

La Plata Police Department – General Orders

	Title: Police Vehicle Operations	Order #: 701		
	Effective Date: June 1, 2014	Review Date:		
	Original Issue:			
<input type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> Amends <input checked="" type="radio"/> Rescinds – E.1				
Approved by: Chief Carl Schinner			CALEA 5 th Edition	
CALEA Standard: 41.2.1 41.3.1 41.3.2 41.3.3 61.3.3			Pages: 5	

01 PURPOSE: To establish policy, procedures and guidelines for the operation and maintenance of all Department vehicles.

02 POLICY: It shall be the policy of the La Plata Police Department to maximize the safety of all personnel and citizens by requiring operators of all Departmental vehicles to obey all traffic laws during normal operations. Officers operating a Departmental vehicle during an emergency response are governed by the Maryland Transportation Article. Officers are not relieved of their responsibility to exercise due care when operating a vehicle in the emergency mode.

03 VEHICLE CLASSIFICATIONS:

A. Patrol Vehicles – conspicuously marked or unmarked vehicles issued to eligible officers for on and off-duty shall be used in accordance with Order 404-Take Home Cruisers.

B. Special Assignment Vehicles – are vehicles, marked and unmarked, authorized for a specialized function (i.e., Evidence, Tactical Unit).

1. All Terrance Vehicle/Utility Vehicle shall be used in accordance with Order
2. Marked and unmarked vehicles will be assigned to the various Divisions within the Department at the direction of the Operations Commander. Unmarked vehicles shall be equipped with front and rear flashing lights. (CALEA 41.3.1)

3. K-9 Vehicles – are assigned to the Special Operations Division and will be operated by members of the K-9 Unit. These vehicles shall be marked. (Future)

4. Pool (Spare) Vehicles – are extra vehicles that may be assigned t when an assigned vehicles are out-of-service.

04 AUTHORIZATION TO OPERATE DEPARTMENTAL VEHICLES:

A. Department vehicles will only be operated by the following persons:

1. Employees of the Department;
2. Town employees on official business; or,
3. Authorized mechanics for the purpose of road testing.

B. Employees shall possess a valid Maryland operators permit for the class of vehicle being operated.

05 CIVILIAN OPERATION OF DEPARTMENT VEHICLES:

Department vehicles may be operated by civilian employees subject to the following conditions:

A. Marked patrol vehicles will not be used.

- B. Civilian employees may not respond to calls or operate emergency equipment.
- C. Civilians may use the police radio to notify Communications of emergency conditions.
- D. Civilians operating Department vehicles are subject to all other provisions of Department Rules concerning the use of such vehicle.

06 PROCEDURES FOR USE OF DEPARTMENT VEHICLES:

- A. Personal business will be held to a minimum when the officer is on-duty.
- B. Officers will not regularly leave the Town without the permission of the Shift Supervisor. However, it is understood that due to the geographical boundaries of the Town, officers on routine patrol must leave the jurisdiction from time-to-time.
- C. When officers transport a prisoner, disabled motorist or other citizen in their vehicle, the officer shall advise the Charles County Communication's Center of the pickup location, reason for the transport, destination, and beginning and ending mileage. The beginning and ending mileage and time will be recorded by the Charles County dispatcher. In addition, the transporting officer will give the sex of the person being transported, as well as whether the individual is an adult or juvenile.

07 ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES:
Vehicles assigned to all Divisions within the Department will be assigned by the Operations Commander.

08 REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:

- A. Vehicles used in routine or general patrol, whether conspicuously marked or unmarked, must be equipped with operational emergency lights and a siren. (CALEA 41.3.1)
- B. Marked patrol cruisers shall be equipped as follows: (CALEA 41.3.2)

1. Exterior mounted red and/or blue emergency lights (In the case of semi- marked cars the emergency lights will be mounted on the interior of the vehicle).
2. Conspicuous markings that identify the vehicle as a La Plata Police cruiser (which includes reflective material on sides and rear of the vehicle). Markings include agency name;
3. Cruiser numbers;
4. Siren;
5. Radio;
6. Public Address system (PA);
7. Spotlight;
8. Flex cuffs;
9. One roll of police line tape; and,
10. Flashlight charger.

