated as a “Biohazard.” The cartridge and prongs shall be packaged and disposed of in an approved sharps container by fire/rescue or medical personnel or placed in a spool bay and disposed of.
  2. In the event of serious injury or death, the prongs shall be placed in a spool bay and placed in evidence.
- G Documentation Procedures - On each occasion of Taser use an Incident Report will be completed (S.O.P. 11-3 Use of Non Deadly Force/Internal Procedures) and the subsequent procedures will be followed:
1. Photograph(s) shall be taken by a supervisor of all prong marks on the subject and any other related injury. Photographs will then be submitted into evidence.
  2. Injuries or the absence of them shall be noted on the Officer’s incident report.
  3. Officers shall take the offender to receive a medical clearance from a hospital prior to jail transport.
  4. Detention personnel shall be notified at the time of booking that the subject has been stunned using probes or by drive stun.
  5. An incident report will also be completed even when the subject was not struck, if the discharge was accidental, or if the Taser was used on an animal.
  6. The Departmental Training coordinator or designee will download data from the Taser as soon as possible after any non-training usage.
  7. The battery should be docked monthly for data download/upload and charging.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**EFFECTIVE: 01/01/2017**

**S.O.P. 16-16 Body Cameras**

**I. PURPOSE**

This policy is intended to provide officers with instructions on when and how to use body worn cameras (BWCs) so that officers may reliably record their contacts with the public. This policy is also intended to establish officer responsibility for the use of body worn cameras.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of this department that officers shall activate the BWC when such use is appropriate to the proper performance of his or her official duties, where the recordings are consistent with this policy. This policy does not govern the use of surreptitious recording devices used in undercover operations. Recordings made by the use of a BWC may be subject to the Open Records Act.

**III. PROCEDURES**

**A. Administration**

This department has adopted the use of the BWCs to accomplish several objectives. The primary objectives are as follows:

1. BWCs allow for video documentation of police-public contacts, arrests, and critical incidents. BWCs may serve to enhance the accuracy of officer reports and testimony in court.
2. Audio and video recordings also may enhance this department's ability to review probable cause for arrest, officer and suspect interaction, evidence for investigative and prosecutorial purposes, and to provide additional information for officer evaluation and training.
3. The use of a BWC may also be useful in documenting crime and accident scenes or other events which include the confiscation and documentation of evidence or contraband.
4. A BWC will be assigned to or made available to all sworn officers of this department.
5. All enforcement personnel will receive training on the use of and proper wearing of the body worn cameras during either the FTO training program or new hire training phase.

**B. When and How to Use the BWC**

1. Officers shall activate the BWC to record all contacts with citizens in the performance of official duties. This requirement includes all officers on a call for service or involved a citizen contact. The BWC will be activated prior to making contact with the citizen, when possible.

2. BWCs shall remain activated until the event is completed in order to ensure the integrity of the recording, unless the contact moves into an area restricted by this policy.
3. If an officer fails to activate the BWC, fails to record the entire contact, or interrupts the recording, the officer shall document in the incident report why a recording was not made, was interrupted, or was terminated, in addition to submission of a BlueTeam entry. Any failure to record a citizen contact may be met with disciplinary action. Circumstances or events outside of an officer's control that cause a BWC to malfunction or fail to record will be taken into account. If an officer is found to have intentionally failed to record or in any way interfere with a body camera recording the officer will face disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. Civilians shall not be allowed to review the recordings at the scene.

### **C. Procedures for BWC Use**

1. BWC equipment are issued to all sworn officers. Officers must use the equipment unless otherwise directed by supervisory personnel.
2. Police personnel shall use only BWCs issued by this department. The BWC equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the equipment is the sole property of the department.
3. Police personnel who are assigned BWCs must complete a department-approved and/or provided training program to ensure proper use and operation.
4. BWC equipment is the responsibility of the individual officer and will be used with reasonable care to ensure proper functioning. Equipment malfunctions shall be brought to the attention of the officer's supervisor as soon as possible.
5. Officers shall inspect and test the BWC equipment prior to each shift in order to verify proper functioning and shall notify their supervisor of any problems in writing.
6. Officers shall not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner BWC recordings or portions thereof without prior written authorization and approval by the Chief of Police or his or her designee. Any officer who is found to intentionally violate this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.
7. Officers are encouraged to inform their supervisor of any recordings which may be of value for training purposes.
8. If an officer is suspected of wrongdoing or involved in an officer-involved shooting or other serious use-of-force, the department reserves the right to limit or restrict an officer from viewing the video file.
9. Requests for deletion of portions of the recordings (e.g., in the event of a personal recording that is obviously accidental) must be submitted in writing and approved by the Chief of Police, or his or her designee, in accordance with state record retention laws. All requests and final decisions shall be kept on file.

