

WOLFEBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT

SOP 3.6

Date Issued: 12/27/2019

Review: 02/25/2021

[Note: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Wolfeboro Police Department and, as provided by RSA 516:36, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.]

By Order of:
Dean J. Rondeau, Chief of Police

VEHICLE OPERATION

Policy

The Department requires that the fleet shall be maintained in good mechanical condition to provide for safe and efficient operation. The fleet shall reflect the best image of the department. The fleet shall be clean, and the installed equipment shall be in good repair and operational.

Purpose

The purpose of this order is to cover:

- Occupant safety
- Vehicular safety
- Equipment
- Maintenance
- Vehicular responses
- Take-home cruisers

General Guidelines

- Drivers shall comply with all applicable traffic regulations.
- Safety restraints must be used by all occupants.
- Drivers are responsible for the vehicles they are assigned to and the equipment designated to that vehicle.
- All department vehicles will be equipped with Emergency Lights & Siren.

Maintenance

- Employees shall inspect the vehicle for cleanliness and mechanical reliability. (vehicle checklist) Any damage shall be filled out on the checklist and brought to the attention to the supervisor on shift.
- Officers and their passengers are required to wear seat belts when operating or riding in vehicles.

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Vehicle Operation**

- Employees shall only operate vehicles that have been assigned to them. Supervisors shall not, except in an emergency, allow employees to operate vehicles that have been designated for another specific use.
- While operating a police vehicle, employees shall have a valid New Hampshire Driver's license and their issued employee identification card with them. Sworn employees in undercover positions are exempt from carrying an employee identification card.
- Employees who use police vehicles that are scheduled to operate around-the-clock shall maintain a sufficient amount of fuel in the vehicle and shall not relinquish to the next operator a vehicle with less than a half tank of fuel.
- Employees shall enter the correct mileage each time the vehicle is fueled and only use the fuel key assigned to the vehicle.
- Officers shall ensure that the patrol vehicle is equipped with a fully charged operative fire extinguisher that is within its expiration date. Each time a fire extinguisher is used, a report shall be made.
- Police vehicles contaminated by a bodily substance shall be driven to the Police Department and the maintenance officer should be notified immediately. The officer shall leave a notice on the vehicle indicating "Out of service, contaminated."
- Any vehicle compartment/area used to transport prisoners must be free of weapons, property and contraband before and after the prisoner comes in contact with it. The transporting officer shall examine the vehicle at the beginning of his or her tour of duty, each time a prisoner is removed from it, and at the end of their tour of duty. At a minimum, the examination shall consist of the officer removing the rear seat cushion (if practical) and looking beneath the front seats in the driver's compartment to ensure that the vehicle is free of weapons, property, and contraband.

Position	Responsibility
Driver	Inspect vehicle & complete Cruiser checklist Sheet every shift. Check fluid levels if available Check tires for proper inflation Refuel vehicle at end of shift
Supervisor	Investigate any problems or damage to vehicles
Fleet Maint. Ofc.	Review all vehicle inspection sheets Replenish supplies used Replace any vehicle that is unsafe, until corrected Utilize a routine lubrication schedule of vehicles Monthly inspection of vehicles & equipment Maintain equipment lists for each cruiser Arrange repairs or preventive inspections Yearly report on each cruiser by February 1 st and given to the SSgt for review.

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Damage

Not the result of an accident

Driver	Fill out a vehicle damage report Obtain witnesses statements (if any) Notify a supervisor
Supervisor	Investigate the damage Make recommendation regarding damage Executive Officer/Captain Arrange for repairs if needed
Captain/Executive Officer	Review damage report Take action based on information

Accident

Driver	Immediately notify a supervisor Another Agency will conduct an accident report Driver will fill out a Vehicle Damage report Witness statement forms will be given to all witnesses
Dispatcher	If cruiser involved in an emergency response, pursuit or an injury occurs – contact Chief and/or Executive Officer/Captain immediately
Supervisor	Respond to scene Investigate to see if SOP is complied with Report to Executive Officer/Captain within 2 days.
Captain/Executive Officer	Review investigative report and report to the Chief of Police and take action based on information.

Responses

- All vehicles shall be parked legally, except in emergency situations.
- Vehicles shall be locked and secured.

Response Code	
Code One	Routine response – non-emergency situation All traffic laws obeyed Use of emergency devices prohibited
Code Two	Urgent response - without unnecessary delay
Code Three	Emergency response - all emergency signaling devices must be used Operate under RSA 265:8 while exercising extreme caution. Any assignment a dispatcher advises is Code 3

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A CODE 3 response does not relieve an officer of responsibility should they jeopardize themselves or others.

Reports

Vehicle Inspection	Vehicle checklist through Planit.
Quarterly Inspection	To be completed & maintained by Fleet Maint. Ofc.
Yearly cruiser report	To be completed by Fleet Officer and given to the Staff Sergeant for review by February 1 st .
Loss or Damage Report	To be completed by assigned driver By end of tour of duty If officer is incapacitated, by his supervisor

Take-Home Vehicles after shift Program.

Supervisors shall oversee officers marked patrol vehicles take-home program. Officers will not be allowed to take home vehicles until the following criteria has been met:

- a. Officers shall have successfully completed the new hire probationary period, unless approved by the Chief of Police.
- b. Officers must reside within the Town of Wolfeboro or have permission by the Chief of Police.
- c. Officers must have had a no at-fault vehicle accidents within 6 months period.
- d. Officer's most recent evaluation performance must be in good standings.
- e. Officers must not have two class one write-ups or two verbal discipline within a six-month period.
- f. Officers who had been suspended due to a disciplinary action will not be allowed to have a take-home cruiser for a period of 6 months.
- g. The Chief of Police can suspend the take home program at any time.