C. Optional Equipment;

1. 100' tape measure;
2. Yellow lumber chalk;
3. Flotation device;
4. Rope bag with 100' rope;
5. Pry bar;
6. Slim jim;
7. Bolt cutters (supervisor); and,
8. Sledge hammer (supervisor).

D. Individually assigned equipment to be kept in cruisers.

1. Crime Scene Processing Kit;
2. Traffic wand/vest;
3. Gas mask;

4. Gas mask filter;
5. Riot helmet;
6. Riot baton;
7. CPR mask; and,
8. First Responder Kit.

- E.** All vehicles will be equipped with the following items:
1. First Aid kit;
 2. Emergency blanket;
 3. Spare tire, lug wrench, and jack (these items will be securely locked in position);
 4. Flares (minimum ½ box); and,
 5. Charged fire extinguisher.
- F.** Supplies not kept readily available can be obtained via the Operations Commander. (CALEA 41.3.2)

09 PARKING POLICE VEHICLES:

- A.** Employees operating Department vehicles shall observe all parking regulations except in performance of their official duties on emergency calls for service.
- B.** During emergencies, Department vehicles parked in restricted areas shall not be parked so as to unnecessarily interfere with traffic or impede fire/rescue operations.
- C.** If a Department vehicle must be double-parked or parked in a restricted area, the vehicle's parking lights shall be placed on flash, unless it compromises officer safety.
- D.** Employees shall ensure that the vehicle and contents are secured whenever the vehicle is left unattended.

10 EMERGENCY RESPONSE: (CALEA 41.2.1)

- A.** Officers operating Department vehicles as emergency vehicles shall adhere to the

requirements of Maryland Traffic Article and General Order 702-Vehicular Pursuit.

- B.** Officers authorized to operate emergency vehicles are not relieved from their duty to drive with high regard for the safety of all persons.
- C.** In addition to requirements of the Maryland Traffic Article, employees shall:
1. Operate emergency vehicles with headlights activated when in conjunction with emergency lights and audible warning devices.
 2. Proceed through a traffic control device, such as a stop sign, traffic control signal, railroad crossing signal, etc. only after properly clearing the intersection or roadway and assuring that it is possible to proceed safely.
 3. Slow to such a speed as is necessary for safety when approaching an uncontrolled intersection.
 4. Drive at a reasonable speed when responding to an emergency call.
 5. Use extreme caution when entering blind intersections.
- D.** Calls which normally require an emergency response include, but are not limited to the following: (CALEA 41.2.1)
- Arson/Fire
 - Breaking and Entering/Burglary
 - Collision with Injury/Fatal
 - Drowning
 - Fight
 - Hit and Run Injury/Fatal
 - Hold Up Alarm
 - Homicide
 - Injured/Sick Person (potentially life threatening)
 - Individual with a Gun
 - Panic Alarm
 - Prowler
 - Rape/Sexual Assault
 - Robbery
 - Signal 13/10-13 (officer in trouble)

- Sounds of Shot Fired
- Suicide/Attempt
- Unknown Trouble
- Violent Domestic
- All other crimes against persons while in progress

E. Calls that require an emergency response shall be prefixed with an alert tone or a verbal Code 2 response by the Communications Specialist. Responding officers or the Shift Supervisor may override the priority response recommendation based on information known to them. This information may include, but is not limited to:

1. Inclement weather conditions;
2. Road construction; and,
3. Sufficient officers already on the scene.

F. Communications Specialists may upgrade or downgrade a response to a call for service as dictated by additional information from a witness, victim, or complainant.

