

RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge this department's, governmental entity's and/or any of this department's employees' civil or criminal liability in any way. It is not to be construed as the creation of a particular standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to any complaint, demand for settlement, or any other form of grievance or litigation. Violations of this directive, if substantiated, can only form the basis for intra-departmental administrative sanctions.

Chief of Police: Steven Pitts/s/		
Approving Deputy Chief: Tom Robinson/s/		
General Order No: P-311-05	Issued: January 3, 2006	Revised: January 1, 2013
General Order Title: POLICE VEHICLE USAGE AND EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATION		

I. POLICY

The Reno Police Department has established procedures for the care and operation of Department vehicles. To provide necessary emergency services, Department vehicles may be required to operate as emergency vehicles. Operation of emergency vehicles is regulated by state statutes and city ordinances. Drivers of emergency vehicles are exempt from certain "rules of the road," but have a duty to drive with due regard for the safety of others.

II. DEFINITIONS

Vehicle - Within this order, "vehicle" is an official vehicle designated by the City/Department for use by Department personnel.

Code 2 - Normal driving operations, obeying all traffic laws.

Code 3 - Operation of an emergency vehicle that involves the continuous application of at least one red flashing emergency light and siren.

Traffic Stop - Application of emergency lights and if necessary a siren to make notification of a police car presence and to cause a violator to stop as quickly and safely as possible.

Overtaking - Overtaking is the active attempt by an officer to pace or catch up to and stop a violator before there is recognition by the violator that the officer is attempting to stop the violator.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. The following applies to all vehicles:

1. Use will be work related, not personal, and utilization will remain within the City limits of Reno, unless travel is related to a call for service/on-site action, beat assignment or supervisory approval is obtained.
2. Only City employees/officials, or persons being transported in an official capacity will be transported, except at the direction/approval of a supervisor.
3. Any time an employee is transporting a non-City employee the employee will notify Communications of the starting location and destination. If the person is of the opposite sex, the employee, in addition to advising the starting location and destination, will also advise Communications of the starting mileage and then the ending mileage when destination is reached. Communications will record this information. This provision does not apply to an approved ride-along, General Order P-350-04, Ride-Along Program.
4. Employees will not smoke in vehicles.
5. Only authorized personnel will check-out and operate vehicles.
6. Operation will be in a careful, prudent manner. All laws and department guidelines must be obeyed. Employees who violate related traffic laws are subject to criminal and administrative sanction.
7. Employees must possess and have on their person when operating a vehicle, a valid driver's license. Employees are to report loss of license (for any reason) to their supervisor immediately.
8. Employees are to park vehicles lawfully, whenever possible. Marked vehicles are to be parked in the motor pool when employees are at the station.
9. Normally, employees will only operate vehicles assigned to their division/section. Supervisory approval will be obtained prior to using a vehicle assigned to another division.
10. Vehicles will not be used to:
 - a. Push or push-start another vehicle.
 - b. Charge or jump-start the batteries of privately owned vehicles.
11. Employees will not operate specialized vehicles e.g., motorcycles, PVA carts, etc., unless assigned and trained.
12. Employees will ensure that the vehicle's interior, and when practicable, the vehicle's exterior, are clean upon return to motor pool.
13. Employees will obtain Deputy Chief's approval before using a vehicle not owned/leased by the City for department business. If approved, the employee will be compensated on a per-mile or monthly basis.
14. Breaks must be taken within the City of Reno, unless prior authorization is granted by a supervisor.

B. Inspection/Damage

1. Prior to operation of a vehicle, employees will inspect the vehicle for damage and to ensure that equipment is functioning properly. Damage or

unacceptable condition of vehicle will be reported immediately, to a supervisor and Fleet Services.

2. Employees will be responsible for ensuring their assigned vehicle is up to date on service and maintenance. Marked units are to be service every 3000 miles, unmarked units every 5000 miles unless specified by Fleet Services.
3. Inoperative or malfunctioning equipment will be reported to Fleet Services per established procedures.
4. Traffic accidents/incidents will be reported in accordance with RPD General Orders.
5. Damage not resulting from a traffic accident/incident will be reported to the employee's supervisor and Fleet Services, through email, as soon as practical, but prior to the end of the employee's shift.
6. Employees are responsible for proper care of vehicles. Items will not be placed on the painted surfaces of vehicles. Employees will not write on any portion of the interior of the vehicle or deface any portion of the vehicle.
7. Damaged or abused vehicles may subject the responsible employee to reimbursement charges and/or appropriate disciplinary action.

