


MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

General Order

CHAPTER: 032-L		TITLE: Vehicle Operations and Equipment	
EFFECTIVE DATE: June 6, 2014	NO. PAGES: 6	REVIEWED/REVISED: May 21, 2018	
REFERENCE: CALEA 41.2.1; 41.3.1; 41.3.2; 61.3.3		RESCINDS:	
 Sheriff of Monroe County			

I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for the safe operation of all Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicles.

II. **DISCUSSION:** This directive shall apply to all personnel.

III. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A. Monroe County Vehicle Operations

1. Unless specifically agreed otherwise in an applicable collective bargaining agreement, all Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicle use is at the discretion of the Sheriff and may be revoked or modified at any time.
2. General Prohibitions:
 - a. Under no circumstances will a member be allowed to operate a Monroe County Sheriff's Office Vehicle unless they possess a valid Florida driver's license.
 - b. Certified members must have successfully completed, or be enrolled in, Road Patrol FTO training before they will be considered for the use of a Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicle.
 - c. Under no circumstances will a non-certified member be assigned a marked unit.
 - d. No person shall operate a Sheriff's Office vehicle:
 - 1) Within eight hours of consuming an alcoholic beverage, or
 - 2) While under the influence of alcoholic beverages, any chemical substance set forth in FSS 877.111, or any substance controlled under FSS Chapter 893.
3. Member Responsibility
 - a. Members assigned a vehicle are responsible to maintain it in duty-ready status. Duty-Ready Status means:
 - 1) Maintaining operating fluids at the proper levels at all times.
 - 2) Maintaining proper air levels in the tires at all times.

- 3) Maintaining an adequate level of fuel at all times.
 - 4) Maintaining a clean exterior
 - 5) Maintaining a clean interior, free of food, drink spills, food or drink containers, paper or trash.
 - 6) Ensuring routine maintenance is performed per scheduled requirement.
 - 7) Ensuring routine or emergency repairs are performed as necessary.
- b. Members assigned a vehicle are required to operate the vehicle in accordance with all applicable traffic laws and regulations of the jurisdiction they are in during operation.
4. Routine Vehicle Operation
- a. Under normal non-emergency operating conditions, and while responding to routine calls for service, members shall strictly adhere to all traffic laws, and shall drive defensively in a safe and courteous manner.
 - b. Operators of Sheriff's vehicles shall exercise a greater than ordinary degree of care while backing.
 - c. Seat belts shall be worn. If seat belts are not worn, injuries from accident may not be covered by Worker's Compensation.
5. Emergency Vehicle Operation [CALEA 41.2.1]
- a. Sheriff's members may engage in emergency vehicle operation in accordance with Florida law when responding to an emergency.
 - b. The provisions of this procedure and Florida law do not relieve the operator of a Sheriff's vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the operator of a Sheriff's vehicle from the consequences of careless disregard for the safety of others.
 - c. Sheriff's vehicles engaged in emergency operations shall utilize all emergency lights. The siren shall be used to warn vehicle and pedestrian traffic along the emergency route. Hazard warning lights, the spotlight, headlights, and public address system may be used as additional safety measures during emergency operations.
 - d. When engaged in emergency operations, the operator of a Sheriff's vehicle shall exercise extreme care. Wearing of seat belts is mandatory at all times for the driver and occupants of the vehicle.
 - e. In accordance with Florida law, Sheriff's vehicles engaged in emergency operations may:
 - 1) Exceed the maximum speed limit, so long as life or property are not endangered. Speed shall be limited by road and weather conditions and the exercise of good judgment.
 - 2) Proceed past a stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing or stopping as necessary for safe operation. Sheriff's vehicles shall not enter controlled intersections against the directed flow of traffic at a speed greater than fifteen (15) MPH and shall be sure that cross-traffic flow has yielded in each lane before attempting to cross that lane.
 - 3) Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning direction, so long as life or property is not endangered.
 - 4) Disregard regulations governing parking laws under normal circumstances, except that

a Sheriff's vehicle shall not block access to a fire hydrant at a fire scene, or in any way obstruct the passage of fire or rescue apparatus.