10. Officers shall note in incident, accident, arrest, and related reports when recordings were made during the incident in question.
11. Officers will wear BWC equipment during all extra duty law enforcement employment jobs and be prepared to record citizen encounters during the course of their extra duty employment.
12. For any failure of BWC activation, the officer shall notify the proper chain-of-command and submit the appropriate report outlining the date, time, case number, location and pertinent details of the interaction.

#### **D. Restrictions on Using the BWC**

BWCs shall be used only in conjunction with official law enforcement duties. The BWCs shall not generally be used to record:

1. Communications with other police personnel;
2. Encounters with undercover officers or confidential informants;
3. When on break or otherwise engaged in personal activities; or
4. In any location where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a restroom or locker room.

#### **E. Storage**

1. All files shall be securely uploaded periodically and/or no later than every three days. Each video will be labeled accordingly: "ID" is the Fairburn Police case number, and "Title" is the type of incident officer encountered.
2. All images and sounds recorded by the BWC are the exclusive property of this department. Accessing, copying, or releasing files for non-law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited.
3. All access to BWC files must be specifically for official law enforcement functions.
4. Files shall be securely stored in accordance with state records retention laws and no longer than useful for purposes of training or for use in an investigation or prosecution.
5. Body cameras will be returned to police headquarters or CID building at the end of each shift. Officers will not bring any BWC home with them without supervisor approval.

#### **F. Supervisory Responsibilities**

Supervisory personnel shall ensure that officers equipped with BWC devices utilize them in accordance with the policy and procedures defined herein.

On a quarterly basis, supervisors will randomly review BWC recordings to ensure that the equipment is operating properly and that officers are using the devices appropriately and in accordance with policy and to identify any areas in which additional training or guidance is required. Supervisors shall focus on officer actions that indicate non-compliance to training, lack of training, improper supervision,

rudeness, or policy non-compliance.

### **G. Retention of Video**

1. All BWC recordings will be kept in accordance with state records retention laws. The following additional retention schedules will be adhered to:
  1. Use of force incidents 5 years
  2. Arrests 3 years from adjudication
  3. Traffic citations 1 year from adjudication

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
EFFECTIVE: 05/19/2008**

**S.O.P. 16-17 ALARM RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Agency recognizes the hazards encountered when officers respond to crimes-in-progress calls. Officers shall assume all alarms are bona fide crimes-in-progress. When approaching the scene, officers shall use caution to determine if a suspect(s) is still present. A confrontation at the scene will not only place the officer in danger but may escalate the incident into a hostage situation.

**I. PROCEDURE**

**a. Patrol Unit Response - When notified of an in-progress alarm:**

- i. An emergency response may be initiated or canceled by the on-duty supervisor, responding officer, or the communications operator.
- ii. If an emergency response has been initiated, the officer is to operate the vehicle in compliance with Agency policy, and state law, regarding emergency vehicle operation.
- iii. The patrol unit(s) responding to the scene will approach with caution. A single officer shall not enter the building until a back-up arrives and shall observe all activity prior to entry.
- iv. If no suspicious activities have been observed at an open business/house, the officer can have the communications operator contact the manager/owner or authorized representative and have him/her meet the officer alone outside the establishment/house.
- v. When the communications operator telephones the location of the alarm and there is no answer, or unusual circumstances are detected during the course of the conversation, it will be assumed that a crime is in progress. Upon confirmation or assumed confirmation the appropriate responses below will be initiated.

In the event a robbery is in-progress, the responding officer shall secure the perimeter and call for additional units as needed. When appropriate, vehicular and pedestrian traffic will be detoured from the area. The on-duty supervisor shall establish a command location. The safety of citizens, as well as law enforcement personnel, will be the highest priority in robbery occurrences. No unauthorized action will be taken that threatens the lives of others.

**NOTE: See Chapter 18 - Unusual Occurrences/Tactical Response.**

In the event of a burglary is in progress, the responding officer shall secure the perimeter, call additional units as necessary, and locate the point of entry. Entry into the structure shall be made when appropriate.

