

<b>MESA POLICE</b>  Department Policy Manual	<b>Search of Vehicle</b>	<b>DPM 2.2.30</b> Effective 01/04/2013 Revised 08/26/2013 Reviewed 12/16/2024
Approved by: <b>Chief of Police</b>	Chapter: <b>Search &amp; Seizure</b>	Page: <b>1 of 3</b>

## 1. PURPOSE

This policy provides Mesa Police Department (MPD) members with guidelines for searching vehicles.

## 2. GENERAL VEHICLE SEARCH PROCEDURES

### A. Locked Areas or Containers.

1. Use key to open rather than force.
2. If key is unavailable, do not force locked containers.

TYPE	ELEMENTS	SCOPE	PROCEDURE
<b>Consent</b> [ALEAP 1.11D]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary.</li> <li>• If not registered owner consent, must have joint access or control.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited by consent given.</li> <li>• Subject can stop or limit at any time.</li> <li>• If not registered owner consent, establish ownership and authority prior to searching containers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have verbal consent recorded on Axon, if equipped. Otherwise signed written consent is preferred.</li> <li>• Use <a href="#">DPM 2.2F1 Consent for Search Form</a>.</li> <li>• Have at least one officer witness search if practicable.</li> </ul>
<b>Abandoned Vehicle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be abandoned (not on private property as possible junk or dismantled).</li> <li>• Must have clear evidence that vehicle is abandoned.</li> <li>• Officer must have legal access to where the vehicle is.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole vehicle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If vehicle is truly abandoned, there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in the vehicle; therefore, it may be searched.</li> <li>• If any person has or claims an interest in the vehicle, it is not abandoned.</li> </ul>
<b>Aircraft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as motor vehicle.</li> </ul>		

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<p><b>Inventory</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle must be impounded for a violation of ARS 28-3511 or for safekeeping.</li> <li>• Inventory must follow policy.</li> <li>• Not intended as evidence gathering theory.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include entire vehicle and all containers, whether closed or otherwise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See <a href="#">DPM 2.7.45 Vehicle Inventory</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mobile Conveyance or Automobile PC Exception</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PC that evidence or contraband is in vehicle.</li> <li>• Vehicle apparently mobile.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited by object search.</li> <li>• Once object found, cease search.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupants may only be searched on consent or under arrest.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Motor/Mobile Home</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If apparently mobile, treat as motor vehicle for warrantless search.</li> <li>• If affixed to location, treat as structure.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Protective Sweep of Vehicle</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawful investigatory stop of vehicle.</li> <li>• Facts support officer reasonably believing subject is armed and dangerous and has access to weapons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited to areas in passenger compartment within lunging area where weapons could be.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>VIN (Vehicle Identification Number)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No reasonable expectation of privacy while on public roadway or in public view for the VIN.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wherever public VIN is placed on particular vehicle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove anything that blocks view of VIN from outside of vehicle.</li> <li>• Check VIN on registration with VIN on vehicle.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Warrant</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Search Warrants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited by warrant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Search Warrants.</li> </ul>

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## REFERENCES

- [DPM 2.2F1 Consent for Search Form](#)
- [DPM 2.7.45 Vehicle Inventory](#)