

DEKALB POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: **Police Vehicle Operation**

Policy #: **304.1**

Effective Since: 8-21-03

Originally Issued As: P-5 of 6-6-83; P-6 & P-13 of 6-26-95

Revision Effective: 1-1-19

Reference Material: ILCS

FTO Training Task: # 12

ILEAP Standards Covered: OPR.01.01-01.04, 01.06, 01.08, .07.03

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the inspection, maintenance, and operation of police vehicles, including procedures for handling an accident involving a police vehicle.

POLICY: As a municipal police agency, the department uses marked and unmarked police patrol vehicles on a continuous basis. It is the policy of the department to maintain properly inspected and equipped patrol vehicles, and officers are expected to operate any police vehicle in a proper manner, both while on routine patrol and responding to calls for service.

DEFINITIONS:

Authorized Emergency Vehicle: 625 ILCS 5/1-105, Emergency vehicles of municipal departments or public service corporations as are designated or authorized by proper local authorities; police vehicles; vehicles of the fire department; ambulances; vehicles of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency; and vehicles of the Department of Nuclear Safety.

PROCEDURE:

I. Vehicle Inspections & Maintenance

- A. Every officer assigned to any police vehicle shall inspect the vehicle prior to use, or as soon as practically possible upon assignment, for the following general items:
 - 1. Exterior: defects, dents, missing or broken parts or equipment not previously reported.
 - 2. Interior: weapons, contraband, defects, missing or broken parts or equipment not previously reported.
 - 3. The operation of the police radio and emergency lights and siren. Police vehicles designated for routine general patrol service, whether conspicuously marked or unmarked, will be equipped with operational emergency lights and a siren. If these are not operational, the vehicle should be placed out of patrol service until repaired.
 - 4. Trunk: ensure placement and working order of appropriate equipment.
- B. Annex A of this policy (the vehicle inspection sheet) lists the equipment to be included in every patrol vehicle.
- C. Upon inspection, the officer shall put his name or badge number in the appropriate date & shift column on the vehicle inspection sheet located in the trunk.
- D. Any defects, dents, damage, missing or broken parts or equipment, or other items needing maintenance, that have not been previously reported, should be:
 - 1. reported on the vehicle inspection sheet
 - a. with the officer's name or badge number
 - b. with the date
 - 2. reported to the shift supervisor, and/or
 - 3. documented on a repair/service order and turned in to the supervisor
- E. Supervisors should take necessary steps to ensure that replacement, maintenance, or repair items are made or forwarded to the appropriate person or agency.
- F. Officers should notify their supervisor if an item needing replacement or maintenance has not been replaced or repaired in a timely manner. The supervisor should then check the status of the replacement or repair.
- G. Vehicles that are unsafe due to missing or malfunctioning parts or equipment shall be placed out of service and arrangements made for repair.
- H. Officers should remove any trash from the vehicle prior to going off duty.

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- I. Officers should keep the vehicle clean, to include vacuuming and washing as needed.
- J. The department may use civilian employees, volunteers, or community service workers to assist in the cleaning of police vehicles.
- K. Supervisors will make routine and random inspections of police vehicles to ensure their maintenance and cleanliness, and to check the equipment list for completeness.