- vi. If the suspect(s) has fled the scene, the primary unit will continue to the scene to:
  1. Check for injuries;

2. Notify the Communications Center and patrol units of any additional information;
  3. Secure and protect the scene;
  4. Detain and separate the witnesses for interviews; and
  5. Obtain names, business and home addresses, and telephone numbers of all persons on the premises. To establish proper identity, officers shall use driver's licenses or other valid identification.
  6. Obtain pertinent information and; initiate an incident report.
- vii. Other Unit Response - Any officer who monitors an alarm or in-progress dispatch and is in the general vicinity of the incident location will notify the communications operator of his/her location. The on-duty field supervisor will be responsible for coordinating the response of all law enforcement units.
- b. Duties of The On-Duty Field Supervisor - Upon receiving information that a crime is in progress, the on-duty field supervisor shall:
- i. Ensure primary and back-up units are in response;
  - ii. Position additional units as needed, and return any units to service that are not needed;
  - iii. Travel to the scene to supervise and coordinate activities;
  - iv. Notify any specialty units as needed; and
  - v. Coordinate action based on the situation (stabilize the situation).

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
REVISED 02/07/2025**

**S.O.P. 16-18 MISSING CHILDREN**

**I. PURPOSE**

This chapter aims to establish guidelines for the preliminary and follow-up investigations of missing and unidentified children, define specific categories of missing children, and establish procedures for the emergency activation of alert systems and law enforcement response.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Unidentified Child – a child, whether living or deceased, who appears to be a child and is located unattended within the city limits of Fairburn.
- B. Non-Family Abduction- refers to unauthorized taking, retention, luring, confinement, or concealment of a child younger than 18 by someone other than a family member.
- C. Family Abduction- occurs when a child is taken, wrongfully retained, or concealed by a parent or other family member depriving another individual of their custody or visitation rights.
- D. Runaway- a child who without just cause and without the consent of his or her parent, guardian, or legal custodian is absent from his or her home or place of abode for at least 24-hours (reference OCGA 15-11-318)
- E. Missing Child – anyone 17 years of age and under who is being reported missing from his/her usual location within the city limits of Fairburn.
- F. Critical Missing/At Risk - a missing child will be considered at risk/critical when one or more of the risk factors noted below are present:
  - 1. 12 years of age or younger
  - 2. Believed or determined to be experiencing one or more of the circumstances noted below:
    - i. Is **outside the zone of safety** for their age and developmental stage. The zone of safety will vary depending on age and developmental stage. In the case of an infant, for example, the zone of safety shall include the immediate presence of an adult custodian or the crib, stroller, or carriage in which the infant was placed. For a school-age child, the safety zone might be the immediate neighborhood, or the route taken between home and school.
    - ii. Has **mental or behavioral disabilities**. If a child is developmentally disabled, emotionally disturbed, or the victim of disease, they may have difficulty communicating with others about needs, identity, or address. The disability places the child in danger of exploitation or other harm.
    - iii. Is **drug dependent**, including prescribed medication and/or illegal substances, and the dependency is potentially life-threatening.

- iv. Has been **absent from home for more than twenty-four (24) hours before being reported** to the police as missing—while some people may incorrectly assume that twenty-four (24) hours must pass before the police will accept a missing person case, a delay in reporting might also indicate the existence of neglect or abuse within the family.
- v. Is in a **life-threatening situation**. The environment in which the child is missing may be particularly hazardous. Examples of dangerous environments could be a busy highway for toddlers, an all-night truck stop for teenagers, or an outdoor environment for any missing child in inclement weather.
- vi. Is in the **company of others** who could endanger their welfare. A missing child in such circumstances is in danger not only of sexual exploitation but of involvement in criminal activity, such as burglary, shoplifting, and robbery.
- vii. Is absent in a way **inconsistent with established patterns of behavior and the deviation cannot be explained**. Most children, to some degree, have established reasonably predictable routines. Significant, unexplained deviations from those routines increase the probability that the child may be at risk.
- viii. Is involved in a **situation causing a reasonable person to conclude the child should be considered at risk**. Significant risk can be assumed if investigation indicates a possible abduction, violence at the scene of an abduction, or signs of sexual exploitation.

G. Levi's Call/Georgia's Amber Alert – Levi's Call is an alert initiated by law enforcement when a child has been abducted and is believed to be in danger of being harmed by his/her abductor. This alert system utilizes the Emergency Service Alert System, and the Georgia Department of Transportation's changeable message boards located among major highways around the state. The criteria for a Levi's Call activation consist of the following:

1. A confirmed child abduction
2. Circumstances surrounding the event must indicate that the child is in danger or harm or death.
3. The child is under the age of eighteen (18) years
4. Sufficient descriptive information is available to believe that an immediate broadcast will be beneficial
5. The abduction must be entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database.

