



San Diego Community College District Police Department Policy and Procedures

1.11 OPERATION OF POLICE DEPARTMENT VEHICLES

EFF. 10/01/19

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for operating Police Department vehicles.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. BACKGROUND

All personnel should exercise due care and caution when operating Police Department vehicles.

Refer to Department Procedures 1.12, Emergency Vehicle Operation and 1.05, Pursuit Procedures for further information related to specialized driving.

IV. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. All vehicles should be inspected for any defects prior to being taken into the field.

1. To eliminate potential complaints, horns and sirens should not be tested at the campus College Police stations.
2. When defects are discovered, they shall be reported to garage personnel by completing an Emergency Repair Order (ERO).
3. Radio discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the officer's supervisor.
4. MCT discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the Communications Supervisor.

B. Upon securing from duty, the driver shall be responsible for removing all trash and

- debris from the vehicle. Vehicles with less than 3/4 of a tank of fuel shall be refilled. Any vehicle defects or damage shall be reported prior to securing.
- C. All patrol vehicles shall have an identifying number affixed to all sides of the vehicle.
 - D. All Department vehicles are to be locked and secured when parked and unattended. This applies to marked and unmarked vehicles parked at secured or unsecured police facilities, and on public and private property.
 - E. Department members shall fuel their own Department vehicle.
 - F. Personnel shall unload and secure all weapons located inside the vehicle when securing at the end of their shift in accordance with established Department Procedure.

V. FIELD OPERATIONS PROCEDURES

- A. All District vehicles are required to comply with all parking regulations. However, District vehicles bearing "E" (Government) plates are exempt from parking meter enforcement (Memo from City of San Diego Chief Operating Officer, dated October 20, 2006).
 - 1. In routine situations, the engine is to be turned off and the key removed from the ignition.
 - 2. The parking brake shall be effectively set, and the shift lever on automatic transmissions placed in the park position before exiting from the vehicle.
- B. When emergency overhead lights are used on freeways to stop a violator, they should be turned off as soon as practical. The four-way flashers or rear ambers are recommended when the emergency has been stabilized.
- C. With few exceptions, an officer should not block a private drive or enter private property to issue traffic warnings or citations. When necessary to do so, complete the contact as soon as possible so that business operations are not disrupted.
- D. Backing Vehicles
 - 1. Whenever possible, drivers should attempt to park their vehicles either so that they do not have to back up, or so they back up the shortest possible distance.
 - 2. Officers driving alone shall always check the rear of their vehicles for any obstructions prior to backing.
 - 3. In cases of two-officer units where the vehicle has restricted rearward visibility,

the passenger should exit the vehicle to guide the driver safely in the backing process.

- E. Jump-starting police and private vehicles using jumper cables is prohibited except under exigent circumstances. Jump-starting with cables introduces the likelihood of severe electrical and computer systems damage.
- F. Driving during hours of darkness without the use of headlights is generally prohibited, except as necessary to facilitate officer safety or to accomplish enforcement objectives. Damage to vehicles or property resulting from such operation may be carried as a police equipment collision.
- G. Personnel should use extreme caution when driving on non-paved surfaces, such as turf and sand, frequently found in park recreational areas. Special attention should be given to prevent damage to the turf and irrigation systems.
- H. When traveling on uneven surfaces, which limit the driver's view, personnel will exit the vehicle and view the terrain prior to proceeding.

VI. POLICE EQUIPMENT ACCIDENTS

- A. Should you become involved in a police equipment accident, your first duty is to notify the radio dispatcher.
 - 1. Protect the scene and render first aid as necessary until additional police units arrive.
 - 2. Do not make any statements concerning the accident or possible civil liability.
- B. Members who do not have access to a police radio shall immediately notify the radio dispatcher of the accident by telephone.
- C. All traffic collisions involving College Police Department employees and volunteers, while operating District vehicles, or vehicles/equipment utilized by College Police Department employees or volunteers in the performance of their duties, will be investigated by College Police personnel. This includes collisions that occur within other cities or jurisdictions within the county. In such cases, these reports will be used for administrative review purposes only. The investigative report prepared by the agency having jurisdiction will suffice as the "official" report for DMV purposes.
- D. The Fleet Safety Supervisor shall be notified immediately any time a collision occurs involving an officer or civilian College Police Department

employee/volunteer, while driving a District vehicle/equipment, or vehicle/equipment utilized by an officer, civilian employee/volunteer that is not District property, but is used in the performance of the officer's or civilian employee/volunteer's duties.

- E. If you must move your vehicle for safety reasons prior to the arrival of investigating personnel, mark the location of the vehicles before moving.
- F. The on-duty supervisor will notify Risk Management personnel as situations dictate.
- G. The "on scene" supervisor investigating the collision must fill out a Supervisor's Vehicle Accident/Industrial Incident Investigation Report within 48 hours of the incident and ensure that it is forwarded to the Fleet Safety Supervisor.
- H. Refer to Procedure 1.13, Police Equipment Accidents, for information on the reporting and investigations of police equipment accidents.

VII. DRIVING OVER CURBS

On those rare occasions when the officer must traverse a curb, the following procedures shall be followed:

- A. Curb height must be low enough so the vehicle can clear without being damaged;
- B. The curb must be approached at angles less than 45 degrees;
- C. The vehicle must be stopped before touching the curb;
- D. Low speed, less than 5 MPH, should be used; and,
- E. One wheel at a time should be moved over the curb.

Damage that occurs when a vehicle crosses a curb will be classified as a police equipment accident.

VIII. SPECIAL PARKING AREAS

A. Parking at College Police Facilities

1. All personal vehicles parked at police facilities must properly display a District-issued parking permit.

B. Court Parking (Downtown Court Facilities)

While it is recognized there is limited parking near the court facilities, Police Department personnel are required to comply with parking regulations.

There are several transportation options available to Department personnel to minimize the need to park vehicles near the court:

1. The Trolley is available for sworn and civilian personnel to use as transportation to and from the downtown courthouse. The Trolley may be boarded at the City College Trolley stop, located at 11th and "C" Street, . Members are not required to buy tickets for the Trolley, but must show their Department identification card to Trolley security officers if asked to show their ticket. Department identification cards may be used in place of Trolley tickets by members on official business only.
2. Department vehicles with "exempt" license plates may park at metered spaces without having to deposit coins into the meters, and for periods of time longer than indicated.