Policy - Police Vehicles and Equipment

The purpose of this general order is to define the requirements governing the use of police vehicles, marked and un-marked, their prescribed equipment, and the use of installed safety devices.

Procedures

A. Exterior Marking and Lighting for Marked Vehicles

Vehicles utilized by the Patrol Division shall have distinctive reflective markings and lights including but not limited to:

1. Florida State University Police Department emblem;
2. Distinctive accent stripes;
3. Emergency telephone number (911);
4. Vehicle number;
5. Operational blue or red and blue emergency lights; [CFA 14.08A]

(NOTE: Blue grill/deck lights may be substituted on designated vehicles.)

B. Vehicle Inspection

Every member of the Department assigned to a marked vehicle shall check and inventory the specialized equipment as soon as practical after beginning their shift and request replacement of missing, expired or defective equipment as needed. Each vehicle shall also be inspected for damage and mechanical defects. Any damage or defects noted shall be brought to the immediate attention of the Shift Supervisor.

C. Specialized Equipment

Vehicles routinely used to perform patrol or traffic duties, excluding special purpose vehicles other than motorcycles, shall be outfitted with specialized equipment including, but not limited to:

1. Properly charged fire extinguisher (excluding patrol/traffic motorcycles); [CFA 14.08B]
2. First Aid kit containing current supplies, to include a minimum of, but not limited to: [CFA 14.08D]
   a. Sheers
   b. Tyvek Coveralls
   c. Face Shields
   d. Gloves
   e. Biohazard Waste Bags w/ties
   f. Personal Protective Equipment
g. Disposable Sheets  
h. Microshield Breathing Devices for CPR  
i. Tape  
j. Gauze  
k. Self-adhesive wrap  
l. Antiseptic wipes  
m. Band-Aids

3. Personal Protective Equipment containing current supplies, to include a minimum of, but not limited to: [14.08E]
   a. Latex Gloves  
   b. Antiseptic Hand Wash or Antimicrobial Hand wipe  
   c. Mask/Face Shield  
   d. Fluid Resistant Gown  
   e. Biohazard Waste Bags  
   f. CPR Mask (are issued to each sworn member and may be stored within vehicle or on officer’s person)

4. Flex cuffs (may be stored in vehicle or officer’s duty bag within the vehicle);  
5. Flagging tape (yellow color with the words “Police Line Do Not Cross”);  
6. Flashlights are issued to each sworn member. A flashlight in working condition is required to be carried in patrol vehicles or on the officer’s duty belt at all times while the vehicle is in use. [CFA 14.08C]

D. Safety Belts/Restraints [CFA 14.09]

Department members and their passengers shall properly use the safety belts installed by the vehicle manufacturer. The belts shall be securely fastened when operating or riding in any vehicle so equipped.

1. Lap belts shall be properly secured in those vehicles equipped with automatic “shoulder” belt systems that require the lap portion of the belt to be manually secured.  
2. All occupants shall comply with applicable state statutes regarding use of installed safety belts.  
3. No Department member shall operate a Department vehicle in which the driver's safety belt is inoperative.  
4. No prisoner shall be transported in a seating position in which the safety belt is inoperative.  
5. No Department member shall modify, deactivate, or otherwise tamper with the vehicle safety belts except for vehicle maintenance and repair. Any inoperative safety belts or restraints shall be brought to the attention of a supervisor. Prompt action shall be taken to replace or repair the inoperative equipment.  
6. Upon arrival at the scene of an emergency call or when making a vehicle stop, the operator may remove the safety restraint immediately prior to stopping so that a swift exit may be made. Caution shall be exercised to ensure that in the case of a traffic stop, the violator is, in fact, going to stop. The intent here is to avoid becoming involved in a pursuit without the use of a seat belt.

