



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. 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 police 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. Lieutenant – 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 a police 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 Lieutenant – The lieutenant who is responsible for taking command of a vehicle pursuit. This lieutenant is either the Patrol watch lieutenant from the district in which the pursuit was initiated or the lieutenant 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 police 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 police 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 police 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 police 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 police 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. Police 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 Dispatcher (e.g., the frequency of location/condition updates, how timely critical information is being relayed).
4. All police 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. A police 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, a police 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. Members assigned to an operation being conducted by the Specialized Investigations Section may obtain pre-approval from a Specialized Investigations Section lieutenant for Specialized Investigations operations to pursue a known violent offender, even when the pursuit initiation criteria are not met, if sufficient investigative intelligence has been established to deem the risk of engaging in the vehicle pursuit to be less than the risk posed to the community by not stopping the subject vehicle. The monitoring lieutenant shall ensure the Chief of Investigations is the "Commander or Higher" reviewer of the Vehicle Pursuit Report.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. After a vehicle pursuit is initiated, the Police Dispatcher assigned to the talk group shall:
  - a. Request assistance from the Aviation Unit and the Canine Unit;
  - b. Ensure a lieutenant or SIC from the initiating district is monitoring the pursuit (unless the pursuit is already being monitored by the lieutenant of the involved unit); and
  - c. Notify a Police Dispatcher supervisor of the pursuit.
6. After a vehicle pursuit is initiated, the Police Dispatcher supervisor shall:
  - a. Monitor the vehicle pursuit; and
  - b. Move normal district radio traffic to a tactical talk group as soon as practical.
7. After a vehicle pursuit is initiated, the monitoring lieutenant is responsible for: [CALEA 41.2.2]



- 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;
  - e. Continuously remain in command of the vehicle pursuit until it is terminated, even if the pursuit leaves the district 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.
8. During a vehicle pursuit, each pursuing and paralleling officer shall: [CALEA 41.2.2]
- a. Operate his vehicle with due care and regard for the safety of the public, himself and fellow police officers, and the suspect (The provisions in Florida State Statutes (F.S.S.) for the operation of emergency vehicles do not relieve a police officer from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the police 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 police officer than the number of occupants in the subject vehicle. (after that threshold is reached, additional responding police 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;
  - g. Not pursue a subject vehicle on the wrong side of any divided highway or against the normal flow of traffic on any one-way street, entrance/exit ramp, or service road;
  - h. Not place their vehicles or any other obstructions in the pathway of a vehicle pursuit. (Police officers may only use the JSO-approved forcible stopping tactics outlined in this order); and [CALEA 41.2.3]
  - i. Not pass another authorized emergency vehicle engaged in a vehicle pursuit unless the police officer being overtaken acknowledges he is relinquishing his position in the pursuit.
9. Unless given authorization by the monitoring lieutenant, police officers operating any of the following vehicles shall relinquish the positions of primary pursuit vehicle and secondary pursuit vehicle to a marked JSO sedan or SUV: [CALEA 41.2.2; CFA 14.05]
- a. Motorcycle;
  - b. Unmarked vehicle;
  - c. Van; or
  - d. Vehicle with a non-JSO passenger.
10. When the Aviation Unit joins a vehicle pursuit, the Aviation Unit shall: [CALEA 41.2.2]
- a. Assist keeping the supervisors updated on the conditions and location of the pursuit, if feasible; and
  - b. Inform the monitoring lieutenant of any pursuit safety concerns and violations of policy.
11. When a ranked member initiates a vehicle pursuit or is pursuing a vehicle, the Police Dispatcher supervisor shall ensure a different lieutenant is designated as the monitoring lieutenant. That monitoring lieutenant has the final authority to determine if the pursuit should continue or be terminated, regardless of the rank of the initiating/pursuing member. [CALEA 41.2.2]
- D. Terminating a Vehicle Pursuit and Follow-Up Requirements [CFA 14.05]
1. When a vehicle pursuit ends due to the subject vehicle being successfully stopped:



- a. The police officer who operated the primary pursuit vehicle shall coordinate the actions of the assisting police officers until he is relieved by a supervisor; and
  - b. Police officers shall follow the high-risk stop procedures outlined in Order 220 (Traffic Function) at the termination point of a vehicle pursuit.
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 lieutenant, or the most appropriate lieutenant (as determined by the watch lieutenant of the district 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 monitoring lieutenant 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 lieutenant shall submit an electronic Communications Records Request on the Communications site on 94Net for an audio recording of the pursuit. Communications Section personnel shall complete this request



and place the audio file(s) in the appropriate district folder on the shared network drive (colloquially referred to as the P-drive).

- b. After the audio file is placed in the appropriate district folder, the monitoring lieutenant shall complete a Vehicle Pursuit Report within 10 calendar days. Any extension to this deadline must be approved by a commander or higher authority. The district commander (or other designated commander) and the Professional Oversight Unit (POU) shall serve as the second and third reviewers, respectively. [CALEA 41.2.2]
  - c. If the pursuit was pre-approved by a Specialized Investigations lieutenant, the Chief of Investigations shall serve as the "Commander or Higher" reviewer. [CALEA 41.2.2; CFA 14.05]
  - d. Prior to the conclusion of 10 calendar days, if the monitoring lieutenant is unable to determine if the incident was a vehicle pursuit due to circumstances outside of his control (i.e., inability to interview involved parties due to incapacitation, lead investigative agency other than JSO, and incomplete investigative information, etc.), the monitoring lieutenant shall contact the POU supervisor in order to determine how the incident will be documented.
  - e. If the monitoring lieutenant of an incident determines an incident was not a vehicle pursuit, but still wishes to document his investigative findings as to why the incident was not a vehicle pursuit, the monitoring lieutenant shall utilize the appropriate report within the Agency Records Management System (ARMS).
- 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 police officers. A police officer shall only use a preplanned stopping tactic when it is safe to do so.

2. Blocking

- a. Police 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. Police 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, police 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, police 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, police officers should consider this information when determining if the pursuit of the subject vehicle is justified.
  - g. Documentation of preplanned stopping tactics.
    - (1) In instances where a police officer utilizes the blocking tactic on a vehicle and no damage is caused to either vehicle, this information shall be documented in the narrative of the applicable Incident Report and/or Arrest & Booking Report.
    - (2) In instances where a police officer utilizes the blocking tactic on a vehicle and damage results to either vehicle, a BlueTeam Vehicle Accident/Incident Report shall be used to document the incident.
- 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 police officers. A police 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, police 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, a police 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 lieutenant.
2. Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT)
  - a. Police 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. Police 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, police 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. Police 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 police officer. Police 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 police 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 police 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.





- a. Police 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. Police dispatcher obtains a decision from the appropriate JSO watch lieutenant as to whether the continuation of the pursuit shall be authorized; and
  - c. Police call taker informs the pursuing agency of the watch lieutenant'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 lieutenants 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 lieutenant 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; CFA 14.05]
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: