

TOWNSHIP OF OSCEOLA POLICE DEPARTMENT		POLICY: VEHICULAR PURSUITS	
ISSUE DATE: 06/22/2022	REVIEW DATE: 04/10/2022	REVISED DATE: 04/10/2022	SECTION:
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CHIEF: DONALD M. COOK		DATE: 04/10/2022	

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I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the initiation and continuation of vehicular pursuits.

II. POLICY:

It is the responsibility of the Township of Osceola Police Department to assist officers in the safe performance of their duties. It is the policy of this department to regulate the manner in which vehicular pursuits are undertaken and performed. Vehicular pursuit of fleeing suspects can present a danger to the lives of the public, officers, and suspects involved in the pursuit. Tactics used to stop a fleeing vehicle may be considered a use of force.

## III. DEFINITIONS:

AUTHORIZED EMERGENCY VEHICLE: A vehicle, whether car or vessel, of this department equipped with operable emergency equipment as designated by state law.

CARAVANNING: Direct participation in, or following of, a pursuit by emergency vehicles other than the primary and authorized secondary units.

PRIMARY OFFICER/UNIT: The police unit immediately following the suspect vehicle at a reasonable distance and that assumes primary control of the pursuit.

PURSUIT INTERVENTION TECHNIQUE (PIT): A physical vehicle contact maneuver designed to terminate a pursuit at lower speeds with limited risk of injury to the officer or those being pursued. It is considered a safer alternative to ramming.

PURSUIT-RATED VEHICLE: An authorized emergency vehicle that is specially designed and equipped for use during high-speed pursuits.

RAMMING: The use of a law enforcement vehicle to drive into and impact the vehicle being pursued. It is considered a highly dangerous action, raising the probability of injury or death to the officer and injury to the pursuit vehicle, and should be restricted to only situations where failure to take such action would reasonably be expected to result in death or serious injury.

ROADBLOCK: The use of obstacles to impede a fleeing suspect. It can create a danger of the suspect crashing, causing injury or death.

SECONDARY OFFICER/UNIT: Any police unit that becomes involved as a backup to the primary unit and follows the primary unit at a safe distance.

SLOW TIRE-DEFLATION DEVICE: Generally designed to slowly deflate the tires of a fleeing vehicle, and designed as an alternative to more dangerous techniques such as roadblocks, ramming, or the PIT maneuver. Includes devices such as spike strips.

SPIKE STRIPS: Specially designed slow tire-deflation device to bring a fleeing vehicle to a gradual stop by slowly deflating the tires.

TERMINATE: To abandon or abort the pursuit.

TERMINATION POINT: The location where the pursuit comes to a conclusion.

TRAIL/TRAILING: The unauthorized following of a pursuit at any distance, to include paralleling, intercepting, or tracking.

VEHICULAR PURSUIT: A deliberate attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend a fleeing suspect who is actively attempting to elude apprehension.

#### IV. INITIATION OF PURSUITS

- A.) Any law enforcement officer in an authorized vehicle may initiate a pursuit when the subject is attempting to avoid apprehension and any of the following situations are present:
- 1.) The subject(s) has committed or is attempting to commit a crime which involved an actual or threatened action which you, as an officer, reasonably believe resulted in or could result in death or great bodily harm to a person or persons.
  - 2.) The subject, if allowed to escape, is likely to cause injury or death to a person or persons.
  - 3.) Unless a greater hazard would result, a pursuit should not be undertaken if the subject(s) can be identified with enough certainty that they can be apprehended at a later time.
- B.) A pursuit should not be initiated or engaged in while providing transportation for any person, other than law enforcement officers.
- C.) The officer shall communicate the initiation of the pursuit to the supervisor immediately or as soon as can be safely done.
- D.) The responsibilities of the officer(s) involved in a pursuit are as follows:
- 1.) Ensure that the siren, blue rotating or flashing lights and headlights are in operation.
  - 2.) Notify the dispatcher that a pursuit is in progress giving the location, description of the vehicle, its occupants, and the reason for the pursuit.
  - 3.) Continue to give updates and maintain radio contact with the dispatcher.
- E.) The officer shall continue operating the vehicle while exercising due regard as per department policy (see: Vehicle Operation).

