

	MEDFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT	POLICY NO. 4.27
FLEET VEHICLES		
MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCED: 41.1.3, 41.3.1, 41.3.2, 41.3.3		DATE OF ISSUE: 07/09/2023 EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/09/2023 REVISION DATE: 10/31/2025
ISSUING AUTHORITY: Michelle Guerette Chief of Police		

BACKGROUND:

Police department vehicles are purchased and maintained for the purpose of delivering police services to this municipality. This Department is committed to maintaining agency vehicles to be safe, dependable, and professional in appearance. Vehicles should be maintained with equipment and stocked with supplies so that employees may effectively carry out their job functions.

POLICY:

Department vehicles shall be properly maintained and only used for police purposes, as determined by the Chief of Police. Crashes involving Department vehicles shall be documented and investigated.

PROCEDURES:

Operation

Only employees of the Medfield Police Department may operate Department owned vehicles, unless otherwise authorized by a supervisor. Employees shall obtain authorization from a supervisor prior to utilizing any vehicle. The Chief of Police may also issue Department vehicles to specific individuals.

Any person operating a Department vehicle must possess a valid driver's license. **[41.1.3 b]** An employee whose right to operate has been suspended or revoked must inform his supervisor immediately upon learning of such suspension or revocation and must advise any supervisor who directs them to operate a motor vehicle.

Officers responding to emergency calls will normally use both emergency lights and siren. Officers may dispense with the use of the siren when responding to crimes in progress to avoid warning subjects of a police response. In all cases officers will operate in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 89, Section 7B, "in an emergency and while in the performance of a public duty, may drive such vehicle at a speed in excess of the applicable speed limit if he exercises caution and due regard under the circumstances for the safety of persons and property."¹

Officers shall lock their vehicles whenever they are unattended and shall take all measures to prevent the theft of department vehicles. Unattended vehicles should not be left running unless there are exigent circumstances related to official police duties such as blocking a road with the vehicle at an accident where the officer must render aid to injured persons. This will prevent the theft of the vehicle in the event that the officer needs to leave it quickly without having time to shut it off. Even if a vehicle cannot be driven away leaving it unlocked and running allows a person to enter it and compromise the equipment inside or steal its contents

Officers shall park their Department vehicles lawfully, except when responding to a call for service or the performance of a police duty requires otherwise.

Maintenance

The Fleet Supervisor shall coordinate the equipping, stocking, maintaining and replacing of Department vehicles under the direction of the Chief of Police.

[41.1.3 c] Regularly scheduled maintenance, such as oil changes, state safety inspections, tire replacements, etc., shall be coordinated by the Fleet Supervisor.

Mechanical and equipment problems shall be reported to the Shift Commander who will determine if the vehicle should be taken out of service and notify the Fleet Supervisor. If a police vehicle becomes disabled and needs to be towed, the Shift Commander should be notified, and the on-call tow service will be notified to respond. If the police vehicle is beyond the range of the on-call tow service, the Shift Commander will determine how to proceed.

Vehicle Inspections

Prior to operating a Department vehicle, normally at the beginning of an employee's tour of duty, employees are to thoroughly check the equipment in every cruiser including lights, siren, rifle and magazines, trunk equipment, etc. They are also to check for body damage and to inspect the prisoner compartment for contraband and weapons. In the case of an emergency, a vehicle inspection

¹M.G.L. c. 89, s. 7B

may be postponed until the emergency has passed, at which time an inspection shall be conducted.

Damaged vehicles or defective equipment shall be reported to the Shift Commander, who will assess the reported damage or deficiency and ensure that the Fleet Supervisor is made aware of the issue. Any employee who is responsible for causing damage to a vehicle shall file a report about such damage to the Shift Commander prior to the end of his tour of duty. In the event that new damage is found and the cause of such damage is not known, the Shift Commander shall initiate an investigation into the cause of the damage.

Mandatory Equipment [41.3.1] [41.3.2]

All marked and unmarked patrol vehicles shall be equipped with a mobile radio, emergency lights, and a siren. Additional equipment and supplies shall be assigned based on the vehicle's function.

All marked vehicles shall carry at a minimum; a patrol rifle, a tactical vest, two extra rifle magazines, a first aid kit, AED, Narcan, and fire extinguisher. Officers shall inspect their vehicle at the start of each shift to ensure this equipment is present. If an item is missing the officer shall notify the shift supervisor prior to the start of their shift to get a replacement. All other consumable items shall be replaced by the officer immediately after use through the shift supervisor on duty.
[41.3.2]

Passengers

No civilian shall be permitted to be an occupant or ride as a passenger in a Department vehicle except in the performance of a police function, or a courtesy transport. Any civilian who wishes to participate in a police ride along may only do so with authorization from the Chief of Police. Law enforcement officers from other agencies may ride as passengers with the approval of the Shift Commander.

Seat Belts [41.3.3]

The wearing of seat belts by sworn personnel in Department vehicles is mandatory. Seatbelts are also mandatory for all civilian personnel, passengers, and detainees. The seatbelt alarm must never be by-passed by locking it behind the occupant or by the using any by-pass device. By-passing the alarm can cause a significant hazard to the driver and/or any occupant's safety in the event of a collision.

Assisting Disabled Motor Vehicles

Department vehicles shall not be used to push another vehicle except in cases causing an extreme hazard and with the authorization of a supervisor. Department vehicles may not be used to jump start other vehicles. Should a Department owned vehicle require a jump-start, the Shift Commander or a higher ranking officer shall determine the appropriate response.

Specialty Vehicles [41.1.3]

Unmarked cars, not easily identifiable as police vehicles, may be used for undercover functions. These vehicles may only be used by officers with the prior approval of the Deputy Chief or a supervisor and are not for normal patrol functions. **[41.1.3 a]** They may or may not be equipped with mobile radios, sirens, and emergency lights. **[41.1.3 d]**

Mountain Bikes shall be operated by officers who are trained to operate them and who are assigned to a mountain bike patrol function. **[41.1.3 (a)(b)]** Mountain bikes shall be equipped with a front and rear light for safety. **[41.1.3 (d)]** Mountain bikes shall be used to supplement the walking beats and for any other operational use that the Shift Commander feels would benefit the community. Each bike shall be maintained by the officer assigned to the each bike. **[41.1.3 (c)]**

The police motorcycle shall be operated by officers who are trained to operate them and who are assigned to the motorcycle unit.

Accidents

Officers involved in a crash with a Department vehicle inside of the town limits shall not move the vehicle except in an emergency. The Shift Commander shall be notified and immediately respond to the scene. The Shift Commander will conduct an investigation into the crash and report all particulars to the Deputy Chief, the Fleet Supervisor, and the Chief of Police. The officer(s) involved shall promptly submit a written report.

Officers who are involved in an accident with a Department vehicle outside of the agency's jurisdiction shall immediately notify their direct supervisor. The supervisor shall determine the appropriate response, to include notifying the police department with jurisdiction to investigate the crash if possible.