



TRUMBULL POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY

	POLICY TITLE: Vehicle Pursuits		POLICY NUMBER: 8.5.5
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I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a Uniform Statewide Pursuit Policy in accordance with Section 14-283a of Connecticut General Statutes. This policy shall serve as the minimum standard for all police pursuits in Connecticut. Additional requirements adopted by an individual law enforcement unit shall not conflict with any provision of this policy.

II. Policy

Pursuits of fleeing motor vehicles may present a danger to the lives of the public, officers, and those vehicle occupants involved in the pursuit. Each law enforcement unit shall be responsible for assisting police officers in the safe performance of their duties.

III. Definitions

1. Authorized emergency vehicle- means a police vehicle equipped with operable emergency equipment, including an audible siren and red or blue flashing lights, while such vehicle is being operated by a police officer.
2. Blocking vehicle- means an unoccupied police vehicle, which is placed perpendicular to a roadway or angled in such a way as to create an obstruction to traffic.
3. Boxing in- means the surrounding of a moving vehicle that is being pursued with moving pursuit vehicles, which are then slowed to a stop along with the vehicle being pursued.
4. Communications- means the central dispatch center or personnel staffing the central dispatch center of the law enforcement unit in the jurisdiction where the pursuit is occurring.
5. Law enforcement unit- has the same meaning as provided in Section 7-294a(8) of Connecticut General Statutes.
6. Physical injury- means impairment of physical condition or pain.
7. Police officer- has the same meaning as provided in Section 7-294a(9) of Connecticut General Statutes.

8. Primary unit- means the initial pursuing police vehicle that assumes control of the pursuit unless relieved by another unit.
9. Pursuit- means an attempt by a police officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend any occupant of another moving motor vehicle, when the driver of the fleeing vehicle is attempting to avoid apprehension by maintaining or increasing the speed of such vehicle or by ignoring the police officer's attempt to stop such vehicle.
10. Pursuit management technology- means real-time tagging and Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking tools and equipment used to aid with reducing dangerous high-speed pursuits.
11. Roadblock- means a restriction or obstruction, which is used to prevent the free passage of motor vehicles on a roadway in order to apprehend the operator of a fleeing vehicle. A roadblock maybe established as a partial, otherwise known as restrictive, or a complete, otherwise known as obstructive, roadblock.
12. Secondary unit- means the second police vehicle in a pursuit, used to relay information about pursuit conditions and location and to handle any radio traffic that may occur.
13. Serious physical injury- means physical injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes serious disfigurement, serious impairment of health or serious loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.
14. Supervisor- means a person designated by the law enforcement unit to have supervisory control over the operation of the agency's vehicles during a pursuit.
15. Terminate- means to discontinue or stop pursuing a vehicle as defined by agency policy, which may also be referred to as "disengage" or "discontinue."
16. Uniform Statewide Pursuit Policy," known as "the policy" or "this policy- means Sections 14-283a-1 to 14-283a-4, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
17. Violent crime- means an offense that has as an element the use, the attempted use or threatened use of physical force against a person that may cause serious physical injury or death to another, or any offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against another person may be used in the course of committing the offense. A violent crime does not mean offenses that constitute infractions, property crimes (including stolen motor vehicles), non-violent misdemeanors and non-violent felonies. A property crime that may cause death or serious physical injury to another will be considered a violent crime.
18. Violent Felony- means a felony that involves an actual or threatened attack, which the officer has reasonable cause to believe could or has resulted in death or serious bodily injury.

IV. Procedures

A. Initiation of Pursuit

1. A police officer may only engage another vehicle in a pursuit if the officer has

reasonable suspicion to believe that the driver or occupant has committed, attempted to commit, or participated in a violent crime, or there are exigent circumstances that warrant the need to apprehend the operator or occupant(s) in a timely manner because of the potential for harm to the public that may occur if the operator or occupant(s) is not apprehended or the vehicle is not stopped. The police officers must be able to articulate the exigent need to apprehend the driver or occupant(s) because of the potential harm or risk to the public.

