

HANCOCK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SECTION:	RULES AND REGULATIONS	NUMBER:	MRR-4.2
TITLE:	VEHICLE PURSUIT	EFFECTIVE:	01-01-2007

PURPOSE

Our freedom to pursue violators plays an important part in crime deterrence and crime control. However, we must not only consider ourselves, but we must consider the safety of the public in general. The purpose of this policy is to serve as a balance between our duty to protect the public and ourselves and our duty to enforce the laws and apprehend violators. The decision to begin a pursuit or to terminate a pursuit is an extremely important one. This decision must be made on the spur of the moment and take numerous factors into consideration.

DEFINITIONS

A. PURSUIT DRIVING

The active attempt by a law enforcement officer, operating a motor vehicle and utilizing the emergency lights and siren to apprehend one or more suspects in another moving motor vehicle, when the officer reasonably believes the driver of the other vehicle is aware of the attempt to stop him and is resisting the attempt of apprehension by speeding up or other evasive actions.

B. PURSUIT VEHICLES

1. Primary-The police unit that initiates the pursuit and is directly behind the fleeing vehicle
2. Secondary-Back-up to the primary vehicle and follows at a safe distance.

C. SUPERVISOR

A police officer who, by virtue of rank or assignment, is responsible for the direction or supervision of the activities of other police officers.

D. VIOLATOR

Any person who a police officer reasonably believes; 1) has committed a traffic infraction, a misdemeanor or a felon; 2) poses an immediate threat to the safety of the public or other police officers.

E. STOP STICKS

Tools issued to all patrol cars that contain small spikes inside pieces of cardboard. These are used to deflate tires in a controlled fashion to safely terminate a pursuit. STOP STICKS ARE NOT TO BE USED ON MOTORCYCLES!

F. DIVIDED HIGHWAY

A road which includes a physical barrier between traffic traveling in opposite directions.

G. BOXING IN

The surrounding of a violator's moving vehicle with moving pursuit vehicles which are then slowed to a stop along with the violator's vehicle.

H. HEADING OFF

An attempt to terminate a pursuit by pulling ahead of, behind, or toward a violator's moving vehicle to force it to the side of the road or to otherwise come to a stop.

I. PARALLELING

1. Street-Driving a police vehicle on a street parallel to a street on which a pursuit is occurring.
2. Vehicle-A deliberate offensive tactic by one or more patrol vehicles to drive alongside the pursued vehicle while it is in motion.

J. ROADBLOCK

A restriction or obstruction used or intended for the purpose of preventing free passage of motor vehicles on a roadway in order to affect the apprehension of a violator.

POLICY

1. PURSUIT GUIDELINES

A. Before entering into a pursuit the officer should consider the following factors.

1. Road conditions
2. Weather conditions
3. Time of day
4. Amount of pedestrian traffic
5. Amount of vehicular traffic on the roadway
6. Location the pursuit is heading
7. Officer's driving ability compared to that of the suspects.

B. If after consideration of these factors and at any time during the pursuit, the officer feels that the risks to his own safety and the safety of others poses a greater danger to the community than the danger which will exist if the suspect is not immediately apprehended, the pursuing officer may terminate the pursuit.

C. If the shift supervisor, after being informed of all information, feels the risks of pursuit are too great, he can order the pursuit terminated.

- D. The only departmental vehicles authorized for a pursuit shall be equipped with emergency lights and siren.
 - E. These emergency devices shall be operated at all times during the pursuit.
 - F. There shall be no more than two (2) departmental vehicles involved in any one pursuit. However, if the supervisor feels that additional manpower is needed to affect apprehension, he may authorize sufficient additional vehicles to accomplish apprehension.
 - G. Departmentally issued "Stop Sticks" should be employed at the earliest opportunity to safely end a pursuit.
 - H. Accepted pursuit circumstances:
 - 1. On sight pursuit of a person who committed, is committing, or about to commit a felony.
 - 2. On sight pursuit of a traffic or misdemeanor violator when the violation has been witnessed by the pursuing officer.
 - 3. When ordered by the shift supervisor to assist the primary pursuit vehicle.
 - I. The primary pursuit vehicle shall maintain visual contact with the suspect vehicle. The secondary pursuit vehicle, if any, shall maintain radio contact with the Dispatcher.
 - J. If more than one departmental vehicle is involved in a pursuit, they shall operate in a single file, maintaining a three to four second cushion between vehicles, to allow for evasive action and safe vehicle operation.
 - K. Officers shall not fire any firearm at or from a moving vehicle, unless it is necessary to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury to the officer or another person.
 - L. Departmental vehicles shall not pursue into oncoming traffic unless there exists exceptional circumstances and ordered to do so by the shift supervisor.
 - M. Departmental vehicles shall not vehicle parallel, head off, set up road blocks, or attempt to make contact with the pursued vehicle (ramming) as a means to end a pursuit unless warranted by exceptional circumstances and authorized by the shift supervisor.
 - N. During a pursuit, every officer involved shall operate his vehicle with due regard for the safety of the public.
2. INTER-JURISDICTIONAL PURSUIT
- A. Our department shall provide timely notification to the department whose jurisdiction we are entering.

- B. That jurisdiction's officer may take over as primary pursuit vehicle due to their familiarity with the area.
- C. When advised by another agency of a pursuit heading into our jurisdiction, and only when our help is specifically requested, shall the shift supervisor authorize department vehicles to enter the pursuit.

3. COMMUNICATION CENTER DUTIES

- A. Dispatch shall receive and record all pertinent information on the pursuit.
- B. Dispatch shall immediately notify the shift supervisor.
- C. Dispatch shall call a signal 100 until the pursuit is terminated.
- D. Perform all relevant motor vehicle checks.
- E. Provide necessary assistance at the direction of the shift supervisor.
- F. Monitor pursuit until termination.
- G. If the pursuit crosses jurisdictional lines, dispatch shall give prompt notification to the department whose jurisdiction the pursuit is entering.
- H. Dispatch shall give the jurisdiction our pursuit is entering all the vital information about the pursuit and the reason for initiating.
- I. Dispatch shall request the same information from a jurisdiction that has a pursuit entering our jurisdiction.

4. SHIFT SUPERVISOR DUTIES

- A. As soon the supervisor becomes aware of the pursuit, he/she shall assume control of pursuit and be responsible for monitoring the pursuit.
- B. While monitoring incoming information about the pursuit, the supervisor shall in compliance with this policy, determine whether to continue or terminate the pursuit.
- C. The shift supervisor shall be responsible for coordination of the pursuit.
 - 1. Requesting additional units.
 - 2. Types of pursuit tactics to employ.
 - 3. Whether to terminate or continue pursuit.
 - 4. Approving the crossing of jurisdictional lines.
- D. The shift supervisor shall go to the scene of pursuit termination and take charge of the scene.
- E. The shift supervisor shall file a supplemental overview report on the pursuit.

5. PURSUIT REPORTING

- A. The primary officer shall file a case report on the pursuit no later than one (1) day after the incident.
- B. The report shall include:
 - 1. Date pursuit started/finished
 - 2. Time pursuit started/finished
 - 3. Location pursuit started/finished
 - 4. Highest speeds obtained
 - 5. Weather and road conditions
 - 6. Reason pursuit was initiated/terminated
 - 7. Result of the pursuit
 - 8. The offenses for which the suspect is to be charged
- C. This report shall be forwarded to the Sheriff.