



Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
ORDER

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I. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for conducting pursuits of motor vehicles.

II. Procedures

A. Vehicle Pursuit Definitions

1. Adjoining Jurisdiction Agency – The law enforcement agency for the adjoining jurisdiction into which a vehicle pursuit is entering.
2. Authorized Emergency Vehicle – A law enforcement vehicle equipped with emergency equipment and being operated by a sworn law enforcement officer.
3. Barricade – An obstruction used by law enforcement to prevent the flow of traffic.
4. Blocking – A tactic by which police vehicles contact a subject vehicle to prevent the subject vehicle from moving.
5. Caravanning – The prohibited practice of unauthorized vehicles or excessive authorized emergency vehicles joining a vehicle pursuit.
6. Commanding Officer – A police lieutenant or sergeant-in-charge (SIC).
7. Emergency Mode – The authorized use of emergency equipment by an authorized emergency vehicle to disregard traffic laws, as long as doing so does not endanger any person or property.



8. Fleeing Vehicle – A vehicle being operated by a person who refuses to stop when being directed to do so by an officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle with lights and siren activated.
9. Forcible Felony – For the purpose of this directive, any of the following crimes:
 - a. Aggravated assault;
 - b. Aggravated battery;
 - c. Aggravated stalking;
 - d. Aircraft piracy;
 - e. Armed burglary;
 - f. Arson;
 - g. Carjacking;
 - h. Home invasion robbery;
 - i. Kidnapping;
 - j. Leaving the scene of an accident involving death or serious injury;
 - k. Manslaughter;
 - l. Murder;
 - m. Robbery;
 - n. Sexual battery;
 - o. Treason; and
 - p. Unlawful throwing, placing, or discharging of a destructive device or bomb.
10. High Center-of-Gravity Vehicle – A vehicle with a center of gravity that is higher than most vehicles due to factors such as the vehicle being abnormally tall, having an enhanced suspension system, or having a substantial roof load.
11. Monitoring Watch Commander – The commanding officer who is responsible for taking command of a vehicle pursuit. This commanding officer is either the Patrol watch commander from the zone in which the pursuit was initiated or the commanding officer overseeing a specialized unit or deployment that led to the pursuit.



12. Paralleling – The authorized practice of driving on roadways that are located near the travel route of a vehicle pursuit to provide assistance to the pursuing officers if needed.
13. Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT) – A tactic by which a pursuing vehicle can physically force a fleeing vehicle to abruptly turn and come to a stop.
14. Primary Pursuit Vehicle – The officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle with lights and siren activated in a pursuit that is directly behind the subject vehicle.
15. Pursuing Agency – The law enforcement agency that is initiating the pursuit.
16. Pursuing Officer – A sworn law enforcement officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle with lights and siren activated to engage in a vehicle pursuit.
17. Ramming – A tactic by which a pursuing vehicle directly and forcefully impacts a subject vehicle in order to incapacitate the subject vehicle.
18. Secondary Pursuit Vehicle – The officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle with lights and siren activated in a vehicle pursuit that is directly behind the primary pursuit vehicle and is responsible for relaying the details of the pursuit over a recorded talk group.
19. Subject Vehicle – A vehicle for which a law enforcement officer has at least reasonable suspicion to stop and detain.
20. Termination Point – The location where a vehicle pursuit ends.
21. Tire Deflation Devices – Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO)-issued devices designed to disable a subject vehicle by causing a slow, controlled deflation of its tires.
22. Vehicle Pursuit – The following of a fleeing vehicle by law enforcement with the intent to stop the subject vehicle from eluding capture.

B. Vehicle Pursuit Safety Factors [CALEA 41.2.2, CFA 14.05]

1. Vehicle pursuits pose inherent risks to the community, as well as to those directly involved. Officers have a duty to exercise prudent foresight whenever others may be injured by their actions.
2. Prior to initiating or continuing any vehicle pursuit, all pursuing officers and all monitoring supervisors are required to determine if the risks to the community posed by the pursuit itself are greater than the risks associated with not stopping the subject vehicle.
3. The following Vehicle Pursuit Safety Factors will be used to assist in evaluating the reasonableness of the decision made by each involved pursuing officer and monitoring supervisor to initiate and/or continue a vehicle pursuit. This evaluation will be based on the information reasonably known to each member at the time, including:



- a. **Environmental Conditions** -- Current weather conditions, traffic levels, roadway quality, and/or time of day. (e.g., precipitation levels, density of vehicles/pedestrians on the roadway, active construction zones, roadway visibility);
 - b. **Offense Details** -- Specific information regarding offense(s) committed prior to the initiation of the pursuit (e.g., the driver of the subject vehicle has a confirmed warrant for violent crimes; new information establishes that an offense initially reported as a forcible felony is actually a property crime);
 - c. **Officer Equipment** -- The condition and use of the pursuing officers' equipment (e.g., the proper use of emergency lights and sirens, damage sustained by officers' vehicles, the condition of critical safety equipment such as brakes);
 - d. **Officer Experience** -- The training, skill level, and work experience of the pursuing officers (e.g., the pursuing officers' familiarity with the area, previous experience conducting vehicle pursuits, basic and advanced vehicle pursuit training, ability to maintain composure and control of their vehicles);
 - e. **Pursuit Speeds** -- The speeds of all involved vehicles, assessed within the context of that specific area (e.g., the pursuit speeds relative to the posted speed limits, characteristics that necessitate reduced speeds such as school zones and heavy pedestrian/bicyclist usage of the roadways); and
 - f. **Radio Communication** -- The quality of the communication between the pursuing officers, monitoring supervisors, and/or the Police Emergency Communications Officer (PECO) (e.g., the frequency of location/condition updates, how timely critical information is being relayed).
4. All officers and monitoring supervisors involved in a vehicle pursuit are subject to being called before the Safety Review Board to testify regarding their actions and decision-making during a vehicle pursuit, including the reasons for initiating, continuing, and terminating the pursuit.
- C. Initiating and Conducting a Vehicle Pursuit [CALEA 41.2.2, CFA 14.05]
1. An officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicle pursuit only if the risk of engaging in a vehicle pursuit is less than the risk posed to the community by not stopping the subject vehicle. In addition, an officer must have the reasonable belief that:
 - a. The driver or an occupant of the subject vehicle has committed a **forcible felony** as defined in this order; or
 - b. PRIOR to law enforcement following or attempting to stop the subject vehicle, the extremely dangerous actions of the driver or an occupant of the subject vehicle pose an **imminent threat of death and/or serious bodily injury to the community** if the subject vehicle is not stopped. Reckless driving and/or the commission of multiple traffic



infractions do not constitute an imminent threat of death and/or serious bodily injury to the community.

2. Upon initiation of a vehicle pursuit, the pursuing officer shall announce the pursuit on the most appropriate recorded talk group, along with the following information:
 - a. Current location;
 - b. Direction of travel;
 - c. Speeds;
 - d. Description of the subject vehicle, including the tag number; and
 - e. Justification for the pursuit including criminal charges;
3. Once a second authorized emergency vehicle has joined a vehicle pursuit, the driver of that second vehicle shall assume the primary responsibility of relaying the details of the pursuit over the appropriate recorded talk group.
4. After a vehicle pursuit is initiated, the PECO assigned to the talk group shall:
 - a. Request assistance from the Aviation Unit and the Canine Unit;
 - b. Ensure a watch commander (lieutenant or SIC) from the initiating zone is monitoring the pursuit; and
 - c. Notify a PECO supervisor of the pursuit.
5. After a vehicle pursuit is initiated, the PECO supervisor shall:
 - a. Monitor the vehicle pursuit; and
 - b. Move normal zone radio traffic to a tactical talk group as soon as practical.
6. After a vehicle pursuit is initiated, the watch commander from the Patrol zone in which the pursuit was initiated, is responsible for:
 - a. Confirming with the pursuing officer that he has the reasonable belief that:
 - (1) The driver or an occupant of the subject vehicle has committed a **forcible felony** as defined in this order; or
 - (2) PRIOR to law enforcement following or attempting to stop the subject vehicle, the extremely dangerous actions of the driver or an occupant of the subject vehicle pose an **imminent threat of death and/or serious bodily injury to the community** if the subject vehicle is not stopped. Reckless driving and/or the commission of multiple



traffic infractions do not constitute an imminent threat of death and/or serious bodily injury to the community.