A Levi's Call bulletin (as provided within this policy) will be completed and presented to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation by the assigned detective. The information required includes a description of the child, a suspect description, a description of vehicle, and direction of travel, where the abduction took place, where the child was last seen, and a local phone number where the public can contact local law enforcement (Reference Appendix V- Levi's Call Bulletin)

H. Mattie's Call – an alert/lookout initiated by law enforcement for missing disabled adults (any adult who is developmentally impaired, suffers dementia, or other cognitive impairment) or critically missing children

I. Kimberly's Call- an alert/lookout initiated by law enforcement for criminals wanted for serious crimes against persons and who pose a serious threat to the public

### III. RULES AND REGULATIONS

#### A. Critical Missing Child – Initial Investigation

Upon receiving a report of a missing child, the responding officer should always follow steps one through five, as listed below. If the initial investigation indicates that the incident involves a critical missing child, the responding officer should immediately notify the shift supervisor to respond to the scene and ensure that the on-call detective and CID supervisor are notified to be en route. All responding and assisting officers, including detectives and supervisors, should follow the steps listed below (Reference Appendix JJ- First Responding Officer Checklist):

1. Activate dash cam and body-worn camera upon approaching the scene to record vehicles, people, and anything else for later investigative review

2. Interview parents, guardians, and the person making the initial report (if different)

3. Confirm the child is missing. *Note – never assume searches conducted by distraught parents or others have been performed thoroughly. A check of the scene should include places where children could be trapped, asleep, or hiding. Special attention should be paid to enclosures such as refrigerators, freezers, and the interior of parked vehicles where limited breathing air may place the child at even greater risk. In the case of older children, first responders should ask if parents have checked with the child's friends or perhaps overlooked or forgotten something that the child may have said that would explain the absence. A home search should be conducted even if the missing child was last seen elsewhere.*

4. Determine if the child has a mental disorder, such as Autism. If yes, then determine the following:

- i. how the child will likely react to searches (run, hide, etc.)
- ii. is the child verbal or nonverbal
- iii. to whom will the child most likely respond
- iv. does the child need life-sustaining medications
- v. ask if the child is drawn to specific items, activities, or places

5. If it is determined that the child has a form of Autism, the following searches must be made as soon as possible:

- i. Searches must check small hiding spaces
- ii. Check all nearby bodies of water
- iii. Check busy intersections, streets, and roadways

iv. Any other areas suggested by parents

6. Verify the child's custody status. *First responders should ascertain whether a dispute over the child's custody might have played a role in the missing episode or might constitute a risk factor. Questions whether the reporting party has legal custody, is the noncustodial parent has been contesting custody, or if the missing child expressed a desire to live with the other parent may help an officer gain important insight into the case.*

7. Identify the circumstances of the disappearance. *First responders should ascertain whether a dispute over the child's custody might have played a role in the missing episode or might constitute a risk factor. Questions regarding whether the reporting party has legal custody, if the non-custodial parent has been contesting, or if the missing child desires to live with the other parent may help an officer gain important insights into the case.*

8. Determine when, where, and by whom the missing child was last seen. *This information is needed to determine factors such as abduction time frame, windows of opportunity, and verification of previously received information. Interview family members, friends/associates of the child, and friends of the family to determine when each last saw the child, what they think happened to the child, and if the child had complained about being approached by anyone. Comparison of information gathered from the reporting party, witness, and other sources may prove vital to case direction.*

9. Interview the individuals who last had contact with the child. *Effective questioning of those individuals who last saw or spoke with a missing child is crucial in the case assessment process. While seeking information about the child's appearance, demeanor, and actions, officers should also be alert to any contradictions made or evasiveness demonstrated by the witness, especially if these statements cannot be readily corroborated. Thorough documentation will allow investigative personnel to later compare those statements with the facts of the case as they are uncovered.*

10. An officer should go to the child's home and remain in that area with relatives to protect it as a potential crime scene until properly relieved.

11. Identify the child's zone of safety for his or her age and developmental stage. *Responding officers should attempt to determine how far a missing child could travel from the location where he or she was last seen before he or she would most likely be at risk of injury or exploitation. This perimeter should, under many circumstances, define the first search zone.*

12. Based on the available information, determine the type of incident, whether nonfamily abduction, family abduction, runaway, lost, injured, or otherwise missing.

