

DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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| Subject Vehicle Pursuit | | | |
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I. Policy

It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department that vehicle pursuits are critical incidents. The manner in which they are undertaken, performed, monitored, terminated, and supervised is strictly regulated. This Department only conducts vehicle pursuits utilizing authorized emergency vehicles when the Officer has articulable suspicion that the suspect has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a potentially serious violent crime.

II. Definitions

- A. *Authorized emergency vehicle* – A vehicle of this **agency Department** equipped with operable emergency equipment as designated by state law, including a siren and emergency signaling lights.
- B. *Primary unit* – The police unit that initiates a pursuit or any unit that assumes control of the pursuit.
- C. *Secondary unit* – Any police **vehicle unit** that becomes involved as a backup to the primary unit and follows the primary unit at a safe distance.
- D. *Serious violent crime* – A criminal act **which that** involves force or the threat of force which may cause serious harm, injury, or death. Examples of serious violent crimes are murder, aggravated assault, rape, armed robbery, and kidnapping.
- E. *Vehicle Pursuit* – An active effort by **an** Officer(s) **in operating** an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend **a** fleeing suspect(s) who attempts to elude **the police law enforcement** through evasive action. If a vehicle does not stop for an Officer's activated emergency equipment and does not take evasive action, **this it** is not considered a **vehicle** pursuit, and the Officer(s) may continue to follow and attempt the vehicle stop as long as the conditions are low or moderate risk.
- F. *Low Risk* – No vehicles on the roadway other than the suspect vehicle, **and** no pedestrians, and safe environmental conditions.
- G. *Moderate Risk* – Light, low density traffic on the roadway and a low volume of pedestrian traffic with safe environmental conditions.

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- H. *High Risk* – The traffic level is at a high density, such as during rush hour, ~~or you are in~~ an area with a high volume of pedestrian traffic, such as a school zone, a residential area, hazardous environmental conditions, or any attempted vehicle stop which involves evasive action.
- I. *Evasive action* – When a driver makes an intentional maneuver(s) to avoid apprehension through actions, such as, but not limited to, increasing speed, abrupt turns, turning off vehicle lights, or violating traffic control devices, such as traffic lights, stop signs, or lane markings.

III. Discussion

Vehicle pursuits of fleeing suspects can present an unacceptable danger to the lives of the public, Officers, and suspects involved in the pursuit. Just as important is the possibility of unintended damage or injury to members of the public who are not involved in the pursuit. Considering the ~~Dalton Police~~ Department's commitment to protecting the general public and specifically protecting innocent life, vehicle pursuits ~~will~~ shall be conducted only under the guidelines of this policy. Wise and prudent Officers terminate pursuits rather than unreasonably risk a threat to human life.

IV. Procedures

- A. The decision to initiate a vehicle pursuit ~~will~~ shall be based on:
 - 1. The Officer's actual knowledge or articulable suspicion that a potentially serious violent crime has just occurred, is occurring, or is about to occur
 - 2. The Officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the public ~~or~~ and the Officer created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large; ~~and~~
 - 3. The suspect's exhibited intention to avoid apprehension by using evasive action
- B. In deciding whether to continue a pursuit, Officers ~~must~~ shall consider:
 - 1. Road, ~~speed~~, weather, and environmental conditions and vehicle speeds
 - 2. Population density, ~~vehicle~~ roadway congestion, and pedestrian traffic
 - 3. Relative performance capabilities of the ~~pursuit~~ pursuing vehicle and the vehicle being pursued
 - 4. Presence of other persons in the ~~police~~ pursuing vehicle and the vehicle being pursued, such as occupants who are not involved in any crime
 - 5. Skill, training, and experience of the pursuing Officer; ~~and~~
 - 6. Alternative means and opportunity of apprehending the suspect
- C. Unmarked ~~police~~ Department vehicles equipped with blue emergency signaling

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lights and a siren may engage in pursuit driving if the fleeing vehicle presents an immediate threat to life. Unmarked vehicles ~~will~~ shall withdraw from active pursuit when a marked vehicle engages the pursuit, unless the controlling Supervisor approves the unit's continuation in the pursuit.

