

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



GENERAL ORDER

Effective Date: December 6, 2024	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amends - GO 6.1.2 (March 7, 2024)	Number: 6.1.2
Distribution: All Personnel	Review Month: May	Reviewing Authority: SOD / Traffic
Subject: Escorts		

This order consists of the following:

1. Purpose
2. Policy
3. Procedures

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to verify that agency escorts are performed in a safe and efficient manner.

2. **Policy**

It is the policy of the agency to conduct escorts in a safe and prudent manner consistent with applicable laws. All escorts, either on or off-duty, will be approved by the Traffic Section Commander or designee and should, when possible, be staffed with Traffic Section personnel.

3. **Definition**

- A. Ceremonial Functions – Events which may include, but not be limited to agency motorcycles being utilized in a static posture for demonstrative purposes only. There is no immediate expectation of law enforcement action. Common examples may include displays at schools, churches and for community groups.
- B. Escort – A coordinated event utilizing agency vehicles (car, motorcycle, and/or SUV) to lead, surround, and/or follow one or more vehicles in the interest of security or expeditious travel to a designated location.
- C. Lead Vehicle – The agency vehicle at the front of the escort package. This vehicle sets the course and speed of the package being escorted.
- D. Package – The vehicle or group of vehicles to be escorted to a designated location. The number of vehicles in the package will determine the number of agency vehicles required for a safe escort.
- E. Parade - a public procession usually to mark a holiday or special event
- F. Presidential Protection Detail Escort Training (PPD) – Agency training certifying escort personnel in PPD escorts.

- G. Tail Vehicle – The agency vehicle that follows the escort package. This vehicle ensures that the package remains consistent and limits other vehicles from interfering with the escort.
- H. Working Vehicle – Agency vehicles that work in conjunction with the Lead and Tail Vehicles to minimize interference with the escort package.

4. **Procedures**

A. Emergency Escorts

1. Emergency escorts will not be provided for emergency vehicles or privately owned vehicles, except as listed below.
2. A Lieutenant or above may authorize the escort of specialized equipment necessary to preserve life or property to the scene of an existing emergency and for incidents involving agency employees injured in the line of duty.

B. Medical Emergency Escorts

1. Ambulances are to be relied upon for transporting sick and injured persons whenever possible.
2. Members may be authorized by their immediate supervisor to personally direct or escort sick or injured persons, riding in a private vehicle, to the nearest emergency treatment facility when the need for immediate medical attention is apparent. Agency vehicles will not operate as emergency vehicles when providing this escort service.
3. Operators of agency vehicles must immediately notify the Communications Section of the mission and request that the proper medical authorities be advised to prepare for the arrival of the emergency conveyance.
4. Transport of a sick or injured person may be made in an agency vehicle when it is determined to be an extreme emergency.

C. Dignitary Escorts

1. Escorts for visiting dignitaries, persons of significant interest or public officials may be provided upon approval of the Traffic Section Commander or designee using on-duty or off-duty personnel. Should the decision be made to provide the escort in an off-duty capacity, the request will be handled in accordance with GO [4.3.1](#) Off Duty utilizing Traffic Section personnel.
2. Escorts will be organized, coordinated and supervised by a Traffic Section Sergeant, or designee. The Traffic Section Commander, or designee, in cooperation with the agency responsible for the personal protection of the principal being escorted, may be called upon to review the plan prior to its inception for safety or logistical reasons. This includes a determination of the number of vehicles included in the escort package.

