



LAWRENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT PROCEDURAL NOTICE

Vehicle Pursuits

PN14.00.02

POLICY

High-speed pursuits are among the most hazardous functions performed by law enforcement. These acts can endanger the officer, citizens, and fleeing suspects and passengers. It is the policy of the Lawrence Police Department that all officers will act in a manner that minimizes the risks associated with emergency driving and high-speed vehicle pursuits.

All personnel operating vehicles in a law enforcement capacity will do so with due regard for the safety of all persons. Officers shall be thoroughly familiar with all the laws of the State of Indiana concerning the use of emergency vehicles and equipment as well as applicable Department procedures.

DEFINITIONS

Pursuit – An attempt by a law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle (IC 9-13-2-6) to apprehend the occupant(s) of a moving motor vehicle when the officer reasonably believes the driver of the fleeing vehicle is aware of the officer's attempt to stop the vehicle and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing vehicle speed, ignoring the officer, or otherwise attempting to elude the police.

StarChase System – A pursuit reduction technology containing a miniature GPS module encased in a tracking projectile/tag that is deployed from a fixed launcher mounted on a law enforcement vehicle.

Street Paralleling – To actively follow a pursuit in emergency status, by driving on a road adjacent to the pursuit and maintaining the same direction of travel as the pursuit.

Clearly Marked Vehicle – A city owned or leased vehicle that is painted or marked with graphics to clearly identify it as a law enforcement vehicle. The vehicle must also have a readily-apparent police insignia visible to others, as well as an overhead emergency light bar attached to the roof of the vehicle and siren.

Semi-Marked Vehicle – A city owned or leased vehicle that may be painted or marked with graphics to identify it as a law enforcement vehicle, and has a readily-apparent police insignia visible to others. The vehicle typically has inside mounted emergency lights (i.e. grill, dash, and/or deck lights) and siren, but lacks an overhead emergency light bar attached to the roof of the vehicle.

Unmarked Vehicle – A city owned or leased vehicle that is not clearly marked with painted words or graphics and does not display a readily-apparent police insignia. Although the vehicle may have hidden emergency lights (i.e. grill, dash, or deck lights) and siren, it lacks any clearly visible emergency lights.

PROCEDURE

I. Pursuit Authority



- A. The authority of a law enforcement officer to engage in pursuit is inherent in the officer's duty to apprehend person(s) who have committed, or are committing a law violation. The authority to pursue law violators provides the Department an opportunity to deter crime and protect citizens.
- B. The decision to engage in a pursuit must be considered a very serious matter. Officers must consider not only themselves, but the general public and occupants of the fleeing vehicle, as well. Officers are reminded that state and local provisions will not protect them from the consequences of any reckless disregard for the safety of others.
- C. Officers in either marked, semi-marked or unmarked police vehicles, and equipment with emergency lights and sirens, may initiate a pursuit. Officers operating unmarked vehicles shall immediately relinquish control of the pursuit to clearly marked or semi-marked vehicle using emergency lights and siren as soon as possible.

II. Pursuit Guidelines

- A. The vehicle's emergency lights and siren shall be operated while driving under pursuit conditions. Should an officer's emergency lights or siren fail or become disabled during the course of a pursuit, or other mechanical failure occur that would make the vehicle unsafe, the officer must discontinue involvement and relinquish responsibility for continuation to the secondary pursuing officer.
- B. No vehicle transporting prisoners shall initiate or become involved in a pursuit under any circumstances.
- C. Pursuit driving shall only be permitted in the following circumstances:
 1. On sight pursuit of a person who has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a felony; and
 2. On sight pursuit of a traffic offense or misdemeanor violator when the violation has been witnessed by the pursuing officer.
- D. Before initiating, and during the course of any pursuit, the pursuing officer(s) and supervisor(s) shall consider the following:
 1. Seriousness of the offense;
 2. Knowledge of the identity of the pursued suspect(s)/violation(s);
 3. Other occupants in the pursued vehicle (i.e. children);
 4. Weather and lighting conditions;
 5. Road conditions (intersections, traffic controls, overhead lighting, curves, hills, repair, width of road, etc.);