E. Agency Take Home Vehicle Classification

1. Full Use Classification
Full use is given to the following personnel for the sole purpose of responding quickly to the needs of the agency.

a. Chief
b. Deputy Chief
c. Operations Captain
d. Support Services Captain
e. Lieutenants
f. On-call Investigator(s)
g. Emergency Management Director

2. Limited Use Classification

Limited use is given to the following personnel for the sole purpose of driving to and from work, attending criminal justice proceedings, special details, department meetings, department approved training and authorized community service events. Use of the vehicle shall not be used for personal travel.

a. Motorcycle Patrol Officers
b. School Resource Officers
c. K9 Officers
d. Task Force Investigators

F. Use of Department Vehicles

Officers shall exercise good judgment and due care in the operation of Department vehicles officers shall strictly adhere to traffic laws and drive defensively in a safe and courteous manner. Any member driving a Department vehicle shall possess a valid driver’s license. Supervisors shall conduct an annual inspection of the subordinate’s driver’s license validation.

1. Agency vehicles shall be secured, and the keys removed when the vehicle is parked and unattended. Excessive idling shall be avoided to prevent unnecessary wear on the vehicle engine and unnecessary gas usage.

2. Use of tobacco products is prohibited in any agency vehicle.

3. On campus, an officer is allowed to use the vehicle when completing paperwork required by the University for taking classes, personal food consumption, or conducting business with the University.

4. Outside the Florida State University Police Department’s jurisdiction, marked patrol vehicles may be used for limited personal business (i.e. bank, cleaners, pharmacy,) when such locations are adjacent to the jurisdiction. Prior approval of the on-duty Shift Supervisor must be obtained before conducting their personal business.

5. Allowing a Department vehicle to be used for a family emergency will be at the discretion of the on-duty shift supervisor. Only with prior approval from the shift supervisor, the member will respond to the family emergency. The operation of the vehicle shall not be in an emergency mode unless the emergency is within the Florida State University Police Department’s jurisdiction and the member is the closest available unit. The vehicle shall be operated in a safe and prudent manner as defined in general order titled, “Responding to Routine and Emergency Calls”.

6. Due to the “subject to call” status that on duty sworn members face, use of police vehicles for meal breaks is authorized for Department personnel under limited conditions. They are as follows:
a. Sworn officers (uniform and plain clothes) shall not travel further than a two (2) mile radius from the Florida State University Police Department in a marked or un-marked vehicle for a meal break. See the maps below for the two (2) mile radius.

b. Exceptions to the two (2) mile radius must have prior approval of the Chief or Deputy Chief, or under the following circumstances:

1) While attending training at the Law Enforcement academy in Gadsden County or approved classes/conferences or meetings held at other locations.

2) If the employee is on official business off campus and a restaurant is in that general area, the employee may either pick up the meal/meals or eat at the establishment.

3) One employee may travel to a restaurant off campus to pick up meals for a number of employees to eat at the station.

Tallahassee Campus
c. Exceptions to the two (2) mile radius must have prior approval of the Chief or Deputy Chief, or under the following circumstances:

1) While attending training at the Law Enforcement academy in Gadsden County or approved classes/conferences or meetings held at other locations.

2) If the employee is on official business off campus and a restaurant is in that general area, the employee may either pick up the meal/meals or eat at the establishment.

3) One employee may travel to a restaurant off campus to pick up meals for a number of employees to eat at the station.

7. When meal breaks are taken at the same time by several officers, different restaurants will be used to prevent congregating in one specific location.

8. A potential call for service may cause a meal break to be interrupted. Department personnel will have their portable radio on so that officer(s) may be dispatched to the call for service or responded to an emergency call.

9. Investigators who are assigned to be the on-call investigator may take an un-marked agency vehicle home while off-duty during their scheduled on-call timeframe. Use of the un-marked vehicle by the on-call investigator shall be limited to:

   a. While on-call the investigator shall be expected to respond directly to any call-out without first returning home

   b. The on-call investigator shall not operate the agency vehicle if he/she has consumed alcohol.

10. Should an FSU PD vehicle be involved in a crash with another vehicle, the guidelines described in the General Order titled “Traffic Crash Investigations” shall be followed.
11. Members shall exercise proper judgment while utilizing the agency vehicle and shall not drive, use, or park the vehicle in a manner that may cause unfavorable comment or reflect dishonor upon the agency.

12. In situations, when the officer is using the Department vehicle outside the “course and scope of employment” the Florida State University may not be held liable for the actions of the officer. He/she may be personally liable for such actions.

**Glossary**

**Flex Cuffs** – Nylon or plastic slide lock band used for hand/feet restraint.

**Personal Protection Kit** – A commercially available packaged biohazard kit.