II. Vehicle Operation & Providing Transportation

- A. Police vehicles, marked or unmarked, are to be used exclusively for law enforcement or official purposes.
- B. All marked vehicles used in general patrol services will be conspicuously marked, be equipped with operational emergency lights and siren, and will allow the operator the ability to maintain constant communication via police radio. [ILEAP OPR.01.02]
- C. All unmarked vehicles used for general patrol service or traffic enforcement will be equipped with operational emergency lights and siren and will allow the operator the ability to maintain constant communication via police radio. [ILEAP OPR.01.03]
- D. While operating a police vehicle either on or off duty, the officer must have department identification and firearm on his person or within the vehicle.
- E. While operating a police vehicle, officers shall not use cell phones for telephone calls unless in Bluetooth or hands-free mode or only as necessary for emergency communications. [ILEAP OPR.01.06(a)]
- F. While operating a police vehicle, officers shall not use cell phones or other wireless communications devices to text, browse the Internet, engage in messaging, or watch videos unless necessary for emergency communications. [ILEAP OPR.01.06(c)]
- G. Whether on or off duty or attending training at any location, officers will not park police vehicles at locations that would cast dispersions on the police department, unless in the course of police business, such as at liquor establishments, adult clubs, casinos, etc.
- H. Transportation to and from work is the responsibility of each individual employee. In exigent circumstances, an employee may request to be transported to or from work in a police vehicle, subject to approval from the shift commander.
 - 1. Such request should be made in as much advance time as possible, or at least 30 minutes.
 - 2. A police vehicle may be dispatched only if no calls for service are on hold.
 - 3. If a police vehicle is sent to a call while en route, the passenger will be discharged and risk being late.
 - 4. Police vehicles will not wait for more than three minutes at any pick-up point for the passenger.
- I. In emergencies or under severe weather conditions, the shift commander may authorize transportation for any city employee whose presence is necessary for municipal operations.
- J. Police officers may provide transportation to the public in exigent circumstances, such as a stranded motorist or during extreme weather, at the officer's discretion, and/or at the direction of a supervisor.
 - 1. Officers with questions regarding transportation for a citizen should notify a supervisor for approval.

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2. For the officer's safety, citizens requesting police transportation are subject to a pat-down search for weapons.
 3. The police department reserves the right to decline citizen transportation due to high call volume, risk to the officer, and/or other means of available transportation.
- K. Transporting children:
1. All children the age of seven and younger must be secured in the appropriate child safety seat.
 2. All other children, ages 8-16, must be seatbelted regardless of their position in the car.
 3. Do not transport a child in a child safety seat in the back seat of a cage car.
 4. Do not transport a rear-facing child seat in the front seat if the vehicle is equipped with a passenger-side air bag that is on.
 5. If a child seat is provided by a parent or guardian, officers should use that seat.
 6. Officers should ensure the seat is properly installed, requesting the assistance of an officer who is a certified technician, if available and necessary.
 7. If no child seat is present or provided, an approved department-owned seat may be used.
 8. The department does not loan out car seats.
- [Sections J & K, ILEAP OPR.07.03]
- L. Persons needing medical attention should be transported by ambulance; see Policy 405.2.
- M. Police escort services for funerals, bank deposits, etc., are outlined in Policy 403.5.
- N. Police patrol vehicles that frequently transport prisoners will have the rear compartments modified to minimize opportunities for exit. Some police patrol vehicles are equipped with safety barriers between the front and rear compartments. All police patrol vehicles will have its interior rear door handles and window controls removed or disabled.

III. Vehicle Operation: Non-Emergency Driving

- A. When driving on patrol, or using a police vehicle for other official purposes such as transportation to court, training, or other events, the following procedures should be followed:
1. Obey all traffic laws.
 2. Wear a properly adjusted seat belt. Officers should ensure that any passengers also wear their seat belt. Children shall be secured in the appropriate restraint devices as described in the previous section.
[ILEAP OPR.01.04]
 3. Be a good example by driving defensively and courteously.
 4. Be alert and aware of your surroundings.
 5. If necessary, pull over to a safe location to:
 - a. observe something more closely.
 - b. operate the MDC, telephone, or other device.
- B. Responding to non-emergency calls for service:
1. Follow the procedures as listed above.
 2. Take the most direct route to ensure a prompt response.
- C. Parking:
1. Whenever possible, park in a safe, legal location.

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2. When responding to a call for service and parking on a traffic lane, alley, fire lane, restricted space, or other hazardous location:
 - a. be able to justify the use of that location
 - b. use hazard (4-way) lights
 - c. use arrow bar and/or overhead warning lights
- [ILEAP OPR.01.01(a)]

