

SANTA CLARA POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 41.2**FIELD OPERATIONS: OPERATIONS****AMENDED DECEMBER 2014**

41.2.1 Response to Calls for Service

Under ordinary conditions and circumstances, members of the Department shall obey all provisions of the law relating to the operation of Department vehicles to the same extent and in the same manner for any other person and vehicles. Being a police officer or other Department member, in fact, requires a greater responsibility for them to obey all laws, and set a good example for other persons.

No member of the Department shall use a city-owned vehicle for personal purposes. The use of a Department vehicle by a Department member shall only be at the direction or assignment of a supervisor or commanding officer.

At no time shall someone operate a Department vehicle other than an employee of the City of Santa Clara or a Department member.

Refer to the [City Manager Directive #3](#) for rules governing the Overnight Use of City Vehicles by Employees.

Ignition keys shall be removed from all Police Department motor vehicles when officers must leave the vicinity of the vehicle. The vehicle will be secured by locking the doors and closing the windows.

Police Department vehicles should not be used to transport injured persons to the hospital. An ambulance should be called. Exceptions may be made to this rule in unusual cases or exceptional circumstances.

When Communications receives a call requiring the presence of a police officer, they will dispatch the appropriate Field Operations officer(s) to respond to the call. Communications will provide the officer(s) with information regarding the nature of the call and any other pertinent information that might assist the officer(s) in determining the urgency of the call (either via radio or MCT).

When an officer receives a call for service, the officer will make an evaluation as to the seriousness of the situation and determine the appropriate response to the call. Officers will respond to calls for service in one of three ways:

Code 3 - Code 3 calls indicate a maximum response by police officers. When responding in this manner, officers will immediately proceed directly and in a safe manner to the call by the most expedient route, and under normal circumstances will have their emergency lights and siren in

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operation to facilitate and expedite their response. This section does not relieve an officer operating a vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons using the streets and highways. Officers shall comply with the California Vehicle Code regarding emergency vehicle operation while responding to a Code 3 call.

Code 2 - Code 2 calls indicate an immediate response by police officers. When responding in this manner, officers will immediately proceed directly and safely to the call.

An officer shall take into consideration the nature of the call, their personal knowledge of the situation, the location or traffic conditions present at the time of the call or any other mitigating circumstances when deciding to use emergency equipment in compliance with California Vehicle Code statutes regarding emergency vehicle operations.

Examples of calls necessitating a Code 2 response are:

- Reported rape, (not in progress)
- Reported robbery, (not in progress)
- Calls involving weapons, (not in progress)
- Disturbance or disorderly conduct (intoxicated subject),
- Dead body - no criminal action suspected,
- Reported kidnapping or abduction, (not in progress)
- Reported lost child,
- Burglary alarms,
- Family disputes,
- Officer calling for assistance (cover request),
- Fire and rescue calls (except those handled Code 3),
- Any accident at a major intersection or where traffic is likely to be seriously impeded.

Code 1 - Code 1 calls indicate a normal response by a police officer to a given situation. When responding to a situation in this manner, officers will proceed to the call in a timely manner. While making a normal response, officers are authorized to conduct other normal police business of a more pressing nature while en route to the call. Officers will, however, respond as quickly and safely as circumstances permit so as not to keep complainants waiting for unreasonable lengths of time. The Police Department will provide a normal response to the following calls:

- Any reported crime or suspected crime of a non-emergency nature,
- Any traffic accident or traffic problem of a non-emergency nature,
- Any other calls for service by a citizen.

Priorities and dispatch procedures

It will be the responsibility of the responding officer to determine the appropriate response to a call.

The on-duty supervisor will change the officer's response priority if, in his/her judgment, the officer's response is inappropriate.

Communications will use the alert tone to advise officers that an important radio message is to follow. This will not indicate the response or priority of the call. The alert tone will be used prior to all calls involving life-threatening situations. The alert tone may be used prior to other important radio messages.

41.2.2 Emergency Vehicle Operation

Vehicle Code Provisions

Section 21055 of the California Vehicle Code provides that the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle shall be exempt from the provisions of the Code contained in Division II and by other provisions thereof; Sections 21056 and 21057 are also included within this exemption. These provisions are commonly referred to as the "Rules of the Road."