2. A pursuit shall not be undertaken, even if allowable by other provisions of this policy, unless and until the police officer, based upon the information available to them at the time, makes an objectively reasonable determination that the immediate danger to the police officer, the public, or both, created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public, should the operator or occupant(s) remain at large.
3. A decision to engage in a pursuit shall be based upon the following:
 - a. Road conditions, including surface type (e.g., wet, icy, or dry roadway), road topography, and traffic controls;
 - b. Location, speed, direction of other traffic, population density, type of vehicle being pursued, pedestrian traffic and operators' driving behaviors;
 - c. Whether the identity of the operator or occupant(s) is known and apprehension by other means is possible;
 - d. Relative capability of the pursuit vehicle(s) and the vehicle being pursued;
 - e. The underlying crime which the operator or occupants are suspected of committing, attempting, or participating in;
 - f. The presence of other people in the pursuit vehicle; and
 - g. Environmental factors such as, weather, time of the day, and visibility.
4. A pursuit shall not be initiated or shall be terminated, as the case may be, when in the opinion of the police officer in pursuit or the appropriate supervisor, there is a clear and unreasonable threat of imminent death or serious physical injury to the police officer, members of the public, or both, created by the pursuit, which outweighs the necessity for an immediate apprehension to eliminate the threat to public safety that would reasonably be posed by the escape of the operator or occupants(s), or by continuation of their actions.
5. Offenses that constitute infractions, property crimes that would not cause death or serious physical injury to another (including stolen motor vehicles), non-violent misdemeanors and non-violent felonies shall not be justification to engage in a pursuit of another vehicle, absent articulable exigent circumstances.

6. The police officers involved in the pursuit and their supervisors shall continuously reassess the factors listed above to determine whether the pursuit shall continue or be terminated.

B. Pursuit Operations

1. All pursuits shall be conducted in strict conformity with Sections 14-283a-1 to 14-283a-4, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and section 14-283a of the Connecticut General Statutes.
2. Upon engaging in or entering into a pursuit, a pursuing vehicle shall activate appropriate warning equipment. An audible warning device and emergency lights shall be used during all pursuits.
3. Upon engaging in a pursuit, the police officer shall immediately notify communications and provide detailed information that may include the following:
 - a. Unit designation;
 - b. Reason for the pursuit;
 - c. Location;
 - d. Direction of travel;
 - e. Speed and driving behavior of the pursued vehicle;
 - f. Description of the pursued vehicle (e.g., make, model, color, license plate state and number, and other distinguishing marks);
 - g. Occupant information, if known (e.g., number, description, and identities);
 - h. Any information concerning weapons, threat of force, injuries, hostages or other unusual circumstances and hazards; and
 - i. Any pertinent information relating to probable cause.
4. Once a secondary unit enters the pursuit, the secondary unit shall assume communication responsibilities, including relaying information on pursuit conditions and location and handling any radio traffic that may occur. Communications shall immediately notify any available supervisor of the agency or agencies involved in such pursuit, clear the radio channel of non-emergency traffic, and relay necessary information to other police officers of the involved law enforcement units or agencies, and adjacent law enforcement units in whose direction the pursuit is proceeding.
5. When engaged in a pursuit, police officers shall drive with due regard for the safety of persons and property.

6. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, a pursuit shall consist of no more than three police vehicles, one of which shall be designated as the primary unit. No other personnel shall join the pursuit unless instructed to participate by a supervisor.
7. The primary unit involved in the pursuit shall become the secondary unit when the fleeing vehicle comes under police air surveillance or when another unit has been assigned primary responsibility.
8. Police officers shall not pursue wrong-way drivers against traffic flow. In the event of a wrong-way driver, officers shall (1) immediately notify dispatch of location, direction, and vehicle description, (2) request units ahead to establish safe intercept, (3) parallel on correct side when safe, (4) use audible warning device and emergency lighting to warn oncoming traffic, and (5) coordinate multiagency response.

C. Supervisory Responsibilities

1. When made aware of a pursuit, the appropriate supervisor shall actively monitor and manage the situation and conditions that caused the pursuit to be initiated and the need to continue the pursuit. Such supervisor shall monitor incoming information and coordinate and direct activities as needed to ensure that proper procedures are used. Such supervisor shall also have the authority to terminate the pursuit. When the agency supervisor communicates a termination directive, all agency vehicles shall disengage warning devices and cease the pursuit.
2. Where possible, a supervisory police officer shall respond to the location where a vehicle has been stopped following a pursuit.
3. Whenever a supervisor or desk officer communicates a termination directive, all pursuing vehicles shall disengage emergency warning devices, cease pursuit, and acknowledge termination of the pursuit via the radio. Upon termination of the pursuit, all pursuit vehicles shall pull to the right side of the roadway and stop at the nearest location where it is practical and safe to do so.

D. Pursuit Tactics

1. Police officers not engaged in the pursuit as the primary or secondary unit shall not follow the pursuit on parallel streets unless authorized by a supervisor or when it is possible to conduct such an operation without unreasonable hazard to other vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
2. When feasible, available patrol units having the most prominent markings and emergency lights shall be used to pursue, particularly as the primary unit. When a pursuit is initiated by other than a marked patrol unit, such unit shall become the secondary unit when a marked unit becomes available as the primary unit, and the initiating unit shall disengage from the pursuit when another marked unit becomes available as the secondary unit.
3. Motorcycles may be used for a pursuit in exigent circumstances including, but

not limited to, situations where a violent felony has been committed, deadly force has been used by a vehicle occupant, or the pursuit is necessary to preserve a life, provided that weather and related conditions allow such pursuit to continue. Motorcycles shall disengage from the pursuit when support from marked patrol units becomes available.

4. All intervention techniques short of deadly force shall be used when it is possible to do so in safety and when the police officers utilizing them have received appropriate training in their use. Such techniques may include, but not be limited to, boxing in the vehicle or using controlled termination devices such as stop sticks.
5. Roadblocks are prohibited unless specifically authorized by the supervisor in charge after consideration of the necessity of applying deadly physical force to end the pursuit.
6. Once the pursued vehicle is stopped, police officers shall employ appropriate police officer safety tactics and utilize only the force the police officer reasonably believes to be necessary to take occupants into custody. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as limiting the police officer's ability to use force authorized pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 53a-22 and department policy.

E. Use of Firearms During a Pursuit

1. Deadly force shall not be directed at a vehicle being pursued merely to disable the vehicle.
2. Police officers are prohibited from discharging a firearm at or into a moving or fleeing vehicle or its occupants, except:
 - a. To counter an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury from an occupant by means other than the vehicle;
 - b. When a driver is intentionally placing others in the vehicle's path causing an imminent risk of serious injury, such as driving into a crowd of assembled persons or into an occupied area not intended for vehicular traffic, and the officer reasonably believes there are no other means available to avert the threat of the vehicle; or
 - c. When an officer is unavoidably in the path of a vehicle and cannot move to safety.
3. A police officer shall not intentionally position themselves in the path of a fleeing motor vehicle, unless such action is a tactic approved by the law enforcement unit that employs such police officer. Whenever possible, the involved police officer should make every effort to move to an area of safety if the vehicle becomes a threat, including retreating from the threat when practical.

F. Termination of the Pursuit

1. The police officer operating as the primary unit engaged in the pursuit shall continually re-evaluate and assess the pursuit situation, including all of the initiating factors, and terminate the pursuit whenever he or she reasonably believes that the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension.
2. The pursuit may be terminated by the primary unit at any time.
3. A supervisor may order the termination of a pursuit at any time and shall order the termination of a pursuit when the potential danger to the public outweighs the need for immediate apprehension. Such decision shall be based on information known to the supervisor at the time of the pursuit.
4. A pursuit may be terminated if the identity of the occupants has been determined, immediate apprehension is not necessary to protect the public or police officers, and apprehension at a later time is feasible.
5. A pursuit may be terminated when the police officers are prevented from communicating with their supervisors, communications or other police officers.
6. A pursuit shall be terminated if the police officer knows or is reasonably certain, that the fleeing motor vehicle is being operated by a juvenile unless the suspected offense is a violent crime.
7. At the termination of the pursuit, agencies may require that police officers obey all traffic laws, including those related to speed, turn off all emergency equipment, inform communications of the termination along with their location, and turn their vehicles away from the last seen direction of travel of the fleeing vehicle or pull to the side of the road if on a limited access roadway when safe and practical to do so.

G. Inter-jurisdictional Pursuits

1. Unless unable to do so, the primary unit shall notify communications when it is likely that a pursuit will continue into a neighboring law enforcement unit's area of law enforcement responsibility or cross the state line. Municipal law enforcement units and the State Police shall notify each other whenever entering the other's area of law enforcement responsibility.
2. A pursuit into a bordering state shall comply with any applicable inter-agency agreements.
3. In all cases where a pursuit enters an area of law enforcement responsibility of a law enforcement unit other than that of the initiating law enforcement unit, the law enforcement unit in pursuit shall be responsible for immediately notifying the law enforcement unit responsible for such area. The desk officer or duty supervisor for the law enforcement unit responsible for such area shall determine if assistance is necessary and police officers from law enforcement units other than the initiating agency shall not join the outside pursuit unless:

- a. Directed by such duty supervisor or desk officer; or
- b. The involved pursuit unit is unable to request assistance; or
- c. The situation demands immediate assistance.

The supervisors of the respective law enforcement units involved in the pursuit shall communicate with each other to determine the respective responsibilities of each law enforcement unit and to determine which law enforcement unit will assume primary operational control of the pursuit. The supervisors shall also communicate with each other regarding any external conditions pertinent to the continued conduct of the pursuit. Communications between law enforcement units shall be controlled by inter-agency police radio systems, if they exist, or by telephone, or by both.

4. In all cases where the pursuit enters a municipality without a regularly organized police department, notification shall be made to the State Police troop responsible for that area. Such troop shall maintain radio communications with all local police officers serving in any such municipality.
5. Agencies pursuing a vehicle into another jurisdiction must notify that jurisdiction as soon as practical, and provide that agency with all available information pertinent to the pursuit, including but not limited to:
 - a. The reason(s) for the pursuit, or primary offense the operator or occupant(s) are believed to have committed;
 - b. Location, speed, and direction of travel;
 - c. Vehicle and occupant(s) description;
 - d. The number of vehicles and agencies involved in the pursuit;
 - e. Whether assistance is requested or needed; and
 - f. Other available information as to the conditions of the pursuit.
6. The pursuing agency will notify the other jurisdiction whether or not the pursuit has been terminated or is leaving their jurisdiction.
7. Any agency involved in the pursuit may, at its discretion, choose to terminate its involvement in a pursuit at any time. The supervisor and the police officers involved in the pursuit shall make their own determination as to whether their police officers shall enter, continue, or disengage from the pursuit within their jurisdiction.

H. Post-Pursuit Reporting

1. Whenever a police officer engages in a pursuit, the police officer shall file a written report on the appropriate form required by his or her agency. This report shall be reviewed by the appropriate supervisor or supervisors to determine if

policy has been complied with and to detect and correct any training deficiencies.

2. Each law enforcement unit shall periodically analyze its police pursuit activity and identify any additions, deletions or modifications warranted in agency pursuit procedures.
3. Post-pursuit reports shall be completed for each police pursuit in accordance with department policy and training.
4. In accordance with Section 14-283a-1 to 14-283a-4, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and section 14-283a of the Connecticut General Statutes, not later than January 31, 2020, and annually thereafter, each Chief of Police and the Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall submit an annual report to the Police Officers Standards and Training Council (POSTC) regarding pursuits by police officers, on the standardized form developed and promulgated by POSTC
5. Each law enforcement unit involved in the pursuit must report their involvement to POSTC on the designated reporting form. Agencies shall indicate on the form whether they were the initiating agency or a secondary agency.
6. The division commander shall conduct an annual analysis of all pursuits and reports of those pursuits. This analysis shall document and include identified training needs and/or policy modifications. This report shall be prepared in January and forwarded to the Chief of Police.

