

PARKER POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

3.1	EFFECTIVE: August 3, 2012	James Tsurapas, Chief of Police
	REVISED: September 25, 2020	
SUBJECT: EMERGENCY VEHICLE RESPONSE		
CALEA: 41.2.1; 41.2.2; 41.2.3; 42.2.2		PAGE: 1 of 3

3.1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of emergency vehicle warning devices to minimize the risk involved in responding to emergencies, as well as routine assignments.

3.1.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to provide guidelines to ensure uniform, safe vehicle operation. In compliance with this policy, the following procedure shall be adhered to in responding to requests for police assistance.

3.1.3 DEFINITIONS <41.2.3 a.>

- A. *Commissioned officer* - any peace officer, recruit or sworn employee in the State of Colorado, regardless of specific title, e.g., sheriff, deputy, trooper, etc., as defined in C.R.S. § 16-2.5-101, as amended.
- B. *Divided roadway* - a road which includes a painted median or physical barrier between traffic traveling in opposite directions.
- C. *Emergency operation* - the act of driving a marked or unmarked police vehicle with the emergency lights and/or siren in operation according to the Uniform Motor Vehicle Law and/or applicable Town ordinance.
- D. *Secondary vehicle* - a patrol vehicle which becomes involved in a pursuit and is immediately following the primary vehicle and acting as the primary vehicle's backup.
- E. *Special purpose vehicle* - any Department-owned or operated vehicle, other than a fully- marked patrol car, operated by a commissioned officer. Special purpose vehicles include, but are not limited to, canine vehicles, motorcycles and unmarked vehicles.
- F. *Supervisor* - any commissioned officer generally of the rank of a sergeant or higher or designated acting supervisor.

3.1.4 PROCEDURE

A police vehicle operating under emergency response conditions will use audible and/or visual signals. Commissioned officers should be reminded their primary responsibility is the safety of the public and the emergency response is secondary.

A. Authorized Emergency Response

A police vehicle may operate under emergency response conditions when the commissioned officer reasonably believes the following circumstances exist:

1. a life may be in danger;
2. circumstances involving reported violent crime, robbery in progress, explosion or other circumstances where lives may be in danger;
3. when responding to a call of "commissioned officer in trouble;"
4. when attempting to apprehend a traffic violator;
5. when involved in an authorized police vehicle pursuit, refer to the "Vehicle Pursuits" Policy contained in the PD Manual); and
6. other circumstances that the commissioned officer reasonably believes requires an immediate response by the commissioned officer, or where the commissioned officer has been directed by the Communications Section or by a supervisor to respond immediately.

B. Adherence to Law During Emergency Response

1. A commissioned officer operating a police vehicle under emergency response conditions will do so according to the provisions of Colorado state law. The state law suspends compliance with some traffic laws, but does not relieve the commissioned officer of the responsibility of safe vehicle operation or justifying actions that imperil the lives of others.
2. A police vehicle operating under emergency response conditions will use all available emergency equipment to give adequate warning to motorists and pedestrians of its approach.

C. Requirements and Restrictions of Emergency Responses <41.2.1>

1. While engaged in an emergency response, commissioned officers must act reasonably and attempt, as much as reasonably possible, to drive defensively and under control.
2. Police vehicles being operated in an emergency response manner should pass to the left of vehicles traveling in the same direction, if possible.
3. When operating emergency vehicles with emergency warning devices activated, commissioned officers will slow to allow safe passage through intersections.
4. Police vehicles being operated under emergency response conditions should not make sudden turns across moving traffic, u-turns or other changes of direction, without a reasonable belief that such movement can be made safely.

D. Routine and Emergency Calls for Service

When commissioned officers are responding to routine calls for service, they will obey all traffic laws. If the call changes to an emergency call, commissioned officers will operate their vehicle as set forth above under emergency response.

E. Authority of Commissioned Officers

Commissioned officers will have the authority to alter their response as circumstances may dictate and should advise the Communications Section, as soon as reasonably possible. Supervisors have authority to cancel altered response modes.

F. Police Vehicle Pursuits

Commissioned officers will engage in pursuits only when there are strong and compelling reasons to do so and only after other reasonable alternatives have been considered, and in full compliance with the policy on "Vehicle Pursuits" contained in this PD Manual.

3.1.5 TRAINING

The Department will provide training on an annual basis as related to this section on "Emergency Response." <41.2.3 c.>