The exemption thus provided applies only where the authorized emergency vehicle is being operated under one or more of the following circumstances:

- In responding to an emergency call.
- In the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law.

The above exemptions apply only when the following conditions are met:

- A siren is being sounded in a manner that gives a reasonable warning of the approach of the vehicle.
- One lighted red lamp that is visible in normal atmospheric conditions for a distance of 500 feet is displayed to the front of the vehicle.

No privilege to operate a vehicle in disregard to the "Rules of the Road" can be established unless these facts can be proven. Having complied with these conditions, the benefits of the privilege are still denied if the driver of the vehicle "fails to show due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway or arbitrarily exercises his privilege."

Emergency Defined

The term "emergency call" as it applies to police work cannot be exactly defined. An act or an event may reasonably be an emergency under a given set of circumstances and not be an emergency under different, though similar, circumstances. What act or event together with what facts or circumstances would justify an emergency call, must be answered by the exercise of sound judgment based upon broad experience.

Use of Red Light and Siren

Whether the officer is responding to an emergency call or pursuing an actual or suspected violator of the law, he/she must sound the siren in a manner which will give ample warning of

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his/her approach, and he/she must display a red light, before he/she or the City has the benefit of the exemption awarded emergency vehicles. Neither the siren nor the red light alone is sufficient; both must be used.

A solid red light may be used as a means of identification while stopping or apprehending violators as long as the "Rules of the Road" are not violated. Red lights may be used on stopped vehicles where such use will aid in minimizing the traffic hazard.

During an emergency response, the siren need not be sounded continuously. The law requires it's use only when the officer is driving in a manner which violates the "Rules of the Road", and is asking for the right to use the roadway in a manner that will conflict with the ordinary rights of some other person to use the roadway. Then the siren must be sounded a sufficient length of time before reaching the place where the conflict might occur to give such other person a reasonable opportunity to come to a stop in a safe place.

At intersections there is always the possibility of a conflict either with vehicles or pedestrians. The more congested the area, the heavier the traffic, the more restricted the view of the intersecting roadway, the greater the likelihood of conflict becomes and the more certain the officer must be that he/she has given adequate warning and that he/she is driving in a manner which shows due regard, under the circumstances, for the safety of persons and property on the roadway.

The siren must be sounded a sufficient time before reaching the intersection to allow such persons to adjust themselves mentally, react physically and bring their car to a stop before the police car reaches the intersection.

Experience shows that sirens are most audible when operated in a manner that causes fluctuation in the tone and volume. A steadily sounding siren does not get the attention that a fluctuating siren receives.

It is well to remember also that some persons are hard of hearing, windows are sometimes closed in other vehicles, persons are listening to radios, and many people become confused when they first hear the siren.

Accidents have occurred between two emergency vehicles sounding sirens and approaching an intersection at right angles. Neither driver was aware of the approach of the other because each could hear only his own siren. Consideration must therefore be given to the possibility that other emergency vehicles may also be asking for the same right-of-way that the officer is seeking.

Speed Restrictions

It is seldom, if ever, that an officer is justified by the emergency nature of the call in traveling at a speed greater than the posted speed. There may, however, be circumstances that would justify higher speeds. They must be exceptional and of a character which will unequivocally outweigh the additional hazard of such operation and the additional uncertainty of reaching the scene.

Naturally, when pursuing an actual or suspected violator of the law, the speed necessary in the proper performance of official duty is largely determined by the violator being pursued.

Escorts

Every police officer is prohibited from using a siren or driving at an illegal speed when serving as an escort of any vehicle on a highway, except when escort or conveyance is furnished for the preservation of life or when expediting movements of supplies for the Armed Forces during a national emergency.

Remember these things:

- Get there as quickly as possible with safety.
- Keep the speed at a level that will enable you to avoid hazards that should reasonably be anticipated by being alert and exercising due care.
- Keep the vehicle under control at all times.
- When exercising the privileges of an emergency vehicle, be sure that the red light is on and that you are sounding the siren in a manner that will give adequate notice of your approach.
- It is better to arrive seconds late than not to arrive at all.

41.2.4 Field Interviews

During the course of their duties, Field Operations officers often encounter persons in suspicious or unusual circumstances. Recording the identities and descriptions of persons and vehicles along with times and places found, and circumstances of the situations, may be beneficial to ongoing investigations and/or future investigations.