#### V. CONTINUATION OF PURSUITS

- A.) In determining whether or not to continue a pursuit that has been initiated, officers should consider the following factors:
- 1.) Whether continuation of the pursuit would likely create a danger to the public, officer(s), or subject(s) which is apparently greater than the value of apprehending the subject(s).
  - 2.) Known information on the suspect. If the vehicle registration or violator's identification has been established so that later apprehension may be accomplished, in the officer's or the supervisor's opinion, there is no apparent continuing need for immediate apprehension (see Wisconsin Stats. §§346.175)
  - 3.) Road conditions.
  - 4.) Weather conditions.

- 5.) Density of population.
  - 6.) Severity of the crime.
  - 7.) Necessity of pursuit by vehicle
- B.) A pursuit should not be initiated or engaged in while providing transportation for any person, other than law enforcement officers.

## VI. ALTERNATIVE TACTICS

- A.) The following include a variety of tactics that may be utilized during the course of a pursuit or instead of a pursuit depending on the availability or the timing of deploying such tactics. Whether or not such tactics are used in the course of a pursuit or instead of a pursuit are up to the officer and/or the supervisor depending on the situation.
- B.) Roadblocks
- 1.) Traditionally used with high-speed pursuits.
  - 2.) Higher danger that the suspect will suffer injuries or death.
  - 3.) The officer and/or supervisor may be able to make the call whether or not to initiate.
- C.) Ramming
- 1.) Can be used to conclude a pursuit.
  - 2.) Probability of death or injury to suspect or officer is high, and damage to vehicle is virtually inevitable.
  - 3.) PIT Maneuver is an alternative to this maneuver only under the conditions as listed in "E".
  - 4.) The officer and/or supervisor may be able to make the call whether or not to initiate.
- D.) Spike Strips and Other Devices
- 1.) Spike strips are generally designed to bring a fleeing vehicle to a gradual stop by slowly deflating tires.
  - 2.) Generally considered a safer alternative to other tactics such as roadblocks, ramming, or the PIT Maneuver.
  - 3.) The officer and/or supervisor may be able to make the call whether or not to initiate.
- E.) PIT Maneuver
- 1.) The maneuver is allowed for use by the State of Wisconsin to end vehicular pursuits if the officer is trained and the circumstances deemed justifiable for use.
  - 2.) Considered a safer alternative to ramming.
  - 3.) Barring exigent circumstances, the officer(s) should communicate their intention or desire to undertake the PIT maneuver to slow and stop the pursued vehicle.
  - 4.) Supervisory approval must be provided for the use of this tactic. The approved officer must be trained and certified in such a technique.

## VII. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES IN PURSUIT INCIDENTS

- A.) The pursuing officer has the authority to initiate, continue, or terminate a pursuit. The chief and/or on-duty supervisors should be notified of pursuits and should monitor progress of pursuits. A supervisor may order termination of a pursuit for any reason and may coordinate any pursuit actions or tactics.

#### VIII. INTERJURISDICTIONAL PURSUITS

- A.) The pursuing officer shall notify dispatch when it is likely that a pursuit will continue into a neighboring jurisdiction (i.e. from Fond du Lac County to Sheboygan County).
- B.) The dispatcher and/or supervisor will notify the units in that county regarding the pursuit and assist in coordinating units as is necessary.

#### IX. TERMINATION OF PURSUITS

- A.) The pursuing officer shall continually reevaluate and assess the pursuit situation and terminate the pursuit if he or she reasonably believes the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension.
- B.) Additionally, law enforcement officers will terminate vehicle pursuits under any of the following conditions:
- 1.) At any time a supervisor orders termination.
  - 2.) When the continuing distance between the pursuing and fleeing vehicles is such that further pursuit is futile.
  - 3.) When the pursued vehicle's location is unknown.
  - 4.) When the officer's vehicle or emergency equipment malfunctions.
  - 5.) When it is necessary to stop to render aid to an injured person or persons, and no other unit is available to do so.

#### X. REPORTS

- A.) The pursuing officer and supervisor shall each complete a detailed report that gives a full account of the event – the events that lead up to the pursuit, the justification to continue the pursuit, and any actions including use of force that happened as a result of the pursuit or after the pursuit was completed, as well as any alternative tactics that were used to aid in a successful pursuit.
- B.) A debrief on the tactics used successfully and unsuccessfully, as well as a critical incident stress debriefing, shall be held for the whole department as soon as possible following the incident.
- C.) This department will submit all pursuit data electronically to the State Patrol/Department of Transportation (DOT) via the Department of Justice's WILENET system.

06-22-16

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Donald M. Cook  
Chief of Police

Date 04/10/2022