IV. Vehicle Operation: Emergency Driving

- A. Emergency calls for service are those that demand immediate police assistance to save a life, prevent bodily injury, or prevent significant loss or destruction of property. Emergency calls generally include, but are not necessarily limited to, the reports of:
 1. a shooting, or shots fired
 2. a stabbing, or a person wielding a knife or other weapon
 3. a battery in progress
 4. a fight in progress
 5. an explosion or bombing
 6. a robbery or any felony in progress involving danger to life
 7. police officer down or in distress requesting immediate assistance
 8. motor vehicle, industrial, occupational, or other accidents involving reported or potential injury, death, or exposure to hazardous materials
 9. attempted or threat of suicide
 10. fires in an occupied structure
 11. a hold-up, bank, distress, or panic alarm
 - B. Telecommunicators should attempt to determine the severity and nature of the request for police service, obtaining as much information as possible so a determination can be made as to:
 1. the number of officers needed
 2. whether other services are needed, such as fire department or ambulance
 3. the responding officer's decision to respond in emergency mode or not
 4. update the officers if an emergency situation no longer exists
 - C. Emergency calls for service may require the operation of a police vehicle utilizing emergency equipment:
 1. Emergency flashing lights
 2. Siren and emergency horn
 - a. Use of oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights in police vehicles is permitted pursuant to 625 ILCS 5/12-215.
 - b. Use of sirens in police vehicles is permitted pursuant to 625 ILCS 5/12-601.
- [ILEAP OPR.01.01(b)]
- D. Officers are authorized to use emergency lights and sirens when responding to emergency calls; officers are NOT authorized to use emergency lights and sirens when responding to non-emergency or routine calls for service.
 - E. When receiving an emergency call, an officer may use discretion when deciding whether or not to initiate an emergency driving response, depending on the situation, the location of the incident, traffic or roadway conditions, and the distance involved when responding to the incident.
 - F. The shift supervisor will monitor radio traffic involving emergency response and if necessary, specifically request officers on whether or not to initiate an emergency driving response.
 - G. Pursuant to 625 ILCS 5/11-205(b),(c), and (d), a police officer responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the

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law, or responding to a fire alarm, may, when the vehicle is making use of the emergency lights and/or sirens:

1. park or stand in violation of IVC regulations;
 2. proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be required and necessary for safe operation;
 3. exceed the maximum speed limits so long as he does not endanger life or property;
 4. disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions;
- H. Driving Safely: 625 ILCS 5/11-205(e): "The foregoing provisions do not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others."
- I. Flashing Lights Required: 625 ILCS 5/12-216: "Oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights located on or within police vehicles in this State shall be lighted whenever a police officer is in pursuit of a violator of a traffic law or regulation." To this end, police officers must use the vehicle's emergency lights when conducting a traffic stop. Traffic stop guidelines are located in Policy 403.1.
- J. Guidelines for emergency driving:
1. Always use emergency flashing lights
 2. Use siren and/or change the siren pitch:
 - a. in heavy traffic when passing vehicles
 - b. when passing through intersections when other vehicles or pedestrians are approaching or present
 - c. when other hazards exist
 3. Remember that emergency lights and sirens are a REQUEST for the right-of-way:
 - a. slow down or stop at intersections as circumstances dictate
 - b. be aware of any traffic hazards or obstructions
 4. Do not use hazard (4-way) lights when moving, as they may interfere with brake lights and turn signals.
 5. Do not travel at a speed excessive or unsafe for traffic, roadway, or weather conditions.
 6. Emergency lights and sirens may be deactivated at a distance from the scene so as not to alert subjects to the officer's proximity.
 7. Once emergency lights and sirens are deactivated, the officer must obey traffic regulations and proceed in a manner consistent with normal traffic flow.
- [ILEAP OPR.01.01(c)]
- K. Guidelines for pursuit driving are located in Policy 304.2.

V. Take Home Cars

- A. The department may assign take home cars to officers.
- B. The following criteria will be used to assign take home cars to officers:
 1. The officer must live within city limits.
 2. The officer must have a favorable work record and evaluation ratings.
 3. The officer will acknowledge understanding of the information contained in this policy.
- C. No officer will be assigned a take home car against their will.
- D. Take home car assignments may be rotated at periodic intervals, at the discretion of the Chief or his designee.
- E. The take home car may be used in going to and from work, during work, or for work-related functions such as court and training.

