

# TAKOMA PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT - GENERAL ORDERS



TITLE: <b>Personal Patrol Vehicle (PPV) Program</b>	NUMBER: <b>426</b>
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**01 Purpose:** To establish policy, procedures, and guidelines for availability and operation of personal patrol vehicles (PPV) to sworn eligible officers for on-duty and off-duty use.

**02 Policy:** It shall be the policy of the Takoma Park Police Department to assign a personal patrol vehicle (PPV) to eligible sworn officers for on-duty and off-duty use. Officers will recognize the additional responsibility that accompanies the off-duty operation of a marked police cruiser, particularly within the jurisdiction, including an expectation by citizens of assistance from the operator of the cruiser.

**03 Program Goals:**

The Personal Patrol Vehicle Program is intended to:

1. Raise community safety through increased police presence and visibility in the City of Takoma Park, to be accomplished by providing greater incentive for police officers to live in the City as members of the community.
2. Improve officer retention and enhance the department's recruiting posture by offering this incentive, which has substantial value to participants.
3. Provide incentive to serve in senior staff and on-call positions, (i.e. investigations and K-9) and to provide adequate equipment, transportation and communications capability on a 24-hour basis.

**04 Eligibility Requirements and Allocation:**

**A.** To become eligible for a PPV, an officer must meet the following criteria:

1. Has successfully completed the required employment probationary period;
2. Officially reside within the State of Maryland, and within a 40-mile direct line radius of any point on the city boundary of Takoma Park.
3. Be in good standing with the Department (that is, not assigned to restricted duties or under suspension).

4. Or regardless of criteria 1 or 2, be assigned to a unit or duty requiring a dedicated vehicle such as, but not limited to, Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU) and/or canine handlers; or be in an on-call status such as CID detectives or Command Staff. Officers in such positions may be required to accept a personally assigned vehicle rather than be eligible for any type of vehicle allowance benefit as negotiated by their bargaining group, as a condition of holding that position.

**B.** Vehicles will be allocated to the PPV Program based on availability of vehicles and the operational needs of the department. Departmental operational needs take precedence over the PPV Program. Eligibility Lists will be established and maintained to govern the order of assignment to eligible officers. Assignment of vehicles will be made in the following priority:

1. Needed for assignment (On-call, TEU, K-9)
2. Residency within the City of Takoma Park
3. Rank - above the rank of Corporal
4. Seniority as determined by the Local 400 Union Contract

**05 Program Regulations:**

The following regulations apply to all participating officers as well as those officers who may be assigned vehicles temporarily under special circumstances by appropriate command authority.

**A.** For those officers assigned a PPV because of assignments requiring them to be in an on-call status for at least one third of their time, PPV may be used off duty within the Baltimore-Washington Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (B-WSMSA). Use outside the B-WSMSA requires approval of a Division Commander or the Chief of Police. The B-WSMSA is defined as the area, within Maryland, Virginia and D.C., encompassed by a 50-mile radius drawn from any boundary of the City of Takoma Park. Any of these officers living outside the City with assigned PPV due to their job assignment, may, in addition, operate the PPV within a 25-mile radius of their residence. For other officers in the program, they may only utilize the PPV to and from work, to and from Court, training or other official business, to and from authorized part time secondary employment within the City, or for personal use conducted within a radius of one linear mile from any point of the City boundary.

**B.** While off duty, and within the constraints in the preceding paragraph, officers are allowed to transport civilian passengers and/or conduct personal errands while going to or from any authorized use conditions, as long as the errand is within the B-WSMSA. The operating officer will use a seat belt and ensure any passengers will use restraint devices.

**C.** Any vehicular accident involving a PPV will be reported to the Department in accordance with General Order Number 303, Departmental Accidents.

**D.** Any personal injury incurred by a Department Member or passenger while in a PPV will be reported to the Department using the reporting criteria for injured employees.

**E.** City vehicles will not be driven within four (4) hours of the ingestion of **any amount of alcohol**, nor by any officer who has ingested any drug that impairs the ability to operate the vehicle. Further:

1. No alcoholic beverages will be transported in the City vehicle except those beverages seized as evidence or contraband.
2. The PPV will not be used to frequent an alcoholic beverages store, bar, or similar establishments. Officers will always be cognizant of the image displayed to members of the public.

**F.** Officers who have current, approved secondary employment requests, for work within the City of Takoma Park, on file with the department, are authorized to use the PPV as part of the employment. The PPV **may not** be used for work outside the city.

**G.** While operating a PPV, officers will have an approved firearm, police credentials, and badge. On their person. Handcuffs, a flashlight, departmentally issued WMD or civil disturbance gear, and a personally assigned portable radio will be available in the vehicle.

**H.** Clothing and attire must be such that it projects a favorable image of the department and does not create a safety hazard for the officer.

1. Officers are prohibited from wearing open toe sandals, shower shoes, or shoes with more than a 1" heel while operating a city vehicle.
2. The minimum acceptable attire for male officers is long pants or "Bermuda" style shorts, a sleeved shirt and shoes. Minimum standards for female officers are long pants or "Bermuda" style shorts, a skirt or dress, a sleeved shirt or blouse, and shoes.
3. Non-uniform attire will be clean and free of tears and holes.

**I.** Officers operating a PPV in non-uniform clothes will only make traffic stops when inaction would result in substantial public danger and reflect unfavorably upon the department.