I. Other Pursuit Considerations

1. High speed operation. A police officer in pursuit may operate their vehicle at a speed that the condition of the vehicle, existing road, traffic, environmental conditions, and the officer's driving abilities will safely permit.
2. Number of involved pursuit vehicles. No more than three police vehicles shall be actively involved in a pursuit, unless directed otherwise by a commander, superior officer, or supervisor, however, all police officers should be alert to the progress and location of any nearby and ongoing pursuit.
3. Offensive driving tactics are limited. Absent exigent circumstances, deliberate contact between vehicles (i.e., intentional collision, PIT Maneuver, or ramming) shall not be attempted unless permission is obtained from a supervisor, in accordance with established written policy.
4. Spacing of Vehicles. All police units in active pursuit shall space themselves at reasonable and safe distances to permit adequate braking and reaction times if any preceding vehicle stops, slows, turns, becomes disabled or collides with any vehicle or object.
5. Police officers shall operate available emergency warning lights and their vehicle siren to alert other motorists to unexpected pursuit vehicle maneuvers for the

duration of the pursuit.

6. A police pursuit vehicle entering any intersection against traffic control signals or signs shall slow to safe speeds and be prepared to slow or stop to avoid any collision.

J. Forced Stop Procedures (Alternative Measures)

1. General Considerations

- a. Forced stop procedures short of deadly force may be considered to stop a fleeing vehicle only after all other reasonable alternatives have failed.
- b. Forced stop procedures may be considered when the necessity for an immediate apprehension outweighs the dangers presented to all parties involved and innocent persons.
- c. Forcing vehicles to stop usually presents serious safety hazards to participants and any innocent persons who are present.
- d. Forced stop procedures shall be reasonably and properly applied by police officers who have received appropriate training in their use and, absent exigent circumstances, have received authorization from their supervisor. Roadblocks are prohibited unless specifically authorized by the supervisor in charge after consideration of the necessity of applying deadly physical force to end the pursuit.
- e. Forced stop procedures shall be conducted in accordance with agency training and policy, which shall outline factors police officers should assess in deciding not only whether to use said technique but also how to do so safely and effectively, including providing guidance about circumstances where the police officer should avoid using said technique and setting any appropriate speed restrictions.

2. Deadly force considerations

- a. Use of a roadblock, ramming or forcing a vehicle from the roadway may be employed if deadly force can be reasonably applied to apprehend one of the following persons, after all other reasonable alternatives have been exhausted or would be ineffective:
 - i. A dangerous fleeing felon. A person for whom there is reasonable cause to believe that the person has committed a violent felony involving an actual or threatened attack which the police officer has reasonable cause to believe could or has resulted in death or serious physical injury; or
 - ii. Any person who is operating a motor vehicle recklessly and in such a manner as to be reasonably likely to cause death or serious injury to any other person should they be allowed to continue

operation of the vehicle.

- b. Forced stop procedures, to include but not be limited to deliberate contact (e.g., Pursuit Intervention Technique, Intentional collision, ramming), boxing-in, and roadblocks may constitute deadly force. Decisions to use any forced stop procedures shall consider speed, circumstances, and risk level.

3. Roadblocks

- a. "Roadblock" means a restriction or obstruction, which is used to prevent the free passage of motor vehicles on a roadway in order to apprehend the operator of a fleeing vehicle. A roadblock may be established as a partial, otherwise known as restrictive, or a complete, otherwise known as obstructive roadblock.
- b. The use of a roadblock shall be used in accordance with agency policy and training.

4. Boxing-in

- a. Boxing in normally requires two or more police units to position themselves around the fleeing vehicle to form a box at low speed pursuits. Once the fleeing vehicle is blocked, the police pursuit vehicles slowly and gradually reduce their speed, causing the operator of the fleeing vehicle to stop.
- b. Boxing in shall only be performed at relatively low speeds. The use of such a tactic must be carefully coordinated with all involved vehicles, taking into consideration the circumstances and conditions apparent at the time, as well as the potential risk of injury to police officers, the public, and the occupants of the fleeing vehicle.
- c. It must be anticipated that a operator of the vehicle being pursued may attempt to maneuver past the lead blocking vehicle or intentionally collide with it or one of the other blocking vehicles to move out of the box.
- d. Boxing-in techniques shall be used in accordance with department policy and training.