- b. Continuously evaluating the pursuit utilizing the Vehicle Pursuit Safety Factors as a guide to determine if the pursuit remains justified, recognizing that even if the pursuit was justified when it was initiated, subsequent developments may render it unauthorized per policy and he must immediately terminate the pursuit;
 - c. Actively managing the pursuit to ensure the pursuit is being conducted within JSO policy;
 - d. Coordinating personnel and resources, both within and outside JSO; and
 - e. Continuously remain in command of the vehicle pursuit until it is terminated, even if the pursuit leaves the zone in which it was initiated; and
 - f. Immediately terminating a pursuit when the risks to the community posed by the pursuit itself are greater than the risks associated with not stopping the subject vehicle.
7. During a vehicle pursuit, each pursuing and paralleling officer shall:
- a. Operate his vehicle with due care and regard for the safety of the public, himself and fellow officers, and the suspect (The provisions in Florida State Statutes (F.S.S.) for the operation of emergency vehicles do not relieve an officer from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the officer from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others per F.S.S. 316.072);
 - b. Continuously evaluate the pursuit utilizing the Vehicle Pursuit Safety Factors as a guide to determine if the pursuit remains justified, recognizing that even if the pursuit was justified when it was initiated, subsequent developments may render it unauthorized per policy and they must immediately terminate the pursuit;
 - c. Relay consistent updates on the conditions and the location of the pursuit using concise radio transmissions;
 - d. Activate and keep emergency lights and sirens on during the entire pursuit;
 - e. Request additional vehicles to join the pursuit to ensure there is at least one more law enforcement officer than the number of occupants in the subject vehicle. (after that threshold is reached, additional responding officers must parallel the pursuit route in emergency mode);
 - f. Upon sustaining damage to their vehicles, only continue in the pursuit if the damaged vehicle can still be operated safely;



2. When a vehicle pursuit is terminated without successfully stopping the subject vehicle, the pursuing officer(s) shall:
 - a. Announce the pursuit's termination on the recorded talk group;
 - b. Provide the subject vehicle's last known location and direction of travel;
 - c. Decrease his speeds to the posted limit;
 - d. Deactivate all emergency equipment;
 - e. Alter his direction of travel by either turning onto a roadway not being used by the subject vehicle or safely stop his vehicle until the subject vehicle is no longer visible;
 - f. Not follow the subject vehicle once the pursuit has been terminated; and
 - g. Complete a follow-up investigation to determine the identity of the driver of the subject vehicle and ensure an arrest warrant is sought, if applicable.
3. The monitoring watch commander, or the most appropriate commanding officer (as determined by the watch commander of the zone where the pursuit ended if the pursuit was not properly monitored), shall respond to the termination point of any vehicle pursuit that involved: [CFA 14.05]
 - a. A forcible stopping tactic;
 - b. A traffic crash; or
 - c. An arrest.
4. The watch commander shall request a City of Jacksonville (COJ) Risk Management Public Liability Adjustor respond to the termination point if the pursuit involved life-threatening injuries or death. [CALEA 41.2.2, CFA 14.05]
5. Every vehicle pursuit and forcible stopping tactic must be documented in an electronic Vehicle Pursuit Report.
 - a. Prior to the end of his shift, the monitoring watch commander shall submit an electronic Communications Records Request on the Communications 94Net site for an audio recording of the pursuit. Communications Section personnel shall complete this request and place the audio file(s) in the appropriate zone folder on the shared network drive (colloquially referred to as the P-drive).
 - b. After the audio file is placed in the appropriate zone folder, the monitoring watch commander shall complete a Vehicle Pursuit Report within 10 calendar days. Any extension to this deadline must be approved by an assistant chief or higher authority. The zone commander (or other designated assistant chief) and the Professional



Oversight Unit (POU) shall serve as the second and third reviewers, respectively. [CALEA 41.2.2, CFA 14.05]

E. Preplanned Stopping Tactics [CALEA 41.2.3]

1. Overview

The preplanned stopping tactics outlined in this section are the only tactics approved for use by JSO officers. An officer shall only use a preplanned stopping tactic when it is safe to do so.

