

PALM BEACH GARDENS POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES

POLICY AND PROCEDURE 4.2.1.24

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PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the use and operation of special purpose vehicles as they are defined in this policy and procedure.

SCOPE: This policy and procedure applies to all members.

REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY: Patrol Operations Bureau Major

POLICY: The Department has a variety of specialized vehicles intended for specific tasks. In general, these vehicles are used by those assigned to them and performing those tasks. However, any Department vehicle may be operated by any member of the Department with the approval of the supervisor of the unit to which the vehicle is assigned for any official purpose or in an emergency and when the driver is properly licensed for the vehicle. The intent of this policy is to allow the use of all Department resources in any situation in which they are required. The only limitation is for those vehicles which require specific training and/or a specific license to operate safely and legally.

PROCEDURES

1. GENERAL

- a. A Special Purpose Vehicle is one used because of the considerations of weather, terrain, or the need for inconspicuous appearance, quietness, storage requirements or other special operational needs.
- b. For the purposes of this policy and procedure, the Department considers the following vehicles to be Special Purpose Vehicles:
 - i. K-9 Vehicles
 - ii. Special Operations (SWAT) Truck
 - iii. Mobile Command Post Vehicle (MCP)
 - iv. Police Motorcycles
 - v. Police Bicycles

- vi. Segways
- vii. Electric Utility Cart and ATV
- viii. All-Hazard Special Response Vehicle (SRV)
- c. All other vehicles operated by the Department are divided into two categories: patrol vehicles and general purpose/utility vehicles such as unmarked cars, vans, SUV's etc.
- d. All Department vehicles, regardless of designation, may only be used for official purposes or as otherwise designated in department policies and procedures.
- e. Crash incidents, including minor, shall be reported to the on-duty supervisor as soon as possible. As with any City vehicle crash, a damage and incident report shall be completed.

2. AUTHORIZATION TO OPERATE

- a. Members assigned to units responsible for special purpose vehicles are authorized to operate those vehicles when needed as long as they are properly licensed and trained (where required).
- b. Other Department members are authorized to operate special purpose vehicles when approved by the supervisor of the responsible unit or in emergencies as long as they are properly licensed and trained (where required).
- c. Public works personnel are authorized to operate special purpose vehicles for maintenance and repair purposes.

3. MAINTENANCE

- a. The supervisor of the unit to which a specialized vehicle is assigned, working with the Fleet Manager and Public Works, is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is properly maintained and repaired when needed. The responsible party shall follow any maintenance schedule provided by Public Works.
- b. If a specialized vehicle is assigned to an individual, e.g., police motorcycles, K-9 vehicle, etc., that individual is also responsible for ensuring proper maintenance and repair of the vehicle.

4. EQUIPMENT

- a. All police special purpose vehicles shall be provided with equipment as needed for their specific purpose.
- b. At a minimum, all special purpose vehicles other than police bicycles and the Electric Utility Cart shall be equipped with a fire extinguisher and first aid kit.
- c. Any additional equipment that should be in a special purpose vehicle is listed under that vehicle in the following sections.

5. K-9 VEHICLES

- a. K-9 vehicles are intended for use by K-9 officers for the purposes of transporting their K-9's.
- b. In addition to equipment common to all patrol type vehicles, additional equipment for K-9 vehicles is addressed in policy and procedure 3.2.4 – Canine Unit Function.

6. SWAT TRUCK

- a. The SWAT Truck is assigned to the SWAT Team and is authorized to be used for transporting members of the SWAT team and their equipment to the site of an operation or training event as well as for providing a location for team briefing and command.
- b. The SWAT Truck may also be used if needed for transporting persons, equipment, and supplies to any other type of incident or event and for any needs at the incident.
- c. The equipment to be kept in the SWAT Truck is at the discretion of the SWAT Supervisor, and may, but is not required to, include: tactical body armor, body bunkers, ladders, entry tools, etc. Any SWAT equipment not kept in the truck will be kept in the SWAT locker or in the custody of individual members when assigned. Weapons and munitions, if stored in the trucks, must be in locked storage containers securely attached to the vehicle.