- D. Unmarked vehicles that are not equipped with blue emergency signaling lights and a siren ~~may~~ shall not engage in a vehicle pursuit.
- E. Unless exigent circumstances exist and supervisory approval is gained, Officers shall not engage in vehicle pursuits while civilian ride-alongs are in the police vehicle.

V. **Pursuit Officer Responsibilities**

- A. The pursuing Officer(s) ~~will~~ shall activate appropriate vehicle warning equipment, including an audible siren and emergency signaling lights.
- B. The initiating Officer ~~will~~ shall notify the ~~communications~~ Whitfield County 911 Center by radio ~~(dispatch)~~ and advise that a vehicle pursuit is underway. The Officer ~~will~~ shall provide ~~communications~~ the dispatcher with the following information:
 - 1. Unit identification
 - 2. Initial offense and reason for the stop
 - 3. Location, speed, and direction of travel of the fleeing vehicle
 - 4. Description and license plate number, if known, of the fleeing vehicle
 - 5. Number of occupants in the fleeing vehicle and descriptions, when possible; ~~and~~
 - 6. Reasons supporting the decision to pursue
- C. Failure to provide this information to ~~communications~~ the dispatcher may result in an immediate decision by a Supervisor to order ~~pursuit~~ the termination of the pursuit.
- D. Officers ~~will~~ shall keep ~~communications~~ the Whitfield County 911 Center updated on the progress of the pursuit.
- E. All emergency vehicle operations ~~will~~ shall conform to all traffic laws and regulations.
- F. Officers ~~will~~ shall not drive with reckless disregard for the safety and welfare of others.
- G. Unless otherwise directed by a Supervisor, vehicle pursuits ~~will~~ shall be limited to no more than two (2) emergency vehicles; a primary and a secondary (back-up) unit. All other personnel ~~will~~ shall stay clear of the pursuit, unless instructed to

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participate by the controlling Supervisor.

- H. Any primary or ~~back-up~~ secondary unit sustaining damage or failure of essential vehicle or emergency equipment during a vehicle pursuit ~~will~~ shall discontinue the pursuit. The withdrawing unit ~~will~~ shall notify ~~communications~~ the dispatcher and the controlling Supervisor, who shall assign another unit to the pursuit, if necessary. ~~so that another unit may be assigned to the pursuit.~~

VI. **Secondary Unit's Responsibilities**

- A. The secondary unit ~~will~~ shall take over as the primary unit if the primary unit sustains damage or failure of essential equipment during the pursuit.
- B. The secondary unit ~~will~~ shall assume control of communications with the Whitfield County 911 Center.
- C. The secondary unit ~~will~~ shall follow all guidelines of this policy during the pursuit.
- D. The secondary unit may terminate the pursuit at any time.
- E. The secondary unit or other back-up Officers ~~will~~ shall affect arrests with the ~~pursuing Officer~~ primary unit assuming the role of back-up, if feasible.

VII. **Communications Whitfield County 911 Center Responsibilities**

- A. ~~Communications will~~ The dispatcher shall immediately advise ~~a field Supervisor~~ the Watch Commander or other shift Supervisor of essential information regarding the vehicle pursuit and designate a controlling Supervisor.
- B. ~~Communications will~~ The dispatcher shall carry out the following activities and responsibilities during the pursuit:
 - 1. Receive and record relevant incoming information about the pursuit and the pursued vehicle.
 - 2. Control radio communications and clear radio channels of all non-emergency calls.
 - 3. ~~Obtain criminal record and vehicle checks of the suspects~~ Conduct checks of the pursuing vehicle's registration and the suspect's driver's license, when possible.
 - 4. Coordinate and dispatch back-up assistance, as directed by the controlling Supervisor.
 - 5. Notify neighboring ~~jurisdictions~~ agencies, when practical, that a pursuit may extend into their ~~locality jurisdiction.~~ and
 - 6. Place emergency medical, fire, or hazardous materials first responders on stand-by for rapid response in case of injury to persons, fire, or hazardous materials incidents.