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- F. Parking the take home car:
 - 1. A primary function of the take home car is for increased police visibility in the neighborhood. Cars should be parked in the officer's driveway or on an adjacent street.
 - 2. Officers may rotate the parking position of the squad car on nearby streets in order to increase visibility but should remain in view of the officer's home.
 - 3. Officers must be sure to keep the vehicle locked whenever parked & unattended.
 - 4. Keys should not be kept in the ignition when parked between shifts.
 - 5. **Rifles and shotguns should be secured in the overhead rack or trunk when parked between shifts.**
 - 6. While the officer is on vacation or away for several days, the vehicle should be left at the Police Department for security reasons and so it can be used if necessary.
- G. Officers with take-home cars may be approached at their home by persons requiring or requesting police service while the officer is off duty. The officer should make every attempt to assist but may call for on-duty officers if a situation needs to be addressed immediately.
- H. Maintenance:
 - 1. Officers are expected to keep their take home car clean and in good working order.
 - 2. Daily inspections need to be documented on the vehicle inspection sheet.
 - 3. Any maintenance issues need to be brought to the attention of the city mechanic.
 - 4. Officers may not make any modifications or alterations to the take home car or related equipment.

VI. Police Bicycle Operation

- A. Only sworn members of the department who have been assigned to the bicycle patrol unit are authorized to use department-owned police bicycles. Exceptions require special permission from the Chief of Police or Patrol Division Commander.
- B. Bicycle patrol officers will be responsible for patrol duties and will handle calls for service as assigned.
- C. Bicycle units may be assigned to a certain geographical area and/or be assigned to directed patrol efforts.
- D. Bicycles are to be used only in good weather conditions that allow for safe operation.
- E. Members of the department who have been assigned to the bicycle patrol unit shall complete a 40-hour training course titled "Police Cyclist" through the Northern Illinois Training Advisory Board or approved similar course that is nationally certified through the International Police Mountain Bike Association as well as being certified by the State of Illinois Police Training Board.
- F. The bicycle patrol unit supervisor shall be responsible for the condition and maintenance of the police bicycles.
- G. Each member of the bicycle patrol unit is responsible for reporting any and all damage or repair needs to the bicycle patrol supervisor.
- H. Any repair beyond that taught in training will be performed by the department's approved bicycle vendor, currently North Central Cyclery of Dekalb.
- I. Each bicycle shall be equipped with a headlight. Each bicycle shall be equipped with a rear bag containing the following:

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1. one spare inner tube
2. bicycle repair tool
- J. Optional equipment carried on the bicycle can include, but is not limited to:
 1. small first aid kit and/or CPR mask
 2. police documents and report forms
 3. additional bicycle tools
 4. water bottle
 5. insect repellant
 6. sun block

VI. Police Motorcycle Operation

- A. Motorcycles are authorized for use and will be utilized by the patrol division to increase traffic law enforcement effectiveness and to improve the department's response capabilities. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(a)]
- B. Motorcycles will be operated only by designated personnel who are properly licensed and trained to department specifications. Training shall consist of successfully passing an 80-hour Police Motorcycle Operator Training Course conducted by Northwestern University Center for Public Safety or comparable course approved by the Chief of Police. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(b)]
- C. Motorcycles are equipped with conspicuous police markings, emergency lights, and siren. Officers using the UTV must constantly maintain the ability for police communications using a mobile or portable radio. [ILEAP OPR.01.02]
- D. Motorcycle Officer Duties:
 1. Traffic law enforcement
 2. Assist patrol units in responding to calls for service.
 3. Traffic direction, parades, or other special situations.
 4. Patrol bicycle paths, or other off-road locations, that are accessible and safely navigable by motorcycle.
 5. Motorcycle officers may be assigned to patrol a specific zone in the same manner as zone designations are assigned by the shift commander and may be assigned to directed enforcement patrols as deemed necessary.
- E. Operational Restrictions:
 1. Motorcycles shall not be operated without the officer wearing a department-approved helmet.
 2. Motorcycles shall not be operated when weather conditions are such that safe operation would be impaired.
 3. Motorcycles shall not be utilized outside city limits except on official police business when authorized by a supervisor.
 4. Off duty riding is not permitted except for maintenance and cleaning upon permission of the Motorcycle Unit supervisor.
- F. Traffic Stops:
 1. Upon observing a traffic violation and a decision to apprehend has been made, the motorcycle operator shall activate the oscillating/strobe emergency lights to initiate the stop, and use the siren as necessary.
 2. When the violator pulls over, the motorcycle is to be stopped and parked behind the vehicle. Do not offset into traffic or otherwise leave the motorcycle exposed in a traffic lane.
- G. Motorcycle Appearance and Maintenance
 1. Motorcycle officers shall check their motorcycle daily for proper levels of oil, fuel, tire pressure, chain adjustment and lubrication, and clutch adjustments prior to use.

