



Kent County Sheriff's Office
Policy and Procedure

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SHERIFF

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Subject: Towing Company Authorization and Coordination	General Order: 1 . 1 0 . 1
Effective Date: 06/12/2024 Revision Date:	Distribution: All Personnel

I. PURPOSE

Establish procedures for selecting towing companies and creating guidelines for these companies to facilitate the removal of vehicles from public property.

II. POLICY

The Kent County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) is committed to ensuring public safety by coordinating with local towing companies that operate in accordance with established rules and regulations to maintain the integrity of the towing process and safeguard the rights of vehicle owners. This policy outlines the laws and regulations governing towing companies participating in the KCSO "No Preference Towing Company" list.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. **No Preference Towing Company List:** A list compiled by the KCSO of towing companies authorized to tow vehicles at the request of personnel in the course of their official duties.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

1. Coordination of authorized contracted towing services for the KCSO is handled through the Purchasing Department of Kent County.
2. Agents of towing companies may visit the Vendor Registration Page and the Bid Opportunities Page for opportunities to apply to be a contract towing service.

3. To be eligible to participate in the KCSO “No Preference Towing Company” list, all of the following requirements must be met:
 - a. The towing company has a storage lot in, or within a reasonable distance of, Kent County.
 - b. The towing company has 24/7/365 towing services available.
 - c. The towing company is registered with Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).
 - The purpose is to ensure the KCSO can process any acquired abandoned vehicles.
 - d. Maintain business liability insurance and provide proof of this annually or upon request.
 - e. Maintain a valid business license and provide proof of this annually or upon request.
 - f. Provide a detailed list of available tow trucks, including each truck's towing capability.
 - g. Provide a current list of all drivers employed and authorized by the company to conduct towing operations on behalf of the KCSO.
 - h. Upon request, demonstrate to a KCSO representative that the available equipment is in good working order.
 - i. Maintain a securely fenced storage yard that meets KCSO standards, including the capability for indoor vehicle storage.
 - Standards include, but not limited to:
 - i. Ensuring the contents of a vehicle are secured maintains the integrity of personal property, preventing theft or damage while in storage, thereby upholding the rights and trust of the vehicle owners.
 - ii. Properly securing a vehicle indoors to allow for evidentiary processing and preserving potential evidence.

B. Code of Conduct

1. Authorized towing personnel are required to maintain the highest standards of professionalism at all times while performing services on behalf of the KCSO. This includes:
 - a. Personnel must consistently demonstrate respect and courtesy towards all individuals involved, including vehicle owners, interested parties, and law enforcement officials.
 - b. Personnel must avoid any actions or behaviors, criminal or unprofessional, that could potentially harm the reputation of both the KCSO and the towing company. This includes adherence to all legal standards and fostering a culture of integrity and accountability within all operations.
2. Any violations of the Code of Conduct will be formally addressed through written correspondence with the towing company's business owner or designated representative. This ensures a clear, documented process for addressing issues.
 - a. Multiple or significant violations may lead to serious repercussions, including suspension or removal from the KCSO's "No Preference Towing Company" list.
 - b. Authorized towing companies must maintain open communication channels with the KCSO to promptly address any concerns or issues. Open communication ensures that any issues or incidents that arise during the towing process can be addressed and resolved quickly.
 - Examples include, but are not limited to, any irregularities, such as damage to a towed vehicle or security breaches at storage facilities; informing KCSO about deviations from standard procedures or compliance with legal and regulatory requirements; and any issues or incidents that arise during the towing process that could negatively affect KCSO or the towing agencies credibility.

C. Fee Schedule

1. Towing companies must provide a schedule of towing and storage fees to the KCSO initially and prior to any changes going into effect.

2. Fees for towing and storage must be reasonable and in compliance with state and local regulations.
3. Towing companies must provide clear and transparent invoicing to vehicle owners, detailing all charges incurred.

D. Vehicle Release Procedures

1. Vehicle owners must be provided with clear instructions on retrieving their towed vehicles, including location, hours of operation, and required documentation and identification.
2. Towing companies must release vehicles promptly upon payment of towing and storage fees.

E. Complaints and Dispute Resolution

1. The KCSO will accept and promptly investigate complaints and take appropriate action to address any valid concerns from vehicle owners, law enforcement officers, or other stakeholders.

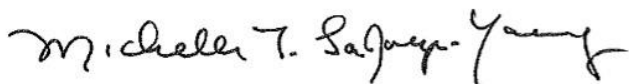
F. Compliance and Accountability

1. Towing companies participating in the KCSO “No Preference Towing Company” list are subject to periodic audits and inspections to ensure compliance with this policy and applicable laws and regulations.
2. Non-compliance with this policy may result in the suspension or termination of the towing contract and other appropriate actions, as determined by the KCSO.

V. CANCELLATIONS

None

Authorized by:



Michelle LaJoye-Young
Sheriff

Index as:

Standard None

Application: This directive constitutes department policy and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third-party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law.

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