

# JACKSONVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy: 16-1  
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## EMERGENCY & PURSUIT DRIVING

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**PURPOSE:** To establish Department procedures regarding the emergency and pursuit driving of departmental vehicles.

**POLICY:** It is the Department policy for employees to operate Department vehicles in a safe and defensive manner while observing all laws concerning motor vehicle operation. During an emergency or pursuit driving situation officers will operate their vehicles with extreme caution and in compliance with A.C.A. §27-37-202. At all times, departmental vehicles will be operated with due regard for the safety of lives and property. In all instances, the safety of persons using the traffic ways is the primary consideration in vehicle operation.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

- I. **EMERGENCY:** Circumstances or results that call for immediate action to protect lives or the intervention of a felony in progress.
- II. **EMERGENCY DRIVING:** The operation of an emergency vehicle with the use of emergency lights and siren in response to an emergency.
- III. **EMERGENCY VEHICLE:** A marked or unmarked Police Department vehicle equipped with blue lights and siren, as described in A.C.A. §27-37-202 and A.C.A. §27-36-303.
- IV. **PURSUIT DRIVING:** Motor vehicle pursuit is an active attempt by a Law Enforcement Officer operating a emergency vehicle utilizing simultaneously all emergency equipment to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving vehicle, when the driver of a fleeing vehicle is aware of that attempt and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing his speed, disobeying traffic laws, ignoring the police, or attempting to elude an officer.

### **PROCEDURES:**

- I. **LEVELS OF RESPONSE (7.17)**
  - A. **Code 1: Routine Assignment-** A call for service where no emergency exists, nor is there a potential of an emergency situation to arise. Officers responding Code 1 shall respond complying with all traffic regulations and shall not use emergency equipment.
  - B. **Code 2: Urgent-** A call for service where an emergency has occurred but is currently over, or is escalating and a timely response is required. Officers responding Code 2 shall respond to the location without delay, by the most direct means, complying with traffic regulations. Officers will use discretion when choosing to use a Code 2 response as to use of emergency equipment.
  - C. **Code 3: EMERGENCY-** A call for service where a crime is in progress or an emergency currently exists which requires an immediate response. Officers responding Code 3 shall respond expeditiously to the location of the emergency, by the most direct means, using all emergency equipment with a paramount consideration for the safety of the public and the assigned officers. Officers should remain alert to traffic and pedestrians using common sense when responding to calls that require speeds that exceed the posted limits. In no event shall officers operate the vehicle in a reckless manner.

D. It will be the responsibility of all supervisors to monitor the radio for compliance.

## II. EMERGENCY DRIVING (NON-PURSUIT SITUATIONS) (7.17)

- A. The decision to drive under emergency conditions will be discretionary with each individual officer, based on the following considerations:
  - 1. When deciding to initiate or continue driving under emergency conditions, the officer will consider such factors as traffic volume, time of day and potential hazards or liability to themselves and the public.
  - 2. Emergency responses will be made only when the call involves a life threatening situation or violent crime in progress.
  - 3. Officers must have sufficient information to justify the decision to drive under emergency conditions.
  - 4. Officers operating under emergency status must bear in mind that even though a rapid response is important, they must arrive at the scene safely in order to be of assistance.
  - 5. Officers will notify communication immediately upon deciding to make an emergency response to any situation.
- B. All officers deciding to make an emergency response will notify communications of such by using the term "Code 3". This term indicates that the officer will be employing all emergency equipment (blue lights and siren).
- C. Field supervisors will override the officers decision to make an emergency "Code 3" response if, in their judgment the emergency response is not warranted or cannot be done safely.
- D. No officer will operate a police vehicle in emergency "Code 3" status if any passengers other than another police officer or a person who has signed a release of "Waiver of Liability" occupy it.

## III. PURSUIT DRIVING

- A. Officers will not pursue for traffic violations.
- B. Officers will not pursue for any misdemeanors violations.
- C. Only emergency vehicles may engage in pursuits.
- D. Specialty vehicles (SUV's, Vans, undercover vehicles, and any non-pursuit rated vehicle) will not become involved in any pursuit.
- E. No more than two (2) police vehicles will be involved in the immediate pursuit, unless a supervisor authorizes additional back-up units. Other police vehicles will not become actively involved in the pursuit, follow the pursuit, or operate in an emergency mode.

## IV. PRIMARY AND BACK UP UNIT

The first unit to become involved in a vehicle pursuit will be designated as the primary unit and will have the following responsibilities:

- A. The officer will activate the police vehicles emergency lights and sirens.
- B. The officer will notify communications of the following information as soon as possible:
  - 1. The unit number in pursuit;
  - 2. The location and direction of travel of the suspect vehicle;
  - 3. The vehicle description, license number and number of occupants; and
  - 4. The reason for the pursuit.
- C. The second marked unit will become the back up. The back-up officer will activate the vehicle's emergency lights and siren and advise communications immediately upon joining the pursuit.
- D. The secondary unit will also take over the responsibilities of keeping other units and communications updated on the pursuit; this relieves the primary unit of the additional duties