G. Calls which normally require a non-priority or routine response include, but are not limited to: (CALEA 41.2.1)

- Alcohol Complaint
- Animal Complaints
- Assault
- Assist Motorist
- Breaking and Entering (Not in Progress)
- CDS Violations
- Disorderly
- Domestic
- Emergency Notifications
- Escort
- Fireworks
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Gambling Complaints
- Harassment
- Indecent Exposure
- Loud Music/Party
- Malicious Destruction
- Missing Person
- Motor Vehicle Collision

- Motor Vehicle Theft
- Shoplifters in Custody
- Suspicious Persons
- Suspicious Vehicle
- Telephone Misuse
- Theft Report
- Trespassing

NOTE: Routine calls may need to be upgraded to emergency response calls depending on how recently they occurred or if they are in progress and based on the potential for the situation to worsen. An officer's personal knowledge of a particular situation or individual may be relayed to the on-duty Shift Supervisor to upgrade or downgrade the Department's response.

11 EMERGENCY ESCORTS: Officers will not use Department vehicles for the purpose of emergency escorts except to prevent loss of life and/or serious injury. Whenever possible, the on-duty Shift Supervisor shall be notified and permission obtained, before initiating the escort. (CALEA 61.3.3.b)

12 FUNERAL ESCORTS: Department vehicles may be used to escort funeral processions, and in such cases, emergency lights will be used. The operator of the vehicle shall adhere to all requirements under Maryland Traffic Article. (CALEA 61.3.3.a)

13 VEHICULAR PURSUITS: Refer to Order 702-Vehicular Pursuits.

14 ROADBLOCKS: Refer to Order 702-Vehicular Pursuits.

15 SEATBELTS: Seatbelts shall be worn by the driver and passengers of all Departmental vehicles at all times. (CALEA 41.3.3)

16 CHILD SAFETY SEATS: Whenever a child is transported in a police vehicle, Maryland child safety seat laws will be followed. Department vehicles without prisoner cages should be used to provide these transports. (CALEA 41.3.3)

17 SMOKING IN DEPARTMENT

VEHICLES: Smoking in Department vehicles is strictly prohibited.

18 ALTERATIONS TO POLICE

VEHICLES: At no time will an officer make any alterations to Department vehicles equipment or install unauthorized equipment, decals and/or insignia. Officers who desire to have additional equipment (i.e. police scanner, citizen band radio, lights or stereo) added to their vehicle will observe the following: (CALEA 41.3.4)

- A. Obtain approval in writing from the Operations Commander to install after market equipment.
- B. Make an appointment with the Town's mechanic to have the after market equipment installed.
- C. A commercial establishment may be allowed to install some items in police vehicles at the expense of the employee. Officers must make appointments with the commercial establishment to have the approved work done, in lieu of 18.B.
- D. Effective the date of this Order (revised), to ensure fleet uniformity and professionalism, officers shall not attach any stickers, signs, headliner pins or other items to the interior or exterior of the vehicle, without the written consent of the Chief of Police.

19 VEHICLE INSPECTIONS: All personnel using police vehicles will perform the following inspections:

- A. Daily exterior inspection for body damage and tire conditions. Previously unreported damage will be immediately reported via memorandum to their supervisor in writing. This original memorandum will be forwarded to the Operations Commander.
- B. Pool vehicle interiors will be inspected weekly for articles left by others. Identifiable personal property will be turned over to the Shift Supervisor for disposition. Interior inspections will also be for property/evidence items. Property/Evidence items will be documented as required by Departmental

procedure. Officers are to conduct a safety inspection on vehicles temporarily assigned to them prior to accepting the vehicle. This inspection includes checking the interior for weapons and/or contraband, checking fluids, tire pressure and lighting equipment, and any other items which might be detrimental to the safety of the officer.

- C. Pool vehicles will have their fluids inspected weekly. Take home cruisers will have their fluids inspected weekly, unless the vehicle has a history for fluid use Then the fluids will be checked daily.
- D. All inspections will be documented on the Quarterly Inspection Sheet LPPD Form # 701. Supervisors will ensure that inspections are completed, and that any problems noted on the form are corrected. Vehicles having mechanical problems that affect the officer's/vehicle's safety will immediately be put out of service and delivered to the Department's mechanic.

20 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE: Vehicles used in everyday patrol shall have preventive maintenance performed every 3000 miles. Non-line vehicles shall have preventive maintenance performed every 5000 mile.

