
	MESQUITE POLICE DEPARTMENT
	401.00 POLICE VEHICLES
	Effective Date: February, 2018
	Approved: _____  Chief of Police

I. General Provisions

- A. Vehicle assignment will be made based on:
 - 1. Job assignment
 - 2. Seniority
 - 3. Residence location
 - 4. The best interests of the department
- B. Any employee operating or riding in a departmental vehicle shall exercise good judgment and shall not commit any act or omission which would reflect unfavorably on the department or tend to cause the public to lose confidence in the department.
- C. No person other than a City of Mesquite employee, or an authorized service or maintenance technician who has a valid Texas driver license, shall be permitted to operate a police vehicle, police radio or