13. Obtain a detailed description of the missing child, abductor, and any vehicles used.

14. Secure photographs/videos of the missing child and suspected abductor.

15. Evaluate whether the circumstances of the child's disappearance meet Levi's Call/Amber Alert criteria and/or other community notification protocols. Discuss plan activation with the supervisor.

16. Relay detailed description to 911 for a BOLO broadcast and updates.
17. Determine the need for additional personnel, including CID, patrol supervisor, fire department personnel, etc.

**STEPS 1-17 SHOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE FIRST HOUR**

18. Brief and bring up to date all additional responding personnel.
19. Identify and separately interview everyone at the scene. Make sure their interview and identifying information are properly recorded. To aid the process, take pictures or record video images of everyone present.
  - i. Note the name, address, and home/cell numbers of each person
  - ii. Determine each person's relationship to the missing child
  - iii. Document information each person may have about the child's disappearance
  - iv. Determine when/where each person last saw the child
  - v. Ask each person what they think happened to the child
  - vi. Obtain names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the child's friends, associates, and other relatives and friends of the family
20. Continue to keep 911 apprised of all appropriate developing information for broadcast updates
21. Obtain a signed consent to search form and note permission to search the home or building where the incident took place
22. Conduct an immediate, thorough search of the missing child's home, even if the child was reported missing from a different location.
23. An officer or detective will remain at the scene to seal/protect the scene and area of the child's home (including the child's articles such as a hairbrush, diary, photographs, and items with the child's fingerprints, footprints, and/or teeth impressions) so evidence is not destroyed during or after the initial search and to help ensure items which could help in the search for and or to identify the child are preserved. Determine if any of the child's personal items are missing. If possible, photograph or video record the area.
24. Evaluate the contents and appearance of the child's room/residence.
25. Inquire if the child has access to the internet. If yes, attempt to locate and preserve internet-capable devices to determine evidentiary value.
26. Ascertain if the child has a cell phone or other electronic communication device.
27. Extend the search to surrounding areas, including vehicles and other places of concealment.
28. Treat areas of interest as potential crime scenes.

29. Determine if surveillance or security cameras in the vicinity may have captured information about the child's disappearance.

30. Interview other family members, friends and associates of the child, and friends of the family to determine when each last saw the child and what they think happened to the child.

31. Ensure information regarding the missing child is entered into NCIC missing person files within two hours of report receipt and any information about a suspected abductor is entered in the NCIC wanted person file.

### **STEPS 18-31 SHOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN TWO HOURS**

#### **B. Supervisor Responsibilities**

The on-duty supervisor will respond to the scene and ensure that the below steps are completed as soon as possible (Reference Supervisor Responsibilities Investigative Checklist, Appendix KK):

1. Obtain a briefing from the first responding officer and other personnel at the scene.
2. Decide if the circumstances of the child's disappearance meet the protocol in place for activation of a Levi's Call and/or other immediate community notifications systems (Civic Ready, Nixle, etc.).
3. Determine if additional personnel are needed to assist in the investigation.
4. Establish a command post away from the child's residence.
5. Determine if additional assistance is necessary from:
  - i. The GBI Child Abduction Response Team (CART)
  - ii. Missing-Children Clearinghouse
  - iii. FBI
  - iv. Outside/specialized units (i.e. Department of Corrections for tracking dogs, Georgia Department of Public Safety for air support, etc.)
  - v. NCMEC's Project ALERT/Team Adam after conferring with the CID Division Commander.
6. Confirm that all required resources, equipment, and assistance necessary to conduct an efficient investigation have been requested and expedite their availability.
7. Ensure coordination/cooperation among all law enforcement personnel involved in the investigation and search efforts.
8. Verify that all required notifications are made.
9. Ensure agency policy and procedure is being used
10. Be available to make any decisions or determinations as they develop.

11. Activate CART for a critical missing child under the age of twelve if four hours have elapsed where no evidence is discovered or viable leads established regarding the location of the child.