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2. Irregularities, maintenance issues, or repair needs are to be reported and corrected without undue delay.
 3. Cleaning and routine maintenance shall be done at the end of each tour of duty.
 4. The motorcycles shall be clean and in good repair at all times and kept in the proper condition by the assigned officers.
 5. The Motorcycle Unit supervisor will complete routine and random inspections of the motorcycles to ensure proper maintenance.
- H. Equipment: Police motorcycles will be equipped with a police . Motorcycle side bags will carry the officer's personal patrol equipment and citation books, and any other equipment deemed necessary by the Motorcycle Unit supervisor. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(c)]

VII. Police Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) Operation

- A. Objectives of UTV operations:
1. The UTV provides a special method of patrol that can be utilized to perform first line police services as needed.
 2. This vehicle can be utilized both on and off city streets as a proactive method of crime prevention and detection, law enforcement, community policing functions, and other situations as directed by a supervisor.
 3. The department UTV will primarily be used to provide high visibility police patrol in areas that are difficult to reach with traditional forms of police patrol. The UTV can be utilized specifically to patrol bike paths, parks, fields, airport grounds, wooded areas, and other public spaces.
 4. The department UTV may also be utilized at special events, where it will be helpful in maneuvering through confined or congested spaces and allowing for a faster response time. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(a)]
- B. The UTV is equipped with conspicuous police markings, emergency lights, and siren. Officers using the UTV must constantly maintain the ability for police communications using the portable radio. [ILEAP OPR.01.02]
- C. A medical bag with AED should be placed in the UTV during patrol or special event operations. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(c)]
- D. The UTV shall not be utilized without permission from the Shift Sergeant. Oversight of UTV operations will be coordinated by the Patrol Commander.
- E. The UTV will only be utilized by DeKalb Police officers who have been properly trained in the use of the UTV, which includes verbal and written instructions as well as a check-out ride conducted by the Patrol Commander or his designee. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(b)]
- F. A Commander or above must approve use of the UTV by another City department such as the Fire Department or Public Works. In these cases, an officer should be assigned to the UTV as a trained operator, except for use by authorized mechanics for the purpose of maintenance and repair.
- G. Use of the winch is limited to operators who have had specific training regarding its proper use. Bystanders must be kept a safe distance away from the UTV any time the winch is being used.
- H. Officers using the UTV will wear seat belts whenever the UTV is in motion. [ILEAP OPR.01.04]
- I. No firearms, less lethal weapons, computers, or confidential paperwork such as warrant lists or signed complaints shall be left in the UTV when not immediately attended by an officer. No items should be left unsecured in the UTV.
- J. When not in operation, the operator must turn off the UTV and remove the key.
- K. Though equipped with emergency lights and siren, the UTV will not be primarily used for traffic enforcement and/or traffic stops.