- f. Sheriff's vehicles shall not be parked in roadways or traffic lanes except when necessary to protect persons.
 - 1) Use of Sheriff's vehicles to protect persons shall be signaled by the activation of emergency lights, or other appropriate warning device.
 - 2) When use of Sheriff's vehicles for protection of persons is necessary cones shall be placed in the roadway between the Sheriff's vehicle and approaching traffic as soon as possible.
 - 3) Sheriff's vehicles shall not be used to protect minor accident scenes.
 - 4) Sheriff's vehicles shall be removed from roadways as soon as possible.
 - g. Emergency operation of Sheriff's vehicles shall be immediately reported to Communications.
 - h. Emergency Response:
 - 1. Sergeants are responsible for directing the type of response a call requires. Before a deputy runs code to a call, that response must be approved by a sergeant or above.
 - 2) No more than two units will respond to any call, unless it is authorized by a sergeant.
 - 3) If a sergeant authorizes more than two units to respond to a call, he or she will specify what level of response. The response must be justified based on the circumstances of the call.
 - 4) All Sergeants, on-duty or on the air monitoring the radio, are required to monitor and take supervisory action when necessary to prevent a violation of this policy or loss of life, regardless of the district to which they are assigned.
 - i. Members operating Sheriff's Office vehicles shall immediately terminate emergency operation when it is no longer necessary or when ordered to do so by a superior authority.
6. Out of County Use
- a. Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicles will not be used to commute outside of Monroe County without the prior written permission of the Sheriff.
 - b. Any member who chooses to live outside Monroe County will park their assigned vehicle at their assigned duty station and leave it there at the end of each shift.
 - c. Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicles will not be taken out of Monroe County except on official business.
 - d. Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicles may not be used for personal business while outside of Monroe County.
7. Off-duty Use
- a. Members must check in-service with communications and advise their status, projected destination and out-of-service when appropriate.

- b. All members must be properly attired when operating an Office vehicle, especially certified members who may be required to take enforcement action at any time.
 - c. Non-certified members may not operate a marked unit, except in the case of an emergency. Nor are non-members allowed as passengers in marked units, unless for official business.
 - d. Non-certified members are permitted to operate unmarked units and civilian passengers are permitted.
 - e. Members assigned a vehicle who reside in Monroe County may use the vehicle in Monroe County for general personal business, such as shopping, within the restrictions described herein.
 - f. Assigned vehicles shall not be used for, or to commute to or from, Off-Duty Employment, as defined in Chapter 23 of the General Orders.
 - g. Assigned vehicles may be driven to and from Extra-Duty Details, as defined in Chapter 23 of the General Orders, only if the Extra-Duty Detail has been approved in advance by the District Special Detail Coordinator (DSDC).
 - h. Certified members may not use a Marked Monroe County Sheriff's Office vehicle for personal business unless they have successfully completed Road Patrol FTO training.
8. Taxable Usage – certified members who are issued an Office vehicle are given a tax exemption for those vehicles if they meet certain criteria.
- a. Marked Units.
 - 1) The marked unit may only be used outside the county on Official Sheriff's Office business.
 - 2) Should the issued vehicle be utilized outside the county for other than Office business, this may invalidate the exemption for the entire year.
 - b. Unmarked Units – The unmarked unit must meet four (4) requirements to establish the tax exemption.
 - 1) The unmarked unit must be driven by a Sheriff's Office member.
 - 2) The personal use be must be authorized by the Sheriff.
 - 3) The use must be incidental to law enforcement use (i.e. the officer must be available for calls).
 - 4) The use of vehicles for vacation or recreation is not permissible.
9. Request to stop Sheriff's Office Members. When directed to stop by another law enforcement officer and/or agency the member shall:
- a. Immediately stop, regardless of assignment.
 - b. Clearly identify self and activity unless such declaration would nullify or hinder a criminal investigation.