**C. Criminal Investigations Division Responsibilities** (Reference CID Responsibilities Investigative Checklist, Appendix LL)

1. Obtain briefing from the first responding officer and other on-scene personnel.
2. Verify the accuracy of all descriptive information and other details developed during the preliminary investigation.
3. Post (or initiate post if without access) critical missing information on the department's social media sites.
4. Initiate a neighborhood canvass using all available resources.
5. Obtain a brief, recent history of family dynamics.
6. Correct and investigate the reasons for any conflicting information offered by witnesses/other individuals, if any.
7. Collect articles of the child's clothing for scent-tracking purposes. Clothing that has direct contact with the child is preferred, such as underwear or socks. The officer collecting such should wear gloves when handling the clothing articles and place articles immediately into a plastic evidence bag and sealed. The sealed bag of clothing articles shall be handed to the responding K9 officer.
8. Review and evaluate all available information and evidence collected.

**STEPS 1-8 SHOULD BE INITIATED WITHIN ONE HOUR OF CID ARRIVING ON SCENE**

9. Attempt to secure the child's latest medical and dental records, including the name and location of each medical/dental provider.
10. Upon approval from the CID Commander, contact landfill management and request they segregate garbage and dumping containers from key investigative areas in cases where it is suspected there may be an imminent danger to the missing child.
11. Develop and execute an investigative plan.
12. Conduct a criminal history check on all principal suspects and participants in the investigation.
13. Determine what additional resources and specialized services are required.
14. Ensure details of the case have been reported to NCMEC
15. Prepare and update bulletins for local law enforcement agencies, missing children clearinghouses, the GBI, and other appropriate agencies. Bulletins may be generated by NCMEC or by the agency, time and resources considered.
16. Establish a telephone hotline for receipt of tips and leads. This hotline will be the city-issued cell phone assigned to the primary detective.
17. Implement the NCMEC's lead management system to prioritize leads and ensure

each is reviewed and followed up on. After reporting to NCMEC, a case manager is automatically assigned to facilitate communication and resource allocation during the investigation.

#### **D. Non-Critical Missing Child Investigation**

A non-critical missing child is any child over the age of twelve who is missing, not in poor physical or questionable mental health, and there is no indication of foul play. This group is most often teenagers who leave home voluntarily for a variety of reasons:

1. The responding officer will complete a detailed report to include an initial physical description of the child and their clothing. The officer should also inquire about and document any recent disciplinary or behavioral issues.
2. Obtain and document any leads as to the possible location (destination, mode of travel, routes, etc.).
3. The identity and location where the person was last seen and the identity of the person who last saw the missing person.
4. The names and telephone numbers of relatives and friends and any other information that may assist in locating the person.

The responding officer will initiate an immediate investigation to locate the missing person and relay such information to the on duty shift supervisor. This investigation will include the following actions:

1. A broadcast over the patrol frequency with a description of the missing person and any known circumstances.
2. Officers will also disseminate information to law enforcement agencies adjacent to this agency and those in the jurisdiction of any known or suspected destinations.
3. Locations will be lawfully searched if the complainant indicates probable location(s).
4. The officer will initiate and document an immediate entry into the NCIC/GCIC computer database. If the individual is located, this entry will be removed immediately.
5. Interviews with the reporting person, parents, siblings, friends, or anyone who may know the missing person's whereabouts. These interviews may be done by telephone or in person, but all interviews and attempts to interview will be documented.
6. If possible, obtain a photograph of the missing individual and forward it to CID to generate posters for distribution.
7. Initiate an incident report with a narrative summary of all actions taken by the reporting officer and any related actions known to have been taken by others. The officer shall also complete a missing person declaration, provide it to the on-duty GCIC clerk, and receive the NIC number.

## **E. Non-Critical Missing Child Follow-Up Investigation**

The Criminal Investigations Division will be responsible for the follow-up investigation. The follow-up investigation shall include the following actions:

1. Contacting the complainant and completing all aspects of the initial investigation that the first responding officer(s) did not complete.
2. Contact the Fulton County Department of Family and Children's Services (DFACS) to request access to any relevant information on the missing child, including whether or not there are any active cases(s), the name of the case worker, previous missing incidents, previous reported abuse cases, and other information which would lead to the whereabouts of the child.
3. Contact the child's school and inquire about their attendance record and disciplinary issues.
4. Contacting the local media and providing them with the information, including a photograph, necessary to facilitate a broadcast to the public.
5. Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-THE-LOST and provide them with all necessary information to publish on NCMEC's website.
6. When the child is located, interview the child within 48 hours of location and include this information as a missing juvenile debriefing supplemental report within the case file.

## **F. Unidentified Child Investigation**

Upon receiving a report of an unidentified child, the responding officer will acquire the following information:

1. An initial physical description of the child.
2. The identity and location of the child and the identity of the person who located the child.

