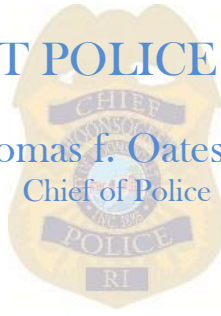


# WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

Thomas J. Oates, III  
Chief of Police



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	320.13	4/13/2021	4/16/2021
SUBJECT		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
Police Vehicle Response		6/16/2015	
ACCREDITATION		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA Standards: 41.2.1 RIPAC Standards: 7.2		11/6/2020, 12/15/2022	
INDEX		DISTRIBUTION	
Patrol Functions		Sworn Personnel Communications Personnel	

## POLICE VEHICLE RESPONSE POLICY

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to state the manner and operations in which police vehicles are to respond to calls for service in the City of Woonsocket.

### II. POLICY

Police vehicle response presents a potential danger to the public, police officers, and property. It is the policy of the department to minimize the risk involved in police vehicle operation to the extent possible while responding to calls for service.

### III. DEFINITION

**Police Vehicle Response:** The operation of a police vehicle when responding to calls for service and officer initiated incidents.

### IV. PROCEDURES

#### RI 7.2 A. Types of Response Levels

1. **Code One** responses are routine calls for service. They are those classes of events determined by the department to be non-serious not requiring an emergency response.
  - a. Officers responding to calls for service with a Code One designation shall observe all motor vehicle laws and restrictions.
  - b. Emergency equipment shall not be used.
2. **Code Two** responses are urgent calls for service. They are those classes of events determined by the department to be of a serious crime, yet not life-threatening.
  - a. Officers responding to calls for service with a Code Two designation may respond at speeds not greater than twenty (20) miles per hour (mph) over the posted speed limit within the strict guidelines of Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) [31-12-6](#) through [31-12-9](#). Officers are not required to operate authorized emergency vehicles at the maximum speed allowed for this response level.
  - b. If officers exceed the posted speed limit, all emergency equipment shall be activated.
  - c. When approaching a traffic control device or an intersection, officers shall slow their vehicles to a speed that affords maximum safety before proceeding.
  - d. Officers bear the responsibility of operating their vehicle in a manner that takes into consideration the existing road conditions, weather, vehicular and pedestrian traffic, population density, time of day, etc.
3. **Code Three** responses are emergency calls for service. They are those classes of events determined by the department to be of life-threatening, very serious, felony, an officer who needs assistance and vehicular pursuits.
  - a. Officers responding to calls for service with a Code Three designation may respond at speeds greater than twenty (20) miles per hour (mph) over the posted speed limit within the strict guidelines of RIGL [31-12-6](#) through [31-12-9](#). Officers are not required to operate authorized emergency vehicles at the maximum speed allowed for this response level.
  - b. If officers exceed the posted speed limit, all emergency equipment shall be activated.
  - c. When approaching a traffic control device or an intersection, officers shall slow their vehicles to a speed that affords maximum safety before proceeding.
  - d. Officers bear the responsibility of operating their vehicle in a manner that takes into consideration the existing road conditions, weather, vehicular and pedestrian traffic, population density, time of day, etc.

## **B. Officer Responsibilities**

1. The officer will acknowledge the receipt of a dispatching message from the Communications Center Personnel with a clear response.
2. The officer will respond according to the associated response code, unless:
  - a. Subsequently informed of a priority change by Communications.
  - b. Specifically directed by a supervisor to change the priority.
  - c. The officer observes facts to warrant a change in priority under this policy, in which case Communications will be notified of said facts:
    - 1) Nature of situation and/or conditions warranting a lower or higher priority.
    - 2) Current location and destination.

#### **C. Communication Center Responsibilities**

1. Upon Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) entry of a call for service, Communications Center personnel will dispatch all units according to priority as indicated with a clear message of the response code at the time of dispatch for all Code Three and Two events.
2. All Code Three events shall be preceded by transmitting an alert tone.
3. Upon receiving information changing the level either higher or lower, said the change will be transmitted to all responding units with the new priority or a “slow down – continue into the scene”, as appropriate. A “slow down – continue into the scene” will indicate a Code One response.
4. Upon receiving notification of a vehicular pursuit, procedures per [General Order 320.01 Vehicle Pursuits](#), will be implemented.

#### **D. Patrol Supervisor Responsibilities**

1. Supervisors will monitor compliance with this policy by all patrol units.
2. A supervisor may upgrade or downgrade a response level if facts warrant under this policy by notifying the Communications Center.

### **RI 7.2**

#### **E. Use of Emergency Vehicle Equipment**

While responding to a call with the emergency equipment activated and approaching an intersection with a traffic control device set red or the existence of a stop sign, the officer will come to a complete stop before entering the said intersection, and upon determining that they may do so safely; proceed through said intersection at a speed no greater than ten (10) miles per hour.

1. During Code Three and Code Two responses, emergency lights, and the siren will be activated whenever officers exceed the posted speed limit.
2. The spotlight will not be utilized to direct at oncoming traffic.
3. Flashing hazard lights will not be utilized while in response mode.
4. Flashing headlights are to be deactivated while not in response mode.

5. When responding on a Code Three or Code Two call, emergency devices may be deactivated at a distance to be determined by the operator so as not to alert suspects.
6. When such devices are deactivated, the response will be reduced to Code One speed with obedience to all motor vehicle laws.
7. Emergency lighting may be utilized in any event whereby a potential hazard to the public or police exists.

#### **F. Calls for Service Response Codes**

1. The department maintains a list of calls for service in the department's CAD system with a corresponding priority.
2. Priority One calls for service are dispatched using a Code Three response level.
3. Priority Two calls for service are dispatched using a Code Two response level.
4. Priority Three calls for service are dispatched using a Code One response level.

#### **G. Provision**

Communications Center personnel shall dispatch Animal Control Officers using Code One designations for all animal-related calls for service.

Per order,

*Thomas F. Oates, III*

Chief of Police

*Written directives published within PowerDMS are in full force and effect on the referenced dates and have been approved by the Chief of Police*

**TITLE 31**  
**Motor and Other vehicles**  
**CHAPTER 31-12**  
**Applicability of Traffic Regulations**

SECTION 31-12-6

**§ 31-12-6 Emergency vehicles – Times when entitled to special privileges.** – (a) The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an alleged violator of the law or when responding to but not upon returning from a fire alarm, may exercise the privileges set forth in § 31-12-7, but subject to the conditions stated in this section and in §§ 31-12-8 and 31-12-9.

(b) Upon establishment of the law enforcement agency accreditation council, the council shall adopt uniform rules and regulations to govern high speed pursuits in the state in accordance with the standards established by the National Law Enforcement Accreditation Agency. Until such rules are adopted, all police departments within the state shall submit to the department of the attorney general a copy of their high speed pursuit policies, which shall be available to the public.

**TITLE 31**  
**Motor and Other vehicles**  
**CHAPTER 31-12**  
**Applicability of Traffic Regulations**

SECTION 31-12-7

**§ 31-12-7 Privileges allowed emergency vehicles.** – The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may:

- (1) Park or stand, irrespective of the provisions of any law;
- (2) Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation;
- (3) Exceed the prima facie speed limits so long as he or she does not endanger life or property;
- (4) Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

**TITLE 31**  
**Motor and Other vehicles**  
**CHAPTER 31-12**  
**Applicability of Traffic Regulations**

SECTION 31-12-8

**§ 31-12-8 Warning signals given by emergency vehicles.** – The exemptions granted in this chapter to an authorized emergency vehicle shall apply only when the driver of the vehicle while in motion sounds an audible signal by bell, siren, or exhaust whistle as may be reasonably necessary, and when the vehicle is equipped with at least one lighted lamp displaying a red light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of five hundred feet (500') to the front of the vehicle, except that an authorized emergency vehicle operated as a police vehicle need not be equipped with or display a red light visible from in front of the vehicle.

**TITLE 31**  
**Motor and Other vehicles**  
**CHAPTER 31-12**  
**Applicability of Traffic Regulations**

SECTION 31-12-9

**§ 31-12-9 Due care by emergency vehicles.** – The provisions of this chapter shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall the provisions protect the driver from the consequences of the driver's reckless disregard for the safety of others.