6. Density of vehicular and pedestrian traffic;
 7. Locality of the pursuit (residential, highway, etc.);
 8. Officer's familiarity with the area; and
 9. Nature of the pursuit (i.e. manner of operation of suspect vehicle, speeding, erratic or reckless driving, etc.).
- E. Vehicle pursuits shall be reported to the Communications Center as soon as reasonably possible. The announcement of a "pursuit" will prompt Communications to immediately begin the patching of radio channels and/or notification of nearby districts or jurisdictions to enhance officer safety. Those officers not involved in the pursuit shall restrict their radio transmissions to emergency traffic only or be prepared to switch to an alternate channel.
- F. Any officer initiating a pursuit shall immediately notify the Communications Center of the pursuit and provide the following information:
1. Unit number;
 2. Location;
 3. Direction of travel;
 4. Reason for initiating the pursuit;
 5. Description of the suspect's vehicle and occupants; and
 6. Other pertinent information (Officer Safety concerns).
- G. The pursuing officer will remain in contact with Communications and advise all pertinent information until such time as additional units are available to assist. When a second officer joins the pursuit (whenever practical) that officer will handle all radio traffic so that the initiating/lead officer can maintain eye contact with the pursued vehicle.
- H. The Communications Center shall formally notify or ensure that the on duty supervisor is on the run to insure prompt supervision and field management of the incident. The supervisor shall acknowledge notification from Communications and assume responsibility for monitoring and continually evaluating the pursuit. The supervisor will be responsible for the preparation and completion of the pursuit supervisory special report and related paperwork and/or reports. The Communications Center shall initiate a Command Staff page of the incident and any other pertinent information related to the incident.
- I. The assigned supervisor will monitor and continually evaluate the pursuit, then respond to the termination point of the pursuit to take charge of the scene.



- J. Only three (3) Department vehicles may operate under pursuit conditions in an attempt to stop a fleeing vehicle, unless further Departmental vehicles are specifically ordered by a supervisor. Assisting units will not convoy behind the pursuing vehicle. A canine vehicle and a vehicle equipped with StarChase is permitted to be additional Department vehicles in pursuit. EXCEPTION: When a Ranking Officer (e.g. the pursuit supervisor) reasonably believes that additional vehicles are needed, a Ranking Officer may authorize sufficient additional vehicles to assist in the pursuit. The supervisor may consider the following when determining if more than three (3) Departmental vehicles are to pursue:
1. Number of occupants in suspect vehicle;
 2. Nature of the offense(s) and danger presented to the pursuing officers; and/or
 3. Any additional exigent circumstances.
- K. Department vehicles not directly involved in the pursuit as a pursuing vehicle shall not travel using emergency equipment unless responding to place tire deflating devices, or unless specifically authorized to do so by the supervisor controlling the pursuit.
- L. Pursuing officers shall operate Department vehicles in single file and maintain adequate distance between the vehicle to allow for evasive action and safe operation.
- M. The assisting officer(s) may take over control of the pursuit only after being requested to do so by the initiating/lead officer. The assisting officer(s) must not attempt to pass the primary officer's vehicle, unless the assisting officer has been requested to take control of the pursuit. If a Precision Intervention Technique (P.I.T.) certified officer joins the pursuit, and determines an approved P.I.T. Maneuver should be performed, then the P.I.T. officer shall take over as the lead car in the pursuit in order to attempt a P.I.T. Maneuver. If a StarChase equipped vehicle joins the pursuit, and determines a deployment should occur, then the StarChase equipped vehicle shall take over as the lead car in the pursuit to attempt to tag the suspect vehicle.
1. At no time shall ramming be used, or attempted, as a method of terminating the pursuit unless the situation warrants the use of deadly force.
- N. Officers involved in a pursuit will not engage in street paralleling.
- O. Upon termination of a pursuit, an officer operating a police vehicle under emergency conditions will cease emergency operations once notification is made that sufficient assistance is on the scene. EXCEPTION: It is determined that a specialty skill is necessary, the supervisor may authorize, the specialty officer to continue under emergency operation.

III. Inter-jurisdictional Pursuits

- A. When a pursuit initiated on LPD jurisdiction crosses into the jurisdiction of another agency and is joined by officers of that agency, the initiating officer will retain responsibility of the pursuit unless relieved by a supervisor.