The responding officer will initiate an immediate investigation to identify the child and relay that information to the on duty shift supervisor. This investigation shall include the following actions:

3. A broadcast made over the patrol frequency with a description of the located child and any known circumstances.
4. Officers will also disseminate information to adjacent agencies.
5. The officer will initiate and document an immediate entry into the NCIC/GCIC computer database. This entry will be removed if the individual is identified.
6. Take a photograph of the child and forward the picture to CID or the person responsible for generating posters for distribution if CID is not involved.

7. Initiate an incident report with a narrative summary of all actions taken by the reporting officer and any related actions known to have been taken by others. Document the assigned NCIC number (NIC number) in the report's narrative.
8. If the child is not identified and a caretaker is not located within a reasonable amount of time, not less than one hour, the on-call detective should be summoned to take custody of the child and complete the required reporting for protective custody.

### **G. Unidentified Child Follow-Up Investigation**

The Criminal Investigations Division will be responsible for the follow-up investigation. The follow-up investigation will include the following actions:

1. Complete all aspects of the initial investigation that the first responding officer(s) did not complete.
2. Contacting the Fulton County Department of Family and Children's Services (DFACS) to request access to any relevant information they may have discovered on the unidentified child, including whether or not there are any active cases(s), the name of the case worker, previous missing incidents, previous reported abuse cases, and other information which would lead to the identification of the child.

### **H. Removal of Information from Criminal Justice Database**

When the missing child is located, the responding officer will verify this information and request that the on-duty GCIC clerk remove the entry from GCIC/NCIC. If the child is located by the detective completing the investigation, they will be responsible for requesting the removal.

If a 'Mattie's Call' or 'Kimberly's Call' alert was activated and the missing person is located, the assigned detective must notify the PIO so that they can notify the local media, cancel the state-wide BOLO, notify the Lottery Corporation, and inform the GBI if News Net was utilized.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
REVISED 02/07/2025**

**S.O.P. 16-19 MISSING ADULTS**

**I. PURPOSE**

This chapter aims to establish guidelines for the preliminary and follow-up investigations of missing adults, to define specific categories of missing persons, and to establish guidelines for the emergency activation of alert systems and law enforcement's response.

**II. DEFINITIONS AND ALERTS**

- A. Missing Adult- a missing adult is anyone 18 years or older reported as missing from their usual location within the city limits of Fairburn.
- B. Critical Missing Adult - a critical missing adult is any person over the age of seventy (70) who is missing, any person in poor physical or questionable mental health, or any missing person where there is an indication of foul play. Foul play is indicated if the occurrence is grossly out of character for the person missing or if the reporting party has sufficient reason to believe foul play has occurred. Any person missing under circumstances that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that there is a danger if the person is not located immediately (i.e., a person missing outdoors in extremely harsh weather, requiring medication, etc.) will also be considered a critical missing person.
- C. Mentally Diminished – if a person is developmentally disabled, emotionally disturbed, or the victim of disease, they may have difficulty communicating with others about needs, identity, or address. Disability places the person in danger of exploitation or other harm.
- D. Life-Threatening Situations - the environment in which the person is missing may be particularly hazardous. Examples could include missing during current or impending inclement weather for an elderly person or a nearby busy highway for a person with Alzheimer's Disease.
- E. There is **NO** waiting period required. While some may incorrectly assume that twenty-four hours must pass before the police will accept a missing person case, a delay in reporting might also indicate the existence of neglect or abuse within the family.
- F. Absent under circumstances inconsistent with established patterns of behavior – To some degree, most adults have established reasonably predictable routines. Significant, unexplained deviations from those routines increase the probability that the person may be at risk.
- G. **Mattie's Call** is an alert/lookout initiated by law enforcement for **missing disabled adults** (any adult who is developmentally impaired, suffers dementia, or has other cognitive impairments).

**Criteria to Activate:**

- 1- Agency believes that a disabled person is missing and is in immediate danger of serious bodily injury or death;
- 2- Through its own investigation, the Agency has verified the disappearance and eliminated alternative explanations for the disabled person's disappearance;

- 3- Sufficient information is available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the disabled person;
- 4- The missing disabled person must be entered into the NCIC database;
- 5- The Agency must issue a statewide broadcast to law enforcement/911 centers and contact local media regarding the missing person. The Mattie's Call alert form must be completed (Refer to Appendix MM- Mattie's Activation Form).