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- L. The UTV will not be used in pursuits.
- M. The UTV is not a primary prisoner transport vehicle. In situations where using the UTV is the most practical method of prisoner transport, two officers shall be present in the UTV during transport. Depending on the length of transport, it may be advisable to transfer the prisoner to an ordinary police vehicle at a feasible location such as a parking lot.
- N. The UTV shall not be used by any officer who is off-duty nor used by non-authorized personnel.
- O. Prior to using the UTV, each officer shall assure that the vehicle and all of its equipment is in proper working order. Any issues or defects with the UTV shall be reported to the Shift Sergeant and forwarded to the Patrol Commander.
- P. Operators are expected to operate the UTV in the safest manner possible, consistent with traffic laws and best practices to present a good example to the public and reduce the potential for accidents and injuries.
- Q. Operators must be aware of the shorter wheel base and higher center of gravity of the UTV, requiring speed to be adequately reduced around curves and corners.
- R. Operators must use caution to avoid damaging private property while operating off-road.
- S. Any misuse, reckless operation, or accidents involving the UTV are to be reported immediately to the Shift Sergeant and forwarded to the Patrol Commander.
- T. When operations of the UTV are completed, the operator must inspect the UTV for any damage or operational issues, and remove any items not belonging in the UTV such as documents, equipment, personal items and trash. The UTV must be cleaned, fueled, and any preventative maintenance performed at the conclusion of operational use. Any issues or defects with the UTV shall be reported to the Shift Sergeant and forwarded to the Patrol Commander.
- U. A sign out log is located in the UTV, indicating the operator, type of assignment, and confirmation of UTV inspection.

VIII. Prisoner Transport Vehicle Operation

- A. The department maintains a converted ambulance to be used for prisoner transports, particularly for mass arrest situations or transporting multiple prisoners. These are the only objectives of its operation. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(a)].
- B. The Prisoner Transport Vehicle will not be used for ordinary patrol but may be staged at or near locations where a mass arrest situation has the potential to occur.
- C. Authorized operators: Other than in emergency or exigent circumstances, only sworn members of the department who have been specifically trained in the operation of the Prisoner Transport Vehicle are authorized for its use. This includes both verbal and written instructions, and a check out ride by a training officer. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(b)]
- D. When in use, the Prisoner Transport Vehicle should contain a medical bag with AED and a supply of flex cuffs for mass arrest situations. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(c)]
- E. The Prisoner Transport Vehicle is equipped with conspicuous police markings, emergency lights, and siren. Officers using the Prisoner Transport Vehicle must constantly maintain the ability for police communications using the mobile or portable radio. [ILEAP OPR.01.02]
- F. Prisoners will be secured in the restraints affixed to the seats prior to setting the vehicle in motion.
- G. When transporting multiple prisoners, two officers should be present in the vehicle whenever possible.

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IX. Police Armored Vehicle Operation

- A. Objectives of operations or usage: The purpose of the Police Armored Vehicle is to safely transport officers to and from high risk situations, the rescue of civilian or police personnel, and other emergency operations in which its use will increase the safety of civilians and police personnel.
- B. Some examples where the use of the Police Armored Vehicle would be warranted are: active shooter situations, extracting wounded victims or those exposed to active shooter fire or related dangers, inserting medical assets in an effort to reduce casualties and provide emergency tactical casualty care to those already wounded, use as a defensive position or barricade, as well as in response to a natural disaster or catastrophic event without a criminal nexus (e.g. hurricane, tornado, flood, earthquake, and wildfire) where lifesaving access to areas that cannot otherwise be achieved is critical. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(a)]
- C. This vehicle is not intended to be utilized as part of a response to public assemblies, protests, demonstrations, exercises of the First Amendment right to free speech, or for the control of civil disorder unless the circumstances cited above exist concurrently.
- D. Authorized operators: Other than in emergency or exigent circumstances, only sworn members of the department who have been specifically trained in the operation of the Police Armored Vehicle are authorized for its use. This includes both verbal and written instructions, and a check out ride by the supervisor of the armored vehicle. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(b)]
- E. When in use, the Police Armored Vehicle should contain a medical bag with AED and any other hand tools or equipment necessary to facilitate the anticipated actions during deployment. [ILEAP OPR.01.08(c)]
- F. When routine maintenance or mechanical work is needed on the Police Armored Vehicle, the City of DeKalb diesel mechanic or other qualified mechanic is authorized to operate the Police Armored Vehicle to diagnose problems and ensure its safe operation.
- G. Members of the DeKalb County Special Operations Team shall also undergo an orientation of the operation and safety protocol for the DeKalb Police Armored Vehicle.
- H. Call out procedures: Only the Chief of Police or in his absence, the Acting Chief of Police, or the Deputy Chief of Operations has the authority to call out/deploy the Police Armored Vehicle. The supervisor in charge will contact the Chief when faced with a situation that he/she feels warrants the use of the Police Armored Vehicle.
- I. Operation of the Police Armored Vehicle:
 - 1. Use due caution when operating the Police Armored Vehicle to prevent:
 - a. Injury to operators or others
 - b. The destruction of property
 - c. Damage to the vehicle
 - 2. Operators shall utilize a ground guide when backing the vehicle, and when loading/unloading the Police Armored Vehicle.
 - 3. Operators shall report any mechanical or operational problems via their chain of command.
Do not use the Police Armored Vehicle when the vehicle is not ready to be deployed in a safe and effective manner.
 - 4. This vehicle is equipped with emergency equipment, but is not intended for high speed response or operation; therefore it should be driven within posted speed limits and not to exceed 60 mph. Except in exigent circumstances, both a driver and observer shall be deployed to operate