- c. Provide the stopping officer with requested information or documentation.
 - d. When the operator of a Sheriff's vehicle continues to be detained by a law Enforcement Officer from another agency, advise communications of the circumstances and request a supervisor to report to the scene of the detention.
10. Emergency Escort of Civilian Vehicles - Emergency escort of civilian vehicles is prohibited. Should a civilian request a medical emergency escort, the Deputy shall summon an ambulance for treatment and/or transporting of the injured or ill person. MCSO does not escort emergency vehicles. [CALEA 41.2.1, 61.3.3]
11. Emergency Medical Transportation - In an extreme medical emergency, it may become necessary for a Deputy to transport the injured or ill person to a treatment facility in a Sheriff's vehicle. Such transports shall be approved by a supervisor. [CALEA 41.2.1, 61.3.3]
12. Spare Units
- a. When spare units exist, the respective Station Commander is responsible for the routine maintenance of that vehicle.
 - b. When a member uses a spare unit that member is responsible to return the unit to storage after use in a duty ready status (i.e. fuel tank full; fluids at the proper level; tires properly inflated; battery, lights, etc. are checked and in good working condition). If any necessary repairs are noted the employee is required to notify the Station Commander so repairs can be made.

B. Patrol Vehicle Equipment: [CALEA 41.3.1, 41.3.2]

- 1. All patrol cars shall be equipped with the following equipment:
 - a. A siren
 - b. Red and blue emergency lights;
 - c. A current first-aid kit with basic emergency medical supplies;
 - d. Two blankets in a suitable container;
 - e. A properly-charged fire extinguisher;
 - f. Reflector set, cones and/or flares;
 - g. A wrecking bar or other extrication device;
 - h. Jumper cables
 - i. Infectious disease kit
 - j. Rescue disc
 - k. Traffic gloves
 - l. An operational flashlight
 - m. Finger print kit
 - n. 100-foot measuring tape
 - o. Traffic vest
 - p. Hazmat Book
 - q. Statute book
- 2. All patrol cars used in routine patrol shall be conspicuously marked. [CALEA 41.3.1]
- 3. Deputies shall ensure that supplies are replenished as needed by requesting them from their supervisor. Supervisors shall ensure that Deputies are maintaining appropriate amounts of supplies in their patrol vehicles during monthly inspections. Supervisors shall obtain supplies from the current inventory, requisitions or purchase orders. [CALEA 41.3.2]
- 4. To ensure safety and consistency, MCSO vehicles will only be repaired or reconfigured by individuals trained and approved to do so. Members shall not install anything in or on, or affix anything to any MCSO vehicle without the prior written approval of the Major of Operations.

5. No member may move, alter, modify, or disable any equipment in or on any MCSO vehicle without the prior written approval of the Major of Operations.

C. Safety Belts: The use of seat belts can have a significant effect in reducing the number of deaths and the severity of injuries sustained in a vehicle crash. Increased seat belt usage at all times among members and strict enforcement of the applicable seat belt and child restraint laws remain the single-most effective thing the Monroe County Sheriff's Office can do to save lives and reduce injuries on Monroe County Roadways.

1. It is the policy of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office that all members will comply with the requirements of F.S.S.316.614-Seat Belt Usage and F.S.S. 316.613-Child Restraints, when applicable, while operating or riding as a passenger at any time in an office vehicle.
2. Any sworn member of this agency shall enforce F.S.S. 316.614-Seat Belt Usage while on-duty.
3. Any sworn member of this agency shall fully enforce F.S.S. 3614.613-Child Seat Restraints with a zero tolerance while on-duty. Pursuant to F.S.S. 316.614(4)(a), it is unlawful to operate a motor vehicle unless each passenger under the age of eighteen (18) is properly restrained by a safety belt or child restraint device pursuant to F.S.S. 316.613. There is no statutory exception for law enforcement officers transporting juvenile offenders.
4. All Passengers five (5) years of age or younger shall be transported in a crash tested federally approved child restraint device. Such restraint device must be a separate carrier or a vehicle manufacturer's integrated child seat for children age three (3) years or younger.
5. Any member who transports a child in an approved separate carrier, or an integrated child seat shall ensure the device is properly installed/attached to the vehicle seat, in compliance with the manufacturer's recommendations.