Officers encountering persons in these situations shall be aware of both statutory and case law regarding detaining persons and requiring identification. This information of persons and/or vehicles shall be recorded on a field interview (F.I.) card. These cards are submitted to the Field Operations supervisor for review, and then forwarded to the Records Unit.

Officers should be as thorough as possible when completing F.I. cards, noting the exact circumstances surrounding the detention of the individual(s).

41.2.5 Notifications: Specific and / or Emergency Situations

Critical Incident Notification - Command Staff

Upon identifying an occurrence as being an "officer involved fatal incident or serious injury," the following personnel are responsible for performing notifications as indicated:

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Supervisor or initial officer at the scene: officers initially assigned to respond to the scene will, as soon as possible, notify the field supervisor and request his/her presence. The field supervisor or initial officer assigned to the scene will request Communications to notify:

- The Watch Commander

Vehicle collision - The Traffic supervisor, when the vehicle collision is the suspected primary cause of the injury or death. The traffic supervisor will be responsible for notifying:

- the Operations Division Captain.

All others:

- the "on-call" investigator.
- the "on-call" Investigations Lieutenant - this Lieutenant will be responsible for notifying:
 - the Crime Scene Evidence investigator.
 - the Investigations Division Captain.
 - the District Attorney's "on-call" investigator (via County Communications).

Watch Commander: the Watch Commander will be responsible for the following notifications:

- Chief of Police: the Chief of Police and Assistant Chief of Police will be notified immediately.
- Division Commander: the Division Commander of the officer involved in the incident will be notified immediately.
- Internal Affairs: the Professional Standards Unit lieutenant will be contacted, and he will respond, and/or will arrange for the response of Internal Affairs Sergeant(s). The role of Internal Affairs is to obtain an officer's statement administratively should the officer decline to give a statement to the traffic or criminal investigators.

If the officer is from another jurisdiction, notify the Watch Commander from the "employing jurisdiction."

A lab technician for the purposes of obtaining a chemical sample from the involved officer(s) in a timely manner, but in no case more than six (6) hours after the incident if the officer is an employee of the City of Santa Clara.

Coroner:

The Coroner shall be notified of all deaths. The investigating officer shall request Communications to notify the Coroner's office. The date and time of the request shall be documented in the offense report.

Street Department/Public Utilities:

Officers shall notify Communications of any hazardous roadway conditions, or any hazardous conditions caused by a public utility.

Communications will be responsible for notifying the appropriate agency designated to respond to the hazard identified.

If necessary, the officer shall insure the public is protected from the hazard until repair crews arrive at the scene.

News Media:

All media notifications shall be made in accordance with [General Order 54](#).

41.2.6 Watch Commander's Shift Activity Report**Responsibility**

It shall be the responsibility of a Field Operations Lieutenant or senior Sergeant who is designated as the Watch Commander, to complete a shift activity report. This report is prepared in order to advise the Command Staff and City Management of events that occurred during the shift.

Topics To Be Included

- Officer-involved accidents
- Officer injuries
- Incidents involving weapons
- Incidents likely to generate inquiries of the Command Staff, Chief, City Management and Political Leadership of the City
- Felony crimes against persons:
 - Robbery
 - Rape
 - Homicide
 - Attempted aggravated assaults/ADW
- Chronic police problems, such as:
 - Street Racers
 - Great America
 - University of Santa Clara
- Miscellaneous events
 - Fatal or major injury accidents
 - Disasters, demonstrations and political events
 - Missing juveniles under 11 years
 - Incidents involving victims or suspects who would be of strong interest to the news media
 - Outside jurisdictions' requests for assistance
 - POP project updates

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- Good investigations
- Any item of interest to keep the Command staff informed of activities in the field.

Format

- Watch Strength
- Events of note:
 - Case number
 - Crime
 - Brief Synopsis
 - Officers
 - Press release (attach if any release has been made)

Reporting

This activity report will be completed in a timely fashion.

It shall be a coordinated responsibility of all supervisory personnel to ensure this information is provided to the Watch Commander or acting Watch Commander.

Completed reports will be submitted promptly to the Division Commander for proper distribution from his/her office.