

## **OPD - 19.1**

### **DEPARTMENTAL GENERAL ORDER**

#### **OLIVETTE POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**

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### **DEPARTMENT VEHICLES**

#### **I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this General Order is to establish a set of guidelines for City employees operating Department owned vehicles.

#### **II. GENERAL POLICY:**

Department employees have an obligation to operate police vehicles in a safe, legal, and courteous manner, since our vehicles are the most visible representation of City Government. Defensive driving habits are the key to driving safely and must be stressed by our employees and reinforced by all supervisors. Officers are responsible to proceed to assignments quickly, but at the same time, operate their vehicles in a safe and prudent manner. Officers are permitted to circumvent traffic laws and ordinances only, when necessary, in the performance of official duties and only when safe and prudent to do so.

#### **III. VEHICLE INSPECTION**

A. Daily patrol vehicle inspections will be performed on each vehicle prior to the beginning of the tour of duty by the officer assigned, and they will report all discrepancies to their immediate supervisor. Damage, trash, low fuel supply (less than ¼ tank) conditions will be accounted to the officer last driving the vehicle.

B. Weekly patrol vehicle inspections will be conducted by the watch commander on the Sunday evening watch. The watch commander will complete a Vehicle and Equipment Inspection sheet and forward it to the Bureau of Professional Standards.

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C. Besides basic police equipment (i.e. radio, computer, emergency lights, shotgun, rifle etc.), the following equipment will be in each patrol vehicle:

1. Flashlight
2. Radar Unit
3. In-Car Video System
4. Flares (minimum of 10 per vehicle, additional flares are kept in the roll call room).
5. Fire Extinguisher
6. Reflective Traffic Vest
7. Safety Cones (minimum of 3)
8. Window Tint Meter
9. Portable Breath Tester
10. First Aid Kit

D. If any of the aforementioned equipment or supplies are not functioning or missing, the officer discovering the discrepancy should make an attempt to locate any missing equipment and determine if there is a reason for its absence in the vehicle. The officer should also make an attempt to replenish the missing supplies. If the officer cannot locate the equipment or replenish supplies, the officer will notify their immediate supervisor of the missing equipment and the supplies needing to be replenished. If the supervisor cannot locate the equipment or if the needed supplies have been depleted, an e-mail of such will be forwarded to the Chief of Police through the chain of command for appropriate action. If immediately procurement is necessary, refer to Olivette Police Department General Order OPD-8.1 BUDGET PREPARATION for emergency purchases procedures.

### **IV. VEHICLE OPERATION**

- A. Officers will not utilize the in-car laptop computer while their vehicle is in motion.
- B. Parked police vehicles will be locked whenever the officer is away from the vehicle.
- C. The engine will be turned off on vehicles that will be parked for an extended period of time.

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D. On public parking lots, police vehicles will be parked in designated parking spaces unless:

1. On an emergency call; or
2. A possible arrest situation exists; or
3. On a complaint call.

E. Officers will not park in a handicapped parking space unless an officer is responding to a possible emergency situation.

F. Smoking in City-owned vehicles is prohibited.

G. Police vehicles will not be used to push other vehicles.

H. All officers will have a valid Operator's License in their possession when operating Department vehicles.

I. All occupants of Department owned vehicles will wear seat belts.

1. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in discipline up to and including dismissal and may jeopardize the employee's rights to certain Workmen's Compensation benefits.
2. If special circumstances exist in which the use of seatbelts and/or restraining devices hamper the efficient conduct of law enforcement functions, the on-duty supervisor may grant an exception to this policy for specific situations which he/she deems the efficiency of operations outweighs the safety benefit.

J. When conveying passengers of the opposite sex, officers will advise the dispatcher of their mileage at the start and end of the conveyance.

### K. FOUR WHEEL DRIVE OPERATION

1. **2WD High:** The vehicle sends power to the rear wheels only. This setting maximizes fuel efficiency and is most suitable for most of our day to day operations. The rear axle is equipped with an automatic locking differential which helps maintain traction if slipping is detected.
2. **4WD Auto:** There is a 4WD auto setting that could also be used for day to day driving but utilizing this setting uses more fuel than 2WD. 4WD auto sends power to the rear wheels until the vehicle detects slipping. The vehicle then sends power to any of the 4 wheels the computer determines has the most traction. This setting would be good for slippery road conditions such as snow/ice and heavy rain

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3. **4WD High:** This setting sends power to all four wheels at all times. The vehicle can be driven to its full capabilities in this setting and is pursuit rated while in 4WD High. Just like 4WD auto, operating the vehicle in this setting uses more fuel. It is best used in slippery conditions (snow/ice) The turning radius is affected in this setting. When turning in this setting at full lock, the vehicle's front wheels will "skip" or "bounce".
4. **4WD Low:** For the purposes and conditions we utilize our vehicles inside the City of Olivette, we should rarely, if ever, use this setting. It is reserved for Off Road inclines and declines, and/or very deep snow. **Vehicle speed is limited in this setting and significant damage to the drive train can occur if used at high speed. Also, improperly shifting into and out of this setting can damage the transfer case.**
5. **Neutral:** This setting essentially disconnects the driveline for flat towing (eg. towing behind an RV). We should not have to use this setting.
6. For the majority of day-to-day driving, Police Department 4-wheel drive vehicles will be operated in 2WD High. If there are snow packed roads, light snow accumulations, or rain with slippery conditions, 4WD Auto should be used as it sends power to the wheels with traction based on the changing road conditions. If there is deep, fresh snow that has yet to be driven on, 4WD High should be used.

## V. REPAIRS

The Watch Commander may authorize the routine maintenance of vehicles and any emergency service repairs that do not exceed \$100.00

*This General Order supersedes all prior directives and orders inconsistent therewith.*

BY ORDER OF:

Signature on File

Beth M. Andreski

Chief of Police

Effective Date: 2/24/2009

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