C. Long –Term Assignment

1. Long term assignments of vehicles will be made at the direction of the Chief of Police. Outside the employee's normal shift, the vehicle will be used only while traveling to/from work or when authorized by the Chief of Police to facilitate department business.
2. Vehicles will be secured at the employee's residence and will be parked in either the driveway or garage and not on the public street.
3. When a position with an assigned vehicle turns over, an evaluation of whether or not to continue the vehicle assignment will be determined by the Chief of Police or his designee.

D. Motor Units

1. Motor units may take their assigned units home in accordance with the RPPA contract.

E. Traffic Stop

1. Officers will notify communications of the nature and location of all Traffic and Subject stops prior to the initiation of contact. Every effort will be made to notify communications of a stop prior to contact unless there is a reasonable officer safety concern related to a sudden and/or unexpected encounter; in such cases police communications will be notified as soon as the situation is stable.
2. Officers engaged in overtaking a suspected violator are not generally considered to be in Code 3 vehicle operation. Officers will operate police vehicles with due regard and reasonable care while trying to overtake a violator.
3. Traffic stops which transition into a Failure to Yield or Pursuit are covered by the Vehicle Pursuit General Order.

F. Restrictions on Idling Engines

Vehicles will not be left unattended with the engine running unless the respective employee(s) are involved in active operational activities that involve the police vehicle. Examples of operational necessities include but are not necessarily limited to situations wherein the emergency lights of a marked police vehicle are necessary for safety or when needed for the well-being of a Department canine.

Examples of prohibited activity include but are not necessarily limited to leaving a vehicle running while on a meal/rest break (unless the employee remains in the vehicle), while the employee is busy in a station, or while the employee is away from the vehicle taking a report. Situation-specific exceptions can occur but must be operationally necessary as mentioned above.

IV EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATION PROCEDURES

A. General

1. Code 3 emergency vehicle operation may occur:
 - a. during a pursuit;
 - b. in response to an emergency call for service (potentially violent or life-threatening in nature, medical emergency and where such response may affect the outcome), or
 - c. when such a response is requested by another member of law

enforcement, civilian field personnel, Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services or an emergency services provider.

2. Determination of emergency vehicle operation will be the responsibility of the employee directly involved. Determination will be based on facts known at the time the call for service was received.

B. Officer Responsibilities

1. The responding Officer is responsible for evaluating information as provided by dispatch as to whether a Code 3 response is appropriate. Calls for service which are normally authorized for Code 3 include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Requests by employees (law enforcement, emergency services providers) for assistance;
 - b. Calls for service that are potentially violent, or life-threatening; or
 - c. Traffic accidents with serious bodily injury.
2. Code 3 will usually be limited to three units, unless exceptional circumstances warrant more. This would be at the direction of a supervisor only.
3. In incidents where fire and ambulance crews are already responding Code 3, the assigned unit will not respond Code 3, unless doing so may affect the outcome of the incident. RPD units are advised when the Fire Department and EMS are responding Code 3 to an injury accident.

C. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. A field supervisor has the authority and responsibility to order or terminate a Code 3 response when circumstances indicate such action is appropriate.

D. Communications Responsibilities

1. Communications is responsible for notifying a police supervisor of any Code 3 response. If no supervisor is available on the primary frequency, another field supervisor will be notified.

E. Conduct

1. Drivers of Department vehicles during Code 3 operation will:
 - a. Use both emergency lights and siren;

- b. Use reasonable and prudent speed that does not create undue danger to life/property; and
 - c. Slow/stop as necessary for safe operation before proceeding through red signals/stop signs.
- 2. Drivers of Department vehicles will notify Communications of such operations except when requests are received by Police Officers or civilian field personnel that are on our radio frequency requesting assistance in EIP situations. For example, 10-78, Officers requesting expedited cover, Officers in foot pursuit, one at gun point etc.
- 3. Unmarked units will not become involved in pursuits unless the pursuit involves a violent felony or poses an immediate threat to others, and the unmarked unit is equipped with both emergency lights and siren. Unmarked units will turn over a pursuit to marked units as soon as possible.
- 4. State statutes, City ordinances and Department policy do not relieve the officer operating Code 3 from the consequences of reckless disregard for the safety of others.
- 5. During routine responses to calls, officers will drive their vehicles in Code 2 status, which is in a safe and courteous manner, obeying all traffic laws.
- 6. Any deviation from a normal Code 3 response to an emergency situation (i.e. lights only) will occur only if use of all warning equipment would present an officer safety or public safety issue. It will be the responding officer's responsibility to articulate the reason(s) why such a response was necessary given the facts and circumstances of the incident.