

Vehicle Towing

Index Code: 1909

Effective Date: 11/15/02 (Revised 5/18/2021)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to provide deputies with guidelines for the towing and storing of vehicles.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to tow and store vehicles when necessary to assist motorists and help maintain a safe highway environment.

III. Situations That Warrant Towing Deputies may have vehicles towed for legitimate governmental purposes, including:

A. Vehicles that have been damaged and rendered inoperative as a result of a motor vehicle collision, which presents a traffic hazard, and the owner or operator is unable to obtain towing service in a timely manner. A timely manner is generally construed as thirty minutes during normal business hours and forty-five minutes after normal business hours. However, this time limit is generally left to the discretion of the deputy depending on individual circumstances.

B. Vehicles that obstruct the free flow of traffic, present a traffic hazard, or meet the criteria defined in the Motor Vehicle Law for an abandoned vehicle.

C. Recovered stolen vehicles when the owners are unable or unwilling to obtain towing services.

D. Vehicles being held for investigation, or otherwise retained for a lawful purpose (seizure, evidence, etc.) However, supervisory approval must be obtained prior to holding a vehicle.

E. Vehicles that are illegally stopped, standing, or parked in the roadway and present a hazard to the public.

F. Vehicles operated by persons arrested, if no one is available to remove the vehicle for the arrestee, the arrestee does not give permission for the vehicle to be left at the scene, and/or the arrestee does not assume responsibility for the vehicle being left at the scene. This assumes that the vehicle is not presenting a hazard to other users of the highway.

G. Vehicles requiring mechanical repair which cannot be obtained in a timely manner.

IV. Requesting Tow Service

A. When requesting tow service, deputies will advise the Department of