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VIII. Controlling Supervisor Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the **controlling** Supervisor~~s~~ to:

- A. Take tactical control of the vehicle pursuit.
- B. Consider all available information and determine whether to authorize, continue, or terminate the pursuit.
- C. Monitor incoming information in order to coordinate, direct, and reinforce **the** use of proper procedures.~~;~~~~and~~
- D. Respond to the location where ~~a~~ **the fleeing** vehicle has been stopped following a pursuit.

IX. Vehicle Pursuit Tactics

- A. Officers **not involved in the pursuit** ~~will~~ **shall** not follow the pursuit on parallel streets, unless authorized by the controlling Supervisor.
- B. At all times during the pursuit, Officers ~~will~~ **shall** obey the four (4) second rule, requiring they stay at least four (4) seconds behind the suspect vehicle, as determined by estimating the ~~passing times of~~ to pass fixed objects.
- C. Patrol units with the most prominent markings and emergency **signaling** lights ~~will~~ **shall** be used to pursue, particularly as the primary unit.
- D. Intervention tactics, short of deadly force, **such as** low speed tactical intervention techniques, low speed channeling (with appropriate advance warning), etc., ~~will~~ **shall** not be used except as authorized by the controlling Supervisor and then only by Officers trained in these tactics and on **the use of** this equipment.
- E. Ramming, bumping, or any other intentional contact between vehicles ~~is not~~ **may be** authorized **by the controlling Supervisor, but only if** ~~unless~~ deadly force is otherwise justified. ~~by the Department's use of force policy.~~
- F. Firearms ~~will~~ **shall** not be fired at or from a moving vehicle unless the Officer reasonably believes that such force is necessary to prevent death or great bodily injury to the Officer or another person.
- G. Only the ~~controlling Supervisor~~ **Watch Commander** ~~will~~ **shall** authorize roadblocks after considering visibility and escape routes as a part of the blocking plan. All roadblocks ~~will~~ **shall** be conducted in accordance ~~to~~ **with policy** GO89-7.15, Roadblocks.
- H. Officers ~~will~~ **shall** use appropriate safety tactics and ~~must~~ **shall** keep in mind the necessity to use only reasonable and necessary force to take suspects into custody.
- I. **The secondary unit or other** back-up Officers ~~will~~ **shall** affect arrests with the

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~~pursuing Officer~~ primary unit assuming the role of back-up, if feasible.

- J. ~~The Pursuing~~ Officers ~~must~~ shall continually consider the risks created by the pursuit as they may change during the pursuit.

X. **Termination of the Pursuit**

- A. Any Officer engaged in or supporting the pursuit may terminate the pursuit at any time.
- B. Pursuits may be terminated if the suspect's identity has been determined, immediate apprehension is not necessary to protect the public or Officers, and apprehension at a later time is reasonably feasible.
- C. ~~The~~ primary pursuing unit and ~~the controlling~~ Supervisor ~~will~~ shall continually re-evaluate and assess the evolving pursuit situation, including initiating factors, and terminate the pursuit whenever he or she reasonably believes the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension.
- D. In the event of a collision with the suspect vehicle, the pursuing Officer ~~will~~ shall immediately ~~notify the Whitfield County 911 Center to dispatch EMS and / or Dalton Fire~~ ~~summon medical assistance~~ for any injured parties.
- E. In the event of a collision involving any third-party vehicle or persons, the ~~back-up vehicle~~ secondary unit ~~shall~~ will stop, ~~and~~ render assistance, and ~~notify the Whitfield County 911 Center to dispatch EMS and / or Dalton Fire,~~ ~~call for medical assistance~~ if necessary.