- B. Should a pursuit initiated by another agency enter into LPD jurisdiction, officers must not join in the pursuit if three (3) or more vehicles are currently in the pursuit of the fleeing vehicle, unless ordered to do so by a supervisor. If an officer trained in the P.I.T. is available and authorized by the other agency, then one (1) P.I.T. officer may join the pursuit to attempt to terminate the pursuit. If a canine officer is available and authorized by the other agency, then one (1) canine officer may join the pursuit to assist in suspect apprehension. If a StarChase equipped vehicle is available and authorized by the other agency, then one (1) StarChase equipped vehicle may join the pursuit to assist in a deployment of the device.
1. Should that pursuit subsequently leave the LPD jurisdiction, the authorized officer(s) involved shall not discontinue the pursuit until sufficient assistance has arrived and/or relieved of their position.

IV. Canine Involvement

- A. Whenever the canine officer is involved in a pursuit, the canine unit shall, when safely able, move to become the lead pursuing vehicle. The canine handler shall notify all units in the pursuit of the potential for canine release upon termination of the pursuit.

V. Tire Deflating Devices / Road Blocks

- A. Stationary Road Blocks shall not be used to terminate a pursuit. Blocking a roadway, street, alleyway, etc., with vehicles or any other objects so that a vehicle cannot pass is prohibited. However, blocking of intersections and entry ramps, etc., to enhance public safety is allowed.
- B. Tire deflating may be used by officers with properly documented training to end a vehicle pursuit, either by hand or by an automated rear-deployment device, except when pursuing the following vehicles:
1. Motorcycle (unless deadly force is authorized);
 2. School Buses (when children are on board);
 3. Any vehicle transporting hazardous materials;
 4. Other two-wheeled vehicles;
 5. Semi-tractors and trailers (unless extreme/exigent circumstances exist); and
 6. Any vehicle that would pose an unusual hazard.
- C. When an officer not involved in a pursuit is responding to place a tire deflating device(s), use of emergency lights and siren is authorized. When placing tire deflating device(s) on the roadway, all emergency lights must be in operation.



- D. The officer deploying tire deflating device(s) must notify the Communications Center of the location of the devices with ample time for pursuing officers to be notified. Extreme caution should be used during deployment.
- E. If an escape route around tire deflating device(s) is possible, they may also be placed in the escape route.
- F. Details concerning the use of tire deflating device(s) must be documented in the police incident report.

VI. Rolling Road Blocks

- A. A Rolling Road Block (R.R.B.) may be used in a situation where the pursuing officers have reasonable belief the situation is generally low risk. R.R.B. is a technique where three (3) police vehicles will attempt to bring the driver to a safe, controlled stop by surrounding the suspect vehicle from front, driver's side, and rear.
 - 1. R.R.B. is best used for situations where a suspect is not necessarily increasing speed, however the driver will not stop. (i.e. DUI, medical condition, elderly person, etc.)
 - 2. R.R.B. shall not be used in any kind of high-risk situation or if the suspect attempts to strike the police vehicles when attempting to perform this maneuver.
 - 3. When attempting a R.R.B., if the suspect displays a weapon, is reckless, or any officer involved does not believe the technique can be safely performed, the technique should be aborted and an alternate means used to end the pursuit.

VII. Precision Intervention Technique (P.I.T.)

- A. The P.I.T. will be used in order to stop the pursuit at the safest, fastest, and most appropriate opportunity before the pursuit continues, placing civilians, officers, and the suspect in further danger. If, in the judgment of the officer(s) trained and certified in the P.I.T. maneuver and the assigned supervisor, the fleeing vehicle must be stopped immediately to safeguard life and preserve public safety, the P.I.T. may be used.
- B. The P.I.T. officer will move to become the lead car in the pursuit (even if a canine officer is involved). The P.I.T. officer shall make notice to assisting officers that the P.I.T. maneuver will be performed at the first available opportunity. The decision to perform the P.I.T. must take into account the suspect's hazardous driving and other means to terminate the pursuit prior to attempting P.I.T. (such as tire deflating device(s)). The P.I.T. officer must consider the following prior to performing a P.I.T.:
 - 1. Safety of bystanders;
 - 2. Suspect's speed;



