

Operation and Care of Agency Vehicles

Index Code: 1402

Effective Date: 11/30/04 (Revised 8/12/19)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to provide guidelines for the operation, care, and servicing of vehicles owned, leased, or utilized by the Office of the Sheriff. A vehicle is defined as any machine used to transport people on land, water or in the air.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to maintain and operate vehicles owned, leased, or utilized by the Office in a safe and efficient manner, and in conformance with applicable Maryland State and Federal laws. In addition, only personnel assigned to the Office, or maintenance personnel authorized to conduct vehicular repairs, are allowed to operate or service agency vehicles.

III. Operation of Agency Vehicles Operator Responsibilities

The following procedures apply to all operators of agency vehicles during emergency and non-emergency response operating conditions. For the operation of vehicles during a vehicular pursuit, refer to Index Code 1607. Supervisors may amend these procedures on a case-by-case basis if exigent circumstances exist, and they accept the responsibility and liability that may arise from any outcome.

1. Operators of motor vehicles must have in their possession a valid operator's license issued by the governing agency.
2. Operators are required to operate agency vehicles in a safe, legal, and courteous manner at all times. When not engaged in an emergency response, operators of agency vehicles will observe all applicable laws.
3. When responding to calls for service that require the use of emergency equipment, generally a Delta Code 1 Response, operators of agency vehicles will utilize all available emergency equipment. In addition, operators will drive in a manner that is reasonable and prudent based on existing conditions, including but not limited to road and traffic conditions, maximum speed limits, weather, presence of pedestrians, performance capabilities of their vehicle, and the nature of the complaint based on known factors.
4. No one will drive, use, or park agency vehicles, on or off duty, so as to reflect unfavorably on the Office of the Sheriff.
5. Only authorized persons are allowed to ride in or on agency vehicles, unless in the performance of duty or otherwise directed by a supervisor. Authorized persons generally include those employed by the Office of the Sheriff, the Queen Anne's County Government, members of the deputy's immediate family, and persons authorized under the ride-along program. Operators are responsible for the behavior of all passengers.
6. Agency patrol vehicles are equipped with E-ZPass MD transponders assigned to the