

## 2.1.2 - Pursuit of motor vehicles

### I. POLICY

Pursuit driving or chases will only be performed in an extreme emergency. Police pursuits are normally considered, when in the member(s) judgement, an individual clearly exhibits intent to avoid arrest by using a vehicle to flee. The responsibility for the decision to pursue rests with the individual member(s). A pursuit should be terminated when, in the member(s) opinion, or at the direction of a supervisor, when the risks of high-speed pursuit outweigh the duty to apprehend. The high speed chasing of a driver for a minor motor vehicle violation is prohibited. ie.: equipment violations Remember the department policy, that we shall put the public at large in the least amount of danger possible while doing our duty in the apprehension of criminals, and performing our other duties. A high-speed vehicle is as deadly as your firearm to you and the public.

#### A. Definitions

1. **Motor vehicle pursuit** - An active attempt by a police officer operating a motor vehicle to apprehend one or more occupants of a motor vehicle when the driver of the vehicle is resisting the apprehension by maintaining or increasing his speed or by ignoring the police officer's audible or visual signal to stop.
2. **Extreme emergency** - a felony or misdemeanor committed in view, which would require an immediate arrest and the subject-operating the vehicle refuses to stop at the direction of the officer, and the subject, if allowed to flee, would present immediate danger to human life or serious injury to others.
3. **Terminate** - All red and blue lights and siren shall be shut down, 9-1-1 will be notified that the pursuit has been terminated. Give location of your cruiser at the time of termination. 9-1-1 shall record the time of termination. Request a copy of the tape from 9-1-1 for department records to review

#### B. In deciding whether to initiate or continue a pursuit, the member(s) shall use good judgement and consider the following factors:

1. The seriousness of the offense(s) believed to have been perpetrated by the individual(s) attempting to flee.

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2. The potential for physical harm to others if the fleeing individual(s) escapes.
  3. The safety of other motorists and pedestrians, the violator, and the member(s) pursuing. **All Officers Shall Wear Seat Belts During The Pursuit.**
  4. Road, weather, traffic or other environmental conditions and time of day. (i.e.- school busses, children along the route of pursuit) and age of the driver being pursued.
  5. Whether sufficient information is available for later prosecution or apprehension.
  6. The availability of alternate means to stop the vehicle.
  7. Familiarity with the pursuit route, volume of traffic on the route, and how the motoring public will react to your red lights and siren.
- C. Immediately upon initiation of a pursuit, the member(s) involved shall notify communications by radio and provide the following information:
1. Reason for the pursuit.
  2. Description of vehicle, occupant(s), if possible registration Number, and have registration \_\_\_\_\_ given over radio including name, address, and if vehicle is stolen.
  3. Location and direction of travel.
  4. Any other information, which may be useful during the pursuit.
  5. Continual up date to 9-1-1 if possible
  6. 9-1-1 shall use all available cruisers to assist in the pursuit by dispatching them to locations where they will be needed.
- D. Pursuit shall not be initiated when non-member(s) other than Law Enforcement officers, or prisoners are being-transported in the police vehicle. This would include any police intern assigned to ride along in that unit.

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- E. A member(s) should not routinely become involved in another police agency pursuit unless requested to do so by that agency, and then, if practical, with approval of the shift supervisor. A police caravan shall be avoided, as it increases the risk of serious accidents and contributes little to the apprehension of the violator. An active pursuit should not consist of more than 2 units.
- F. The use of firearms to stop a fleeing vehicle shall be in accordance with the provisions set forth regarding use of force and use of deadly force.
- G. Member(s) may use roadblocks, ram a vehicle, or use other means to stop a vehicle **IN EXTREME CASES** after all reasonable means of apprehension have been considered and the member(s) has reason to believe that the continued movement of the pursued vehicle would place others **in imminent danger of serious bodily harm or death**.
- H. Unmarked police vehicles shall not engage in high-speed pursuits, but may follow suspect at a reasonable speed and keep the vehicle under surveillance until an authorized emergency vehicle arrives. The officer shall immediately notify 9-1-1 of the officer's actions, and will give updates for all units involved.
- I. In all of the above, caution and safety of others must be the most important thing on your mind. The red and blue warning lights and siren must be used. A pursuit shall be terminated if the suspect(s) can be identified for later apprehension or prosecution. A pursuit shall be terminated whenever the risk to the member(s) safety and the safety of others outweighs the danger to the public if the individual is not apprehended.
- J. Member(s) shall terminate the pursuit if directed to do so by a shift supervisor, sergeant or watch commander.
- K. Cambria 9-1-1 will give the highest priority to a pursuit in progress and will advise all agency's in the county and will contact Somerset county 9-1-1 and advise of the pursuit possibly coming into their area so that all agency's, in their county may be advised.

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- L. Upon completion of the chase the supervisor on duty shall prepare the Pennsylvania Police Pursuit Report and forward to the Pennsylvania State Police within 48 hours form the pursuit termination or completion.

Effective:

Date: March 22, 2006

By Order Of:

Craig Foust  
Chief Of Police