### **III. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

#### **A. Missing Adult Initial Investigation**

Upon receiving a report of a missing adult, the responding officer will acquire the following information:

1. An initial physical description of the individual
2. Any leads as to the possible location (destination, mode of travel, routes, etc.)
3. The identity and location of where the person was last seen and the identity of the person who last saw the person.
4. Names and telephone numbers of relatives and friends and any other information that may assist in locating the person.

The responding officer will initiate an immediate investigation into locating the missing person and relaying such information to the on duty Shift Supervisor. This investigation will include the following actions:

1. A broadcast over patrol frequency with a description of the missing person and any known circumstances.
2. Officers will also disseminate information to adjacent agencies and to the law enforcement agencies in the jurisdiction of any known or suspected destinations via Fulton County Communications Center (dispatch).
3. If the complainant indicates a probable location of the missing person, each location will be lawfully searched.
4. The officer will initiate and document an immediate NCIC/GCIC database entry. This entry will be removed if the individual is located.
5. Conduct interviews with the reporting person, a spouse, parents, siblings, friends, employers, co-workers, or anyone who may know the missing person's whereabouts. These interviews may be conducted via telephone or in person, but all interviews and attempts must always be documented.
6. If possible, obtain a photograph of the missing person and forward it to the investigative division or designee as determined by the on-duty supervisor so that the missing person posters can be generated for distribution.
7. Initiate an incident report with a narrative summary of all actions taken by the reporting officer and any related actions known to have been taken by others. The officer shall also complete the GCIC Missing Person's Declaration, which will be

turned in with the GCIC/NCIC entry paperwork.

#### B. Missing Adult Follow-up Investigation

The Criminal Investigations Division will be responsible for the follow-up investigation. The follow-up investigation will include the following actions:

1. Contacting the complainant and completing all aspects of the initial investigation that the first responding officer did not complete.
2. Contact the agency's Public Information Officer (PIO) and provide them with the information and a photograph, if available, of the missing adult to facilitate a broadcast of this information to the public via local news media outlets.

#### C. Critical Missing Person Initial Investigation

Upon receiving a report of a critical missing person, the responding officer will take the following specific actions, in addition to those described in Missing Person Initial Investigation:

1. Mobilize all available resources to assist in locating the missing individual. This mobilization should be coordinated and implemented with the on duty shift supervisor. Resources to consider include:
  - a. Requesting assistance from the city/county fire department(s), public works department, and other city/county resources to aid in the search.
  - b. Requesting assistance from other law enforcement agencies.
  - c. Requesting a law enforcement canine unit to assist when appropriate.
  - d. Request air support to assist in the search when appropriate.
  - e. Notify the news media and ask for a camera crew or a reporter with the approval of the on duty shift supervisor.
2. The supervisor shall initiate a thorough and detailed physical search of areas with reasonable grounds to believe the person could be located. The physical search should start with the missing person's home and spiral outward if the person is reported missing from the house.
3. The officer will cause an immediate entry into the GCIC/NCIC database by submitting the Missing Persons Declaration. (Refer to Appendix S)

#### D. Critical Missing Person Follow-up Investigation

If a critical missing person is not located within one hour, the Criminal Investigations Commander will be notified, and a detective will immediately be assigned to conduct a follow-up investigation. The follow-up investigation will include:

1. Remain in contact with the person making the report to keep them updated with the progress of the investigation.
2. Continue reasonable efforts to acquire additional and ongoing information about the missing person, including prompt integration of extra information into the GCIC/NCIC

database.

3. If the critical missing person is a disabled adult, activate Georgia's 'Mattie's Call' after a CID supervisor reviews and approves it.
4. If the missing person suffers from Alzheimer's Disease, contact The Safe Return Program at 800-572-1122 and provide them with information on the missing adult. The Safe Return Program will enter the information into their database, which may assist in confirming the identity of the person if they are in another jurisdiction.

#### **E. Removal of Information from the Criminal Justice System**

When the missing or critical missing person is located, the responding officer will verify the information and request that the on-duty GCIC operator remove it immediately from GCIC/NCIC. If the missing person is located by the detective completing the investigation, they will be responsible for the GCIC/NCIC removal. If the 'Mattie's Call' alert was activated and the missing person was located, the assigned detective must notify the local media, cancel the statewide BOLO, notify the Lottery Corporation, and notify the GBI if News Net was utilized. The detective will also need to complete the Mattie's Cancellation form (Refer to Appendix NN).