3. Risk of injury to occupants of the suspect vehicle and officer(s) involved; and
 4. Adequate space for the maneuver.
- C. Assisting officers shall attempt a tactical “V” with their vehicles after the P.I.T. maneuver has been completed. Officers shall use their vehicles to block any escape by the suspect vehicle, unless an officer safety or other high-risk situation arises. The tactical “V” should be considered a felony stop under certain circumstances.
 - D. The use of the P.I.T. maneuver within guidelines and training of LPD is not designed or likely to cause serious bodily injury or death.
 - E. Officers who have not been trained and certified by a P.I.T. Instructor shall not perform the P.I.T. maneuver. If there is a question of training by a supervisor or instructor, the officer shall be responsible for providing training documentation.
 - F. The P.I.T. is meant to prevent major property damage and injury to civilians, officers, and/or suspects. Therefore, it is recommended the P.I.T. be used at speeds not greater than 45 to 50 miles per hour.
 - G. Vehicular damage may occur to vehicles involved in the maneuver. P.I.T. is a trained pursuit termination procedure use-of-force. Damage to the vehicle(s) involved in the maneuver is not an accident or crash, thus the Accident Review process shall not be initiated. Any damage that occurs shall be documented in the case, report and photos shall be taken, regardless of whether there is damage to the police vehicle or not.
 - H. Officers trained in the P.I.T. maneuver shall attend an eight (8) hour class for initial certification. Officers shall then attend annual in-service training on the P.I.T. maneuver. Any officer failing to attend the in-service training shall not be allowed to perform the maneuver and will have to attend another certification class.

VIII. StarChase Pursuit Management System

- A. Allows an officer to remotely affix a GPS tracking device to a pursued, or about to be pursued, vehicle using an air pressure system to discharge the tracker from the front of the StarChase equipped vehicle. Once the tracker is affixed, its location can be tracked by the Communications Center.
- B. For the purpose of clarity of communications, radio traffic should identify the device as “StarChase”.
- C. StarChase equipment will only be assigned and operated by officers who have been trained in its use, unless required by exigent circumstances.
- D. Trained officers shall use their own judgment regarding affixing a StarChase tag upon a pursued vehicle and does not need prior approval from a supervisor.



1. All safety decisions related to the discharge of a StarChase tag rest with the operating officer.
 2. Supervisors may direct or approve the deployment of a StarChase equipped vehicle in a pursuit and/or discharge of a tag.
- E. The following shall be consider before deployment of the tag:
1. The ability to safely maneuver within targeting range of the suspect vehicle.
 2. Determine if there are any circumstances that would indicate the device would not work (e.g. weather conditions, suspect weaving, etc.).
- F. StarChase tags will be deployed in accordance with training.
1. Once the StarChase tag has been successfully deployed, pursuing vehicles should normally drop back significantly from the suspect vehicle.
 2. Officers will maintain constant communications with the Communications Center for the speed/direction/location of the tag.
 3. The pursuit supervisor will coordinate with the Communications Center to direct resources and officers to the appropriate locations.
- G. The StarChase tag will not be deployed in the following situations:
1. The suspect vehicle is a motorcycle; and/or
 2. When pedestrians are between or very near the suspect vehicle and the StarChase equipped vehicle.

IX. Aviation Support

- A. Communications will attempt to determine if a public safety agency helicopter is available to assist in a pursuit. The pursuing officer and supervisor should be promptly advised of the availability of a helicopter.
- B. When a helicopter is available and has visual contact with the suspect vehicle, the pursuing officer(s), when appropriate, will leave emergency lights and siren on, decrease speed in order to increase a safe distance between the suspect vehicle and police vehicle, and allow the helicopter to continue surveillance and provide direction to the ground officers.
- C. Helicopter personnel may be able to advise ground personnel of upcoming traffic congestion, road hazards, and other factors that may endanger life and property.