- d. The SWAT Supervisor shall be responsible for monthly inspections of any team equipment stored in the vehicle.

7. MOBILE COMMAND POST (MCP)

- a. The MCP is assigned to the Patrol Operations Bureau. It is intended to be used as a field command post for unusual occurrences, hostage and barricaded persons incidents, and other situations where its capabilities would be useful.
- b. The MCP was grant funded by the State of Florida and is available for use by other agencies under mutual aid agreements.
- c. While the MCP does not require a special license, anyone assigned to operate the vehicle must first demonstrate the ability to do so.
- d. The Patrol Operations Bureau shall ensure that sufficient members are trained and qualified on operating the MCP and its systems.
- e. The Patrol Operations Bureau shall ensure that an equipment checklist is developed for the vehicle and that all equipment is inspected on a monthly basis.

8. POLICE MOTORCYCLES

- a. Police motorcycles are assigned to the Traffic Unit and are intended to be used for the purpose of enforcing traffic laws throughout the City.
- b. Police motorcycles may only be operated by those assigned to the unit, those undergoing motorcycle training, and Public Works personnel for purposes of maintenance and repair.
- c. All officers operating a police motorcycle must have a motorcycle endorsement on their driver's license. The only exception is for those in training to operate a police motorcycle.
- d. All officers assigned to operate a police motorcycle must have successfully completed the 80-hour police motorcycle operator's course or an equivalent course.
- e. Notwithstanding Florida law, all operators of a police motorcycle are required to wear a DOT approved helmet provided by the Department.

9. BICYCLES AND SEGWAYS

- a. Police bicycles and Segways are assigned to the Field Operations Division.
- b. Police bicycles may be utilized by officers for community policing activities, tactical patrol activities, and special events.
- c. Any officer using a police bicycle or Segway must have completed approved training such as the International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) course, similar courses, or appropriate Department provided training.
- d. Any officer using a police bicycle or Segway must wear an approved helmet, Department issued standard or special purpose uniform, Department issued body armor, black shoes appropriate for the assignment, and all leather gear and equipment (incl. firearm and radio) or nylon gear if provided.
- e. To be operated at night, a bicycle or Segway must be provided with lighting that meets state law, i.e., a white headlight and red tail light.
- f. Other recommended equipment includes: audible warning system, storage rack, and storage bags.

10. ELECTRIC UTILITY CART AND ATV

- a. The Electric Utility Cart and ATV are assigned to the Patrol Operations Bureau, Community Involvement Unit.
- b. Use of these vehicles is primarily for visual presence at events, but either may be safely operated for any incident requiring its ability.
- c. The Electric Utility Cart or ATV may be operated by members of the Police Department who are at least 18 years of age.

- d. Prior to operating either vehicle members should familiarize themselves with the safety limitations. Attention should be given to braking, steering, and the rollover potential associated with their height.
- e. These vehicles should be operated in a safe manner at all times. Reckless and unsafe operations are prohibited.
- f. The LED warning lights should be activated while traveling near traffic or on roadways. These vehicles are not street legal.
- g. The Electric Utility Cart has no safety belts; the ATV has safety belts which shall be worn at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- h. The ignition key should be removed if the cart is to be left unattended.
- i. These vehicles should be parked at the Police Department and when not in use, covered at all times with the covers provided.

11. ALL-HAZARD SPECIAL RESPONSE VEHICLE (SRV)

- a. The SRV is assigned to the Patrol Operations Bureau. It is intended to be used for unusual occurrences, hostage and barricaded persons incidents, and any other situations where its capabilities would be useful.
- b. The SRV is available for use by other agencies under mutual aid agreements.
- c. While the SRV does not require a special license, anyone assigned to operate the vehicle must first demonstrate the ability to do so.
- d. The Patrol Operations Bureau shall ensure that sufficient members are trained and qualified on operating the SRV and its systems.

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- **HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION TEAM**
- **TACTICAL CRIME SUPPRESSION UNIT**
- **SERGEANTS**
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APPROVED:



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