2. Blocking

- a. Officers who have completed the PIT training course may use the blocking tactic on a stationary vehicle or a subject vehicle traveling at startup speeds of 15 mph or less. Blocking is only permitted when:
 - (1) Circumstances would allow for the pursuit of the subject vehicle prior to using the blocking tactic; or
 - (2) A supervisor authorizes the use of the blocking tactic. Authorization is required for each particular incident or operation.
- b. Officers are not permitted to use the blocking tactic to stop a fleeing pedestrian or bicyclist.
- c. A minimum of two police vehicles is required for the vehicle blocking tactic unless the subject vehicle is next to a strong stationary object, such as a building or concrete barrier, that can serve the same purpose as a second police vehicle.
- d. When the occupant(s) of a subject vehicle is known to be armed, the blocking tactic should only be used in exigent circumstances and with extreme care.
- e. To properly use the blocking tactic, officers must place their vehicle bumpers directly against the subject vehicle's bumper, strictly adhering to the methods taught during the PIT training course.
- f. If the subject vehicle defeats the blocking tactic and flees, officers shall only engage in a pursuit if there was prior justification to do so or an act is committed during the attempted authorized block that would then permit the pursuit, as outlined in this order.
 - (1) Incidental vehicle-to-vehicle contact resulting from the subject vehicle evading capture is not sufficient justification for pursuing the subject vehicle or using deadly force.



- (2) If a subject vehicle intentionally rams a police vehicle or any other occupied vehicle despite having a clear path of exit, officers should consider this information when determining if the pursuit of the subject vehicle is justified.

F. Forcible Stopping Tactics [CALEA 41.2.3, CFA 14.05]

1. Overview

- a. The forcible stopping tactics outlined in this section are the only tactics approved for use by JSO officers. An officer shall only use a forcible stopping tactic when it is safe to do so and after receiving the appropriate agency training for that specific tactic.
- b. Provided it is safe to do so and within policy, officers shall employ the most appropriate forcible stopping tactic as soon as practical to end the pursuit and prevent continued risk to the community.
- c. When feasible, prior to using a forcible stopping tactic, an officer shall announce via radio his intent to use the tactic. Except where noted in this section, supervisory approval is not needed prior to using an approved forcible stopping tactic.
- d. All uses of forcible stopping tactics shall be documented in a Vehicle Pursuit Report by the appropriate commanding officer.

2. Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT)

- a. Officers who have completed the PIT training course may use the PIT tactic during a vehicle pursuit to forcibly stop a subject vehicle and thereby eliminating any further risk to the community.
- b. Unless the use of deadly force is justified, as outlined in Order 551 (Response to Resistance), the PIT tactic shall not be used on a(an):
 - (1) All-terrain vehicle;
 - (2) High center-of-gravity vehicle;
 - (3) Motorcycle or motor scooter;
 - (4) Open-top vehicle; or
 - (5) Vehicle travelling in excess of 55 mph.
- c. To properly use the PIT tactic, the pursuing officer must align his vehicle with the appropriate rear portion of the subject vehicle, strictly adhering to the methods taught during the PIT training course. When feasible, three police vehicles should be present to properly complete the PIT tactic.



3. Ramming

- a. Officers who have completed the PIT training course may use the ramming tactic when the PIT maneuver is not feasible. The same restrictions applicable to the PIT tactic also apply to the use of ramming.
- b. To properly use the ramming tactic, officers must target the subject vehicle's wheel hubs and/or engine compartment. The passenger compartment should not be intentionally targeted unless the use of deadly force is justified against all occupant(s) that could be injured by the tactic.

4. Tire Deflation Devices

- a. Officers who have completed the Tire Deflation Device training course may use tire deflation devices:
 - (1) Preemptively, to prevent a suspect from fleeing in a vehicle; or
 - (2) To stop a fleeing subject vehicle, provided the vehicle is traveling at speeds slow enough to present minimal risk to the officer. Officers should not attempt deploying tire deflation devices during high-speed vehicle pursuits without the existence of a physical barrier sufficient enough to protect the deploying officer.
- b. Unless the use of deadly force is justified, as outlined in Order 551 (Response to Resistance), a tire deflation device shall not be used on a(an):
 - (1) All-terrain vehicle;
 - (2) Motorcycle or motor scooter; or
 - (3) Three-wheeled vehicle.
- c. When deploying a tire deflation device, the officer shall strictly adhere to the requirements taught during the Tire Deflation Device course and shall:
 - (1) Ensure the safety of the community and law enforcement takes precedence over the deployment of the device;
 - (2) Clearly communicate with the pursuing officers prior to deploying the device and explain exactly where the device will be placed;
 - (3) Follow any directions given by the pursuing officers regarding the deployment of the device;
 - (4) Implement measures to divert other traffic from the area to prevent unnecessarily damaging other vehicles;



(5) Upon deployment of the device, provide a sufficient distance and/or barrier between the officer and the subject vehicle's possible path of travel; and

(6) Remove the device from the roadway as soon as feasible after its use.