X. Pursuit Termination



- A. As the supervisor continually assesses conditions, the supervisor may order the termination of a pursuit. Officers ordered to discontinue a pursuit must immediately acknowledge this order via radio to both the supervisor and the Communications Center.
- B. The pursuing officer may end a pursuit, or a supervisor may order a pursuit terminated. Factors to consider include the following:
 - 1. Nature of offense;
 - 2. Time of day;
 - 3. Location;
 - 4. Knowledge of the identity of the pursued suspect(s);
 - 5. Occupants of vehicle (i.e. children);
 - 6. Weather conditions;
 - 7. Traffic conditions/congestion;
 - 8. Pedestrians; and
 - 9. Speed or recklessness of the fleeing vehicle.
- C. The supervisor and pursuing officer are responsible for quickly weighing the above factors and determining if it is in the public interest to continue a pursuit. Supervisors are responsible and accountable for ordering the termination of a pursuit if, in their experience and judgment, the risk factors are too great to continue the pursuit.
- D. Following any pursuit, officers must immediately notify Communications once the vehicle is stopped, regardless of the distance or duration of the pursuit. This applies to pursuits of short duration, even if the officer had not yet had an opportunity to broadcast details via radio.
- E. The initiating officer, if not still involved in the pursuit, should proceed to the termination point of the pursuit under normal driving conditions in the event of an apprehension.
- F. The only officers remaining at the termination point of a pursuit will be the initial pursuing officer, the last pursuing officers, and other personnel ordered by the supervisor.
- G. The officer initiating the pursuit will be responsible for the arrest of the suspect when the suspect voluntarily terminates the pursuit, is involved in a traffic accident, or is forced to stop by other means. If the officer initiating the pursuit is unable to proceed to the termination point (i.e. involved in a traffic accident/crash), then the officer directly in pursuit at the time of the apprehension will be responsible for the arrest and reports.



XI. Supervisory Responsibility

- A. A Supervisory Special Report will be completed for all vehicle pursuits. The supervisor assigned to the pursuit will be responsible for the thorough and accurate completion of the Supervisory Special Report.
1. The supervisor will provide a written evaluation of the pursuing officer(s) actions in the “Supervisor’s Opinion” section of the Supervisory Special Report, indicating any necessary counseling, corrective actions, or other recommendations relative to any involved officer’s performance and decision-making throughout the pursuit.
 2. The supervisor must indicate whether or not the pursuit was “In Compliance” or “Not in Compliance” with Department policy.
 3. If a P.I.T. maneuver was used to terminate the pursuit, the supervisor shall make note of that on the Supervisory Special Report.
 4. If StarChase was used during a pursuit, the supervisor shall indicate on the Supervisory Special Report such deployment, successful or unsuccessful, and if the tag was recovered.
 5. The supervisor will complete the section titled “Supervisory Actions” and explain why the pursuit was either allowed to continue or ordered to be terminated.
- B. The supervisor originally assigned to the pursuit will also be responsible for any additional special reports that are necessary (damage to city vehicle, resisting arrest, etc.).
- C. The Supervisory Special Report will be reviewed by all of the involved supervisors and forwarded to the respective Division Commander, not later than twelve (12) hours after termination of the incident. The Division Commander will review the Supervisory Special Report and all other relative reports and forward a recommendation to the Deputy Chief of Police, identifying whether or not the pursuit was handled in accordance with the Department’s pursuit policy.
1. If a P.I.T. maneuver was used to terminate the pursuit, the Division Commander, shall forward all documents to the Deputy Chief of Police for the incident to be reviewed by the Use of Force Board.
 2. The results of the Use of Force Board findings will be forwarded to the Deputy Chief of Police.
 3. The Deputy Chief of Police will be responsible for reviewing the Board’s findings and instituting any necessary remedial counseling or training relative to the performance and actions of the officer(s) and/or supervisor(s).
 4. The Deputy Chief of Police will make recommendations to the Chief of Police, or designee, regarding any disciplinary action.



5. All documents and findings pertaining to an incident reviewed by the Use of Force Board will be retained in the office of Professional Standards.

XII. Investigative Responsibility

- A. The assigned accident investigator and assigned detective will be responsible for the investigation of all incidents in which a person is intentionally injured, critically injured or results in a fatality by the pursued suspect's vehicle.
- B. If the pursued vehicle is involved in a property damage accident, the procedures regarding a traffic accident/crash must be followed.