**J.** PPV will not be used to carry excessively large or heavy loads or objects, which protrude from the trunk or windows, except in performance of official duties.

**K.** The portable radio and all weapons will be removed from the PPV when it is unattended except for a short period of time. For example, these items should be removed when parked overnight at the officer's residence. Body armor, uniform items and equipment will be placed in the trunk. The participating officer will ensure unauthorized persons do not handle department weapons or equipment.

**L.** Unattended PPV will be locked at all times.

**M.** PPV will be turned in to their division commander if the officer is on light duty, extended sick leave, disability or administrative leave, suspension, or who is the subject of a criminal investigation. Vehicles may be used and/or reassigned as determined by operational needs until such time as the officer becomes eligible for reinstatement to the program.

**N.** When out of the city during vacation or other leave periods of more than 7 days, vehicles normally will be stored at police headquarters. Keys will be provided to the appropriate division Commander.

**O.** Officers will not allow use of their PPV to officers not eligible for the program. Operational requirements may require temporary on-duty use of an assigned vehicle by another officer in exceptional circumstances as directed by a Division Commander.

**P.** No unauthorized person is permitted to operate a City vehicle except in a life-threatening emergency.

**Q.** Officers are prohibited from using their PPV while engaged in political activities (i.e. setting up signs, attending rallies, fund-raisers, etc.). No bumper sticker, decal, banner or placard of any type may be attached to a PPV without the permission of the Chief of Police.

#### **06 Operating Procedures:**

**A.** While operating a PPV within radio service range (The District, Montgomery, Northern Prince Georges, Southern Howard and Southern Frederick Counties) will monitor the police radio. Officers need not advise any jurisdiction's dispatcher when they operate a PPV either in or outside of the City, but **must** advise the appropriate jurisdiction's dispatcher when taking police action of any nature. Action taken outside of Takoma Park needs to be reported to the appropriate Departmental authority in as timely a manner as possible as required in any other general order governing such conduct.

**B.** While in the City, off-duty officers operating a PPV will take appropriate action on incidents or calls for service which come to their attention either in-view, through a citizen, or radio-monitored activity of a serious nature occurring within reasonable proximity to their location. In routine situations, the off-duty officer is expected to report the activity and assist until an on-duty officer(s) arrives or until released by the on-duty supervisor. In serious situations, the off-duty officer is expected to assist as necessary at the direction of the on-duty supervisor.

**C.** Minor incidents, to include disabled vehicles, stranded motorists, and citizens in need of assistance, encountered in the City while operating a PPV off duty may be handled and cleared by the off-duty officer. If a report is required, it will be done as soon as possible and submitted to any on-duty supervisor for approval.

**D.** Officers with civilian passengers will not become involved in high-risk activities until the passenger(s) have been discharged at a safe location.

Communications will be advised of the location where passengers are discharged.

**E.** Animals will not be transported routinely in PPV's (except designated K-9 vehicles).

**07 Compensation:**

**A.** The off-duty use of a PPV has sufficient value to preclude off-duty officers from being compensated further for providing assistance in routine situations for short periods of time (less than 30 minutes).

**B.** When the on-duty patrol supervisor requests the off-duty officer's presence for 30 minutes or longer, the officer will qualify for compensation for the actual time worked. When an off-duty officer responds to a felony, or serious misdemeanor call, it may be necessary for the officer to remain involved to maintain the chain of custody of evidence.

**08 Off-Duty Involvement (Outside the City):**

**A.** Officers shall know and understand the limits and scope of their authority and only take enforcement action in those situations enumerated in the Annotated Code of Maryland and Takoma Park General Orders. (See G.O. 658.)

**B.** When deciding to take enforcement action outside the City, officers must consider the limitations of their communications capability.

**C.** Except in incidents **immediately** affecting public safety, officers **will not make traffic stops outside the City while off-duty.**

**09 Maintenance and Authorized Equipment:**

**A.** Officers are responsible for the maintenance of their assigned vehicle and will keep all scheduled appointments for service, factory recalls, etc. Maintenance or repairs will only be performed under the direction of the City Department of Public Works.

**B.** City vehicles will be kept clean. Trash will be properly disposed of and not subject to public view.

**C.** Any addition or modification to vehicle equipment will require advance approval by the appropriate division commander and the Public Works Shop Supervisor.

**D.** The same items maintained in the vehicle for normal duty shall be carried when off-duty, including flares, knife, basic emergency medical kit, wrecking bar or other extraction device, clipboard, fire extinguisher, blankets, crime/accident scene sketch material, measuring tape, and Emergency Response Guidebook.

**10 Suspension or Termination from Program:** An officer may be suspended or terminated from the program for the following:

- A. Failure to properly maintain an assigned PPV
- B. Failure to comply with regulations and procedures of this general order
- C. Loss of police powers
- D. Placement in a limited or non-duty status.

**11 Inspection of PPV:**

- A. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy by an employee within the confines of the PPV.
- B. The department reserves the right to inspect the contents and the condition of a PPV at any time at the direction of supervisory authority. If such inspection is to be done outside of regular duty or part time hours, the cause will be explained in writing to the appropriate Division Commander
- C. Supervisors will be expected to conduct a documented (TPPD Form 600-007) inspection of their assigned employees' PPV at least yearly, unless otherwise directed to do so with greater frequency.