3. Escorts will be conducted based on the operational, tactical, and the logistical needs of the operation. These needs should include a threat assessment when involving dignitaries or a homeland security function.
 4. Working vehicles may use pre-posted closures of roadways, rolling roadblocks and other methods approved by the Traffic Section Sergeant or designee to accomplish a safe escort. Only deputies certified in Presidential Protection Detail Escort Training (PPD) may pass the escort package while performing working vehicle duties.
 5. Taking into consideration the safety of the escort package and the motoring public, a Traffic Section supervisor or designee may cancel the escort if deemed unsafe. All attempts will be made to resolve the unsafe situation with the primary dignitary or lead agent responsible for the personal protection of the principal being escorted prior to cancellation.
- D. Security Escorts
- Security escorts will not be provided to employees or owners of business establishments for purposes of depositing funds in financial institutions by on-duty personnel. Requests for this service will be handled in accordance with GO [4.3.1](#) Off Duty.
- E. Fundraising/Community/Other Escorts
1. Escorts for fundraising, community sponsored events or events that may pose a specific traffic hazard may be provided upon approval of the Sheriff using on-duty or off-duty personnel. Should the decision be made to provide the escort in an off-duty capacity, the request will be handled in accordance with GO [4.3.1](#) Off Duty utilizing Traffic Section personnel.
 2. Taking into consideration the safety of the escort package and the motoring public, a maximum of 25 vehicles or 100 motorcycles will be included in the escort package. A Traffic Section supervisor or designee may cancel the escort if deemed unsafe. All attempts will be made to resolve the unsafe situation with the primary organizer prior to cancellation.
- F. Citizen Funeral Escorts
1. Staff permitting, all citizen funeral escorts will be conducted by off-duty full-time Motor Unit and cross-trained personnel. Persons of special interest, dignitaries, and escorts that may pose a specific traffic hazard may be approved for use of on-duty units as determined by the Traffic Section Commander or designee.
 2. Requests for off-duty citizen funeral escorts will be referred to the Off-Duty Services Unit to be processed as enforcement related off-duty employment. The Traffic Section Commander or designee must approve all citizen funeral escorts. The Off-Duty Services Supervisor shall assign a permit number as outlined in GO [4.3.1](#).

3. All requests for the agency to provide escorts for funerals must be received by the Traffic Section office no later than 24 hours prior to the actual time of the event. The following information will be obtained to complete the Funeral Escort Request form:
 - a. Time and date of escort
 - b. Beginning location
 - c. Destination
 - d. Name of funeral home, telephone number and name of contact person
 - e. Approximate number of vehicles in procession
4. The Funeral Escort Request form will be immediately forwarded to the Traffic Section Commander or designee who shall determine if sufficient assets and personnel are available to conduct the escort. A Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall contact the requesting party and notify them if the Traffic Section will be able to assist with the escort. Requests for escorts that are made after the 24-hour minimum has passed will only be considered if personnel are available. No funeral escorts will be conducted outside Orange County without prior approval of the Traffic Section Commander or designee, and only within the guidelines of GO [6.2.11](#), Mutual Aid.
5. Funeral Escort Requirements
 - a. All citizen funeral escorts will be performed by members of the Traffic Section and cross-trained personnel. All Traffic Section personnel involved in a citizen funeral escort, except lead vehicle, tail vehicle or static post positions, must have successfully completed the agency funeral escort training.
 - b. All units involved in a citizen funeral escort shall be under the supervision of a Traffic Section supervisor or designee. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall be responsible for assigning motor deputies to funeral escorts and verifying that they are notified in a timely manner. Traffic Section personnel assigned to funeral escorts should be at the required location a minimum of 15 minutes prior to departure of the procession.
 - c. Funeral processions with more than 25 vehicles will not be provided with an escort. Exceptions require prior approval by the Traffic Section Commander or designee.
 - d. Funeral processions with 25 or fewer vehicles may be provided an escort by members of the Traffic Section when a proper request is received and approved. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall determine the number of personnel required.
 - e. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee is responsible for assessing the need for additional units, weather, road conditions, routes and briefing the personnel assigned to the detail. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall contact and coordinate with the funeral director. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall notify the funeral home in the event the escort cannot be provided.

6. Funeral Procession Routes

- a. The route taken will be determined by a Traffic Section supervisor or designee. The funeral director shall be notified of the route immediately upon arrival at the starting location. All reasonable attempts to work out a route that is agreeable to the Traffic Section supervisor or designee and funeral director shall be made before declining to provide the escort. At no time, will the safety of escort personnel be compromised.
- b. Personnel conducting an escort shall not pay tolls for vehicles in a funeral procession. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall attempt to confirm there are no construction, detours, crashes or other road blockages along the chosen route and if so, an alternate route should be planned.

7. Funeral Escort Notifications

- a. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall notify Communications of the escort prior to it being conducted. Communications shall be advised as to the units involved, route being taken, the time that the procession will begin and what radio channel the escorting units will utilize.
- b. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall notify other law enforcement agencies of routes passing through their jurisdiction.
- c. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee be in charge of all involved units regardless of agencies involved. In any escort that includes other agency personnel, the detail supervisor shall be at least a Corporal in rank.

8. Escort Prohibitions

The Traffic Section should not conduct non-sworn funeral escorts on motorcycles in rain or other inclement weather. The decision not to conduct an escort or to terminate an escort will be the responsibility of the Traffic Section supervisor or designee. The lead and tail vehicles may continue with the procession after the motor units discontinue. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee has authority to cancel or terminate an escort.

9. Gifts, Gratuities, Compensation

Other than the requisite off-duty compensation, no agency personnel involved in any funeral escort shall accept any gift, gratuity or other compensation from the family, funeral director or other party.

10. Funeral Escort Training Procedures

- a. Funeral escort techniques will be explained by the Motor Unit training officer and practiced during Motor Unit in-service training. Personnel shall not be allowed to participate in a funeral escort until they have successfully completed the required training.
- b. When non-trained personnel assist in a funeral escort, they may be used as a lead vehicle, tail vehicle or at static posts only. It is the

responsibility of the Traffic Section supervisor or designee to explain each deputy's duties prior to conducting an escort.

- G. Funeral Escorts for Non-Sworn Members of the Sheriff's Office or Immediate Family Members of All Employees
1. Upon being notified of the arrangements for the funeral and that an escort is requested, a Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall coordinate the escort.
 2. Traffic Section personnel shall provide an escort for the family from their homes or wherever they are assembled, to the visitation/viewing, to the funeral location and from the funeral service to a reasonable destination. A minimum of four working vehicles will escort the family. Taking into consideration the safety of the escort package and the motoring public, a maximum of eight vehicles may be included in the escort package.
 3. The escort will be conducted only if it does not conflict with the wishes of the family.
 4. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall coordinate with the Casualty Benefits Team Leader or designee to confirm that all representatives of the agency shall arrive together and present a professional image.
- H. Oversized Loads, Hazardous or Unusual Cargo Escorts
1. Staffing permitting, all escorts for oversized loads, hazardous or unusual cargo will be conducted by off-duty full time Traffic Section personnel and cross-trained personnel in accordance with GO [4.3.1](#) Off Duty.
 2. Requests for off-duty oversized load, hazardous or unusual cargo escorts received by the Traffic Section office shall be referred to the Off-Duty Services Unit, Human Resources Division to be processed as enforcement related off-duty employment. The Traffic Section Commander or designee must approve all requests for off-duty escorts. The approval will be obtained by Off-Duty Services.
 3. Special Requirements
 - a. Off-duty oversized load, hazardous or unusual cargo escorts will be conducted only after proper state/county/city permit documentation has been provided to the Off-Duty Services supervisor and will only be conducted during times authorized by the permits.
 - b. House moves: A minimum of one tail car and four additional working vehicles will be used for each oversized load escort.
 - c. Oversized Load, Hazardous or Unusual Cargo moves: The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall pre-select the safest route, determine the personnel needed, but a minimum of one tail car and four additional working vehicles will be used. The Traffic Section supervisor or designee shall notify Communications of the move, and

secure an operational channel, if necessary.

- d. The off-duty approval process is not required during emergency situations that pose a risk to public safety (e.g., water main break, gas line break, sewer line break). In these instances, on-duty personnel shall provide the oversized load, hazardous or unusual cargo escort when required (e.g., after-hours, holidays, weekends), in accordance with FDOT rules.
- e. The Watch Commander and the Traffic Section Commander or designee shall be notified prior to the movement of any oversized load, hazardous or unusual cargo requiring an escort.

I. Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) Escorts

- 1. The CIMT Team Commander or designee can authorize an escort of CIMT equipment.
- 2. Escorts of CIMT equipment and resources may be authorized for a training environment or for an official deployment. In both cases, CIMT and supporting equipment will be escorted by a combination of both marked and unmarked vehicles. Vehicles being escorted in the package may be a mix of marked, unmarked, and agency vehicles without emergency equipment.
- 3. The environment and length of this escort will determine whether or not emergency equipment will be utilized. Notwithstanding, at any time the escort is taking command of a roadway or intersection, emergency equipment will be utilized.
- 4. The number of working vehicles will be determined based on the size of the package.

J. Other Considerations

- 1. During all escorts, use of emergency equipment is authorized to facilitate the safe and secure transportation of all vehicles involved.
- 2. Deputies riding motorcycles during night time escorts shall wear a reflective traffic vest or issued safety jacket. In case of rain or other adverse conditions, vehicles may be used in place of motorcycles.
- 3. Agency personnel participating in any escort, in which law enforcement action is being performed, will activate their Body Worn Camera if assigned.
- 4. Agency personnel participating in a parade, or other ceremonial functions will maintain their BWC's in buffering mode unless taking specific law enforcement action outside of the scope of the event.