



OPERATIONAL MANUAL

OPS-470 – STOLEN/UNAUTHORIZED USE OF VEHICLES

Amends/Supersedes: OPS-470 (11/14/2018)

Date of Issue: 04/22/2024

I. GENERAL

- A. Police Department employees will take a report on any incident fitting the criteria for stolen vehicles or unauthorized use of a vehicle, as outlined in this policy.
- B. All stolen vehicles recovered in the City of Newport News by the Newport News Police Department will be processed by patrol officers, except for stolen vehicles involved in major felony cases (e.g., homicide, rape, robbery, carjacking, kidnapping, or hit-and-run). The Forensic Services Unit will process vehicles involved in these types of crimes.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Grand larceny of a vehicle is defined as the vehicle being taken with the intent to permanently deprive the owner of their vehicle.
- B. Unauthorized use of a vehicle is defined as:
 1. Any person who takes, drives or uses any motor vehicle, not their own, without the owner's consent, in the owner's absence, and with the intent temporarily to deprive the owner of their possession, without intent to steal the same ([§18.2-102](#) of the Code of Virginia).
 2. The vehicle is not returned by the person taking the vehicle within the timeframe specified by the vehicle's owner.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. Grand Larceny of a Vehicle
 1. When taking an Incident Report in RMS for a stolen vehicle, the department employee should obtain as much information as possible. If the person who took the vehicle is known to the complainant, that person should be listed as a suspect, and the narrative should indicate whether the complainant intends to prosecute if the suspect is arrested.
 2. The department employee taking the report will notify their precinct Records Technician so that the vehicle information can be entered into NCIC/VCIN, or the VCIN Unit after duty hours and on weekends. [82.2.3]
 3. An Incident Report will still be obtained if the reporting person does not have enough information for the stolen vehicle to be entered into NCIC/VCIN. The report shall contain as much information as is known.
 4. Stolen vehicles recovered in the City of Newport News by a Newport News police officer will be processed for latent prints and other evidence by the recovering officer. [83.2.1]

NOTE: An agreement between Hampton Roads area police departments requires the recovering officer to process the vehicle for latent fingerprints touch DNA and any other evidence unless requested otherwise by the law enforcement agency where the offense occurred. [83.2.3]

- a. Chain of custody of all evidence and fingerprints recovered must be maintained at all times.
- b. If the vehicle cannot be processed at the scene, it may be towed for processing as outlined in [OPS-340 Towing, Inventory & Impoundment of Vehicles](#). Care must be taken to prevent the destruction of any latent fingerprint evidence.



- c. Document the vehicle theft recovery by entering a supplement to the original theft report in OnCall and email the officer who took the report and the precinct's investigative unit supervisor. If OnCall does not have an existing theft report, initiate a recovered stolen vehicle report. The report shall contain the following information: [82.2.1(a,b,c,d)]
 - 1) The Records Unit has been notified of the recovery and that the vehicle was removed from NCIC/VGIN. A link to the supplemented RMS report will be forwarded to the detective(s) working on the case to notify them of the recovery.
 - 2) Note the jurisdiction from which the auto theft occurred and if the owner was notified (date and time);
 - 3) List all pertinent information on the vehicle (i.e., year, make, model color, VIN, license plate number and state, the registered owner, his address and telephone numbers);
 - 4) Note towing information as outlined in [OPS-340 Towing, Inventory & Impoundment of Vehicles](#);
 - 5) Note the time, date and location of recovery along with any suspect information, latent fingerprints lifted and evidence seized;
 - 6) List the Originating Case Agency (OCA) number if the vehicle was stolen from a jurisdiction other than Newport News. In RMS, use the offense code "999 Out of Jurisdiction Vehicle Recovery" and answer the questions in the "Notes" section, as well as the other information noted here.
 - d. Whenever a stolen vehicle is recovered in Newport News or a department employee receives notification that a vehicle stolen from Newport News has been recovered in another jurisdiction, every effort shall be made to notify the owner of the recovery (either by telephone or in person).
 - e. To preserve space in the department's impound lot when a vehicle reported stolen by another agency is recovered and that agency requests the vehicle be impounded for any reason:
 - 1) If the impoundment is for a property-related case, the vehicle should be towed by the requesting jurisdiction to their impound lot by a tow service they have a contract with, not an NNPD-contracted service.
 - 2) If this is not possible (e.g., response time would not be reasonable, the requesting jurisdiction is a considerable distance away, etc.), a field supervisor will ascertain the reason for the request and determine if ascertain if the request can be accommodated without impounding the vehicle, such as processing it for prints.
 - 3) If the department impounds the vehicle, the officer will document the following information on the tow slip:
 - a) The name and rank/title of the person requesting the impoundment.
 - b) The name of the agency.
 - c) The contact phone number and email of the person requesting the impoundment.
 - d) The contact phone number and email of the individual the requestor identified for follow-up, if any.
 - e) The date the agency anticipates removing the vehicle from NNPD's impound lot.
- B. Unauthorized Use of a Vehicle
1. Department employees shall take reports of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle as they would for any other type of reportable offense.
 2. When taking a report for unauthorized use of the vehicle, the department employee shall obtain as much information as possible concerning the description of the vehicle and the identity and description of the suspect.



3. The person who took the vehicle, with or without permission, should be listed as the suspect, and the narrative should indicate the time the vehicle was to be returned (if a time was specified).
4. The vehicle shall be entered into NCIC/VCIN once:
 - a. The Incident Report is completed and
 - b. A warrant or petition has been obtained for the suspect, charging them with unauthorized use of a motor vehicle.
5. The procedure for notifying the owner of a recovered vehicle listed as an unauthorized use will be the same as for notifying the owner of a recovered stolen vehicle.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steven R. Drew".

Steven R. Drew
Chief of Police