XI. **Inter / Intra-jurisdictional Pursuits**

- A. Pursuing Officers ~~will~~ shall notify ~~communications~~ the Whitfield County 911 Center when it is likely for pursuits to cross into neighboring jurisdictions.
- B. Pursuits into a bordering state ~~will~~ shall conform to the laws of both states and any applicable inter-jurisdictional agreements.
- C. When pursuits enter this jurisdiction, ~~Officers~~ pursuing personnel ~~will~~ shall be governed by the policies of their own agencies, specific inter-jurisdictional agreements, and state law.
- D. The initiating agency ~~will~~ shall remain in control of any pursuit that crosses into this jurisdiction and ~~will~~ shall remain responsible for the pursuit.
- E. ~~Department~~ Officers ~~will~~ shall not assist in an active ~~vehicle~~ pursuit unless approved by a ~~Department~~ Supervisor.
- F. All communications between the ~~Dalton Police~~ Department and other agencies ~~will~~ shall be coordinated through the Whitfield County 911 Center.
- G. Unless otherwise directed by a Supervisor, pursuits ~~will~~ shall be limited to no more

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than two (2) ~~Dalton Police~~ Department emergency vehicles.

XII. **After-Action Reporting**

- A. An incident report shall be completed on all vehicle pursuits by the initiating Officer, and any other Officer involved must file a supplemental report detailing the circumstances, their actions, and **their** observations.
- B. Supervisors ~~will~~ **shall** be responsible for conducting a post pursuit review. ~~They will review~~ All relevant video and audio from the units involved with the pursuit **shall be reviewed**. A Supervisory Review of Vehicle Pursuit form ~~will~~ **shall** also be completed.
- C. The **Patrol** Division Commander or **his / her** designee ~~will~~ **shall** periodically analyze pursuit activity and identify any additions, deletions, or modifications warranted in Department pursuit procedures and training.
- D. A documented annual analysis of vehicle pursuits ~~will~~ **shall** be compiled by the Support Services Division Commander and forwarded to the Chief of Police.
- E. A documented annual review of all pursuit policies and reporting procedures shall be completed by the Support Services Division Commander and forwarded to the Chief of Police.
- F. The accreditation manager shall complete the GACP Pursuit Data Collection Form by March 1st each year and submit it to the Director of the Georgia Law Enforcement Certification Program.

XIII. **Training**

All sworn personnel shall receive documented entry level training and annual in-service refresher training on this policy.

This policy supersedes any previous policies issued.

BY ORDER OF

CHIEF OF POLICE

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**DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
SUPERVISORY REVIEW OF VEHICLE PURSUIT**

Case Number_____Date_____Day of Week_____

Time Began_____Time Ended_____Daylight/Night

Location Began _____

Location Ended _____

Road Conditions: Wet/Dry Estimated Max mph reached during pursuit_____

Roadway where initiated: 2 Lane 4 Lane Interstate Other

Number of police vehicles involved in the pursuit:

DPD_____Other Agencies_____Total # of Agencies_____

Total Distance Traveled_____Type of Vehicle Pursued_____

Violation that initiated pursuit (Choose One):

Traffic Violation Felony Property Crime Forcible Felony Stolen Vehicle

Drug Related Hit and Run Other

Way pursuit ended: (Choose One):

Pursuit Discontinued Suspect Stopped Vehicle Wrecked Stop Sticks Deployed

PIT Roadblock Suspect Shot Other

Initiating Officer's Information: Name: _____

Age_____Sex_____Race_____Years of Experience_____

Backup Officer's Name: _____

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Suspect Driver (If known)

Age_____ Sex_____ Race_____

1. Were there any injuries during the pursuit YES NO

Explanation and seriousness of injury: _____

2. Damage? () DPD Vehicle () Suspect Vehicle

() Other Vehicle () Property

Explanation: _____

3. After reviewing all reports, speaking with the officers, and watching any videos, was the pursuit conducted within the guidelines of GO88-4.16. Why or Why not?

Reviewing Supervisor

Division Commander

Professional Standards

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