

ESCORT SERVICES

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish guidance for providing law enforcement escort services under both scheduled and emergency situations.
2. **POLICY:** The Huntsville Police Department will provide reasonable and lawful aid to individuals or companies in the escort of property or personnel through the city, provided the escort does not create an unacceptable risk to the public.
3. **SCOPE:** This directive is applicable to all sworn personnel.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY:** All sworn personnel will comply with this directive.
5. **APPROVAL**
 - A. **SCHEDULED ESCORTS:** All routine requests for escort will be reviewed and approved by the Operations Bureau Commander or his/her designee. Each request will include time, date, location, number of officers needed, and any other pertinent details. If private escort personnel are utilized, they will be reviewed to ensure the escort meets the guidelines of current city ordinances and state laws.
 - B. **EMERGENCY ESCORTS:** Officers will not initiate emergency escorts without obtaining authorization from a supervisor.
6. **PROCEDURES:** Marked police vehicles should be used for all escort services (exceptions: motorcades and other transports of public officials or dignitaries).
 - A. **SCHEDULED ESCORT SERVICES**
 1. Legitimate requests for scheduled escort services include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Motorcades and other transport of public officials or dignitaries ;
 - b. Oversized vehicles, highway construction and maintenance vehicles; and
 - c. Vehicles with hazardous or unusual cargo. All such requests must have command level review and approval before they will be honored.
 2. When the Department approves a request for a scheduled escort service, the trip route will be established in advance, as will the maximum speed to be maintained along each segment of the route.
 3. Traffic direction and control will be established, as appropriate, at locations along the scheduled route, sufficient to ensure safe passage through intersections. Except under the most exigent circumstances, all traffic laws will be obeyed.

4. Oversize/overweight load permits may be necessary to properly move some loads. In the event a permit is required, the permit will be reviewed before the escort takes place. The Alabama Dept. of Transportation requires that an oversize/overweight permit be obtained for the load to be transported on state or federal roads. Normally, any load exceeding 82,000 lbs. Any such permit must be verified before an escort can be scheduled.

B. EMERGENCY (UNSCHEDULED) ESCORT SERVICES

1. **OTHER EMERGENCY VEHICLES:** Emergency vehicles from other agencies will be escorted under limited circumstances and only after supervisory approval. Such circumstances may include the escort of an emergency vehicle from our city limits to a hospital if the driver is not familiar with the location.
2. **PRIVATE VEHICLES:** Emergency escort of private vehicles is to be avoided when possible. Officers should escort civilian vehicles to a medical facility **ONLY** as a last resort, and only if it appears the patient's life is in immediate danger.
 - a. The preferred alternative is transfer of the patient to an ambulance, or in the event time is critical, to the patrol vehicle for the code run.
 - b. If it appears impossible or impractical to transfer the patient to the patrol vehicle, and the patient's life appears to be in immediate danger, the officer may escort the private vehicle with specific approval from a supervisor.
 - c. Regardless of the threat to the patient, the escort of a private vehicle will not exceed a speed reasonable for the conditions present. Officers conducting the escort will activate the patrol vehicle's emergency equipment. However, officers will not proceed through traffic control devices without stopping and ensuring that both vehicles can safely proceed through the intersection.
 - d. An officer will terminate an emergency escort and resume normal vehicular operation when, in his/her opinion, continuation of the escort would constitute an unacceptable risk to the public. If possible, the person being escorted will be advised of this requirement before the escort is started.