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Subject: **Police Vehicle Operation**

Policy #: **304.1**

Effective Since: 8-21-03

Originally Issued As: P-5 of 6-6-83; P-6 & P-13 of 6-26-95

Revision Effective: 1-1-19

Reference Material: ILCS

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the vehicle and ensure its safe operation; and when possible, the Police Armored Vehicle should be escorted while on public roadways by appropriately marked law enforcement vehicles.

- a. The Police Armored Vehicle has an empty weight of 48,500 lbs. (no occupants and a 50% fuel load), a height of 10'6" (with fully inflated tires), is 11 '7" wide (mirror to mirror) and 26' in length. These specifications should be considered during the operation of the vehicle.
- b. The DeKalb Police Department ranking officer assigned to the DeKalb County Special Operations Team shall ensure that regular inspections of the vehicle, equipment, and maintenance are performed.
- c. Deployment of the vehicle for mutual aid or at the request of an outside law enforcement agency is permissible only with the authorization of the Chief of Police or in his absence, Acting Chief of Police, or the Deputy Chief of Operations and if the operation or response meets the requirements for the vehicle to be otherwise deployed. Only operators of the DeKalb Police Department shall operate the vehicle for mutual aid or at the request of another law enforcement agency. Under no circumstances shall the vehicle be operated by a member of another law enforcement agency.

X. Accidents Involving Police Vehicles

- A. Accidents involving police vehicles should be reported immediately to the shift commander.
- B. If the accident occurred within the city limits, the shift commander should investigate the accident.
- C. Standard procedure for investigating accidents should be followed, as outlined in Policy 403.4.
- D. In accidents involving injury or death to the officer or other person, the shift commander should notify the on-call Commander.
- E. The shift commander, or designated accident investigation team, shall forward a copy of the accident report of any police vehicle accident to the Chief as soon as possible. The report should include:
 1. A detailed account of the accident;
 2. Statements of witnesses and those involved;
 3. The nature and seriousness of any injury or property damage;
 4. A statement as to whether the crash was preventable or non-preventable, with statements supporting the conclusion;
 - Non-preventable: a crash shall be classified as non-preventable when it is concluded that the officer/driver exercised reasonable caution to prevent the crash from occurring AND observed applicable law, policy, procedure, and training.
 - Preventable: a crash shall be deemed preventable when the officer/driver failed to observe law, policy, procedure, or training and/or failed to exercise due caution or defensive driving tactics.
 5. Any recommendations that would help prevent similar crashes in the future; and/or recommendations by the shift commander or ranking member of the accident investigation team for discipline when the officer was in violation of policy or law.
- F. At the discretion of the Chief, serious accidents may be investigated by another police agency.

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- G. Reports involving a police vehicle while engaged in emergency driving, where the officer may be in violation of policy or law, shall be referred to the Chief for disposition.
- H. Reports of accidents where drivers of authorized emergency vehicles from other agencies (fire, sheriff's office, etc.), may be in violation of law, should be reviewed by command staff and forwarded to the appropriate agency or State's Attorney's office for disposition.

Policy originally issued 8- 21-03; this revision becomes effective on 1-1-19 by authority of the Chief of Police.

NOTE: This policy and procedure summarizes the department's position on this specific matter. This policy is for general direction and guidance primarily designed for use by the department's members. This policy is for internal use only and does not create or enlarge an officer's liability in any way. This policy shall not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of an internal departmental complaint and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.