- d. Pursuing officers should be mindful that the subject vehicle may drastically slow down and/or take evasive action upon seeing a tire deflation device being deployed.
- e. Pursuing officers should not take radical evasive action to avoid striking a tire deflation device that has not been removed from the roadway.
- f. When any non-JSO vehicle not involved in a vehicle pursuit strikes a tire deflation device, a supervisor shall complete an Information Report to document the damage to the noninvolved vehicle. The supervisor shall photograph the scene and all damage unless the incident requires a crime scene detective to process and photograph the scene.
- g. Officers can obtain replacements for deployed or damaged tire deflation devices from the Supply Unit during normal business hours. Officers must submit the damaged device and a copy of the electronic Vehicle Pursuit Report to obtain a replacement.

G. Vehicle Pursuits Entering Another Jurisdiction [CALEA 41.2.2, CFA 14.05]

- 1. Officers may only continue a vehicle pursuit into another county if:
 - a. The monitoring watch commander authorizes its continuation; and
 - b. The adjoining jurisdiction agency approves the continuation of the pursuit.
- 2. The PECO supervisor is responsible for contacting the adjoining jurisdiction agency and:
 - a. Providing them with the details of the vehicle pursuit, including descriptions of the involved vehicles and the reason for the pursuit;
 - b. Obtaining a decision from that agency as to whether the continuation of the pursuit into that jurisdiction is authorized; and
 - c. Relaying the adjoining jurisdiction agency's decision to those involved in the pursuit.
- 3. The adjoining jurisdiction agency will assume command of the vehicle pursuit once one of its sworn members joins the pursuit.
- 4. JSO shall immediately terminate the vehicle pursuit if the adjoining jurisdiction agency requests the pursuit be terminated.
- 5. JSO has been given advance permission to continue a vehicle pursuit into the jurisdictions of Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville and Naval Station Mayport.



6. The monitoring watch commander shall ensure all arrests made in another jurisdiction are in compliance with applicable state law and Order 201 (Arrests).

H. Vehicle Pursuits Entering Duval County [CALEA 41.2.2, CFA 14.05]

1. When the JSO Communications Center is notified of a vehicle pursuit that is approaching or has entered Duval County, the PECO supervisor shall ensure the:
 - a. PECO call taker obtains details of the pursuit from the pursuing agency, including descriptions of the involved vehicles, the reason for the pursuit, and what offenses the suspect has committed;
 - b. PECO dispatcher obtains a decision from the appropriate JSO watch commander as to whether the continuation of the pursuit shall be authorized; and
 - c. PECO call taker informs the pursuing agency of the watch commander's decision and that JSO shall assume command of the pursuit (if continuation of the pursuit is approved).
2. When determining whether to allow the continuation of a vehicle pursuit into Duval County, watch commanders shall adhere to the same criteria established in this order regarding the initiation and continuation of a pursuit that originates in Duval County.
3. The monitoring watch commander shall ensure all arrests made in Duval County are in compliance with state law and Order 201 (Arrests).

I. Vehicle Pursuit and Forcible Stopping Tactic Reviews [CALEA 41.2.2, 41.2.3]

1. As outlined in Order 572 (Professional Oversight), the POU reviews all Vehicle Pursuit Reports to ensure each vehicle pursuit and forcible stopping tactic adheres to training standards and policy.
2. Each year, the POU and the Crime Analysis Unit (CAU) complete a documented annual analysis of all Vehicle Pursuit Reports. This annual analysis, which includes an overall review of policy, training, and reporting procedures, must be approved by the Sheriff.

T. K. Waters, Sheriff
Jacksonville Sheriff's Office

References: