


Safety Belt Use

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|  | MEDFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT | POLICY NO. 4.12 |
| SAFETY BELT USE | | |
| MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCED: 41.3.3 | | DATE OF ISSUE: 06/25/2023 |
| ISSUING AUTHORITY: Michelle Guerette Chief of Police | | EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/25/2023 REVISION DATE: 11/03/2025 |

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Research clearly indicates that the use of safety belts has a significant effect in reducing the number of deaths and the severity of injuries resulting from traffic crashes. A law enforcement officer's chances of being involved in a motor vehicle crash is approximately two to ten times greater than that of the general public. The use of safety belts reduces the risk of death and serious injury and assists officers in maintaining proper control of their vehicles in pursuit and or emergency high speed operations. This policy is established to assure the maximum operator and passenger safety. This policy applies to all personnel operating or riding in Department vehicles.

II. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of this Department that:

Safety Belt Use

- To assure the safety of all personnel, safety belts shall be worn by drivers and passengers in all vehicles owned, leased or rented by the Department. This shall also apply to the operation of privately owned vehicles if used on-duty.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Use of Safety Belts

- Department personnel shall use the safety belts installed by the vehicle manufacturer, properly adjusted and securely fastened, when operating or riding in any vehicle so equipped while on duty.
- The driver of the vehicle is responsible for insuring compliance by all occupants of the vehicle they are operating. Whenever possible child safety restraints shall be used by all children of age, size, or weight for which such restraints are prescribed by law.
- Personnel who discover an inoperable restraint system shall report the defect to the appropriate supervisor. Prompt action will be taken to repair or replace the system.
- Any person under arrest and being transported in Department vehicle(s) are required to be secured in the vehicle by a safety belt in all seating positions for which a safety belt is provided. CAUTION: Prisoners that are handcuffed in front have the ability to release the handcuffs using the latch plate of the safety belt. If an officer encounters an unruly prisoner or if the application of the safety belt would jeopardize or compromise the safety of the officer, prisoners may be transported without the use of a safety belt.
- An officer operating in an undercover capacity may be exempt only if the officer believes the use of the safety belt would compromise the officer's safety/identity.
- When arriving at an emergency call or making a traffic stop, the operator may remove the safety restraint just prior to stopping for a quick exit. Caution should be exercised to insure that during the traffic stop the violator is in fact going to stop. This prevents becoming involved in a pursuit without the use of a safety belt.

B. Enforcement of Seat Belt Policy

To enforce the provisions of this policy, the Officer in Charge of the tour of duty shall verify the appropriate use of the Safety Belt System.