5. Deliberate Contact with Offending Vehicle

- a. Types of deliberate contact:
 - i. Intentional collision is defined as deliberate contact, initiated by a police officer, between a police vehicle and a fleeing vehicle intended to end a pursuit, which typically occurs at lower speeds.
 - ii. Pursuit Intervention Technique, commonly known as a PIT maneuver, is a deliberate contact between a police vehicle and a

fleeing vehicle that is intended to cause the fleeing vehicle to spin or leave the roadway in a slow and controlled manner.

- iii. Ramming is a deliberate action where a police vehicle intentionally strikes the fleeing vehicle with the goal of damaging, slowing, or stopping the fleeing vehicle. Ramming usually occurs at higher speeds.
- b. These techniques shall be used in accordance with department policy and training.
- c. Officers should be aware that the technique may activate the vehicle airbags or fuel system shut offs causing the police vehicle to become disabled.
- d. Initiating a deliberate contact is considered a use of force and may be classified as a deadly force tactic, depending on the circumstances. When considering deliberate contact, each police officer and supervisor must be aware that these actions may result in serious physical injury or death. It is typically authorized only under specific, high-risk circumstances, such as when the suspect has committed a violent felony and poses an immediate threat to public safety.

6. Tire Deflation Devices

- a. In order to use Tire Deflation Devices, commonly referred to as stop sticks, police officers must first complete a department required training course on the use of stop sticks. These devices shall only be used in accordance with department policy.
- b. Tire Deflation Devices shall not be deployed to stop Motorcycles, or other vehicles with less than four (4) wheels, unless deadly force is justified.
- c. Exception. In the following scenario, officers may use Tire Deflation Devices without prior supervisor authority:
 - i. Immediate action. Forced stop procedures utilizing the tire deflation devices shall be reasonably and properly applied, and shall only be applied by police officers who have received appropriate training in their use and have received authorization from their supervisor. Prior authorization shall not be required in exigent circumstances involving a rapidly evolving commission of a violent crime, requiring the police officer to take immediate action.

7. Pursuit Prevention

Prior to attempting a motor vehicle stop or after stopping a motor vehicle, situations may arise where a police officer reasonably believes that the operator may attempt to escape, elude law enforcement, or otherwise initiate a pursuit.

When a police officer has a reasonable and articulable belief that a suspect will attempt to escape, elude law enforcement, or otherwise initiate a pursuit, a police officer may consider a prophylactic measure, thereby preventing the engagement in a pursuit. The officer employing such measures will comply with all additional requirements under this policy.

K. Pursuit Management Technology

Pursuit management technology represents an evolving set of tools designed to reduce the risks associated with vehicle pursuits while maintaining law enforcement's ability to apprehend suspects. These technologies include, but are not limited to, vehicle-mounted and handheld GPS tracking devices, remote vehicle disabling systems, speed restriction capabilities, and other emerging innovations that allow law enforcement to monitor and maintain control from a safe distance. Technology should enhance, not replace, sound judgment in evaluating the initiation, continuation, and termination of a pursuit. Factors to consider in policy include, but are not limited to:

1. Authorized uses;
2. Prohibited uses;
3. Operational considerations;
4. Legal considerations;
5. Safety factors; and
6. Post-deployment procedures.

L. Vehicle Pursuit Training

1. Police officers who drive police vehicles shall be given initial and annual update training in the agency's pursuit policy and in safe driving tactics. The provisions of Sections 14-283a-1 to 14-283a-4, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be a part of the curriculum for all police basic recruit-training and re-certification programs in Connecticut.
2. Pursuit Training Programs shall consist of:
 - a. Knowledge of applicable statutes;
 - b. Court decisions impacting police pursuits;
 - c. Department policy;
 - d. Supervisory and individual responsibilities in a police pursuit;
 - e. Reporting requirements;
 - f. Inter-jurisdictional considerations; and

g. Pursuit driving skills and techniques.

3. The Training Division, under the direction of the Professional Standards Unit Commander, Shall annually re-publish in PowerDMS, the current version of this policy for all sworn officers and police dispatchers to read. Additionally, the Training Division shall develop and attach a test to the policy to ensure that all personnel comprehend and acknowledge the content. The Training Division will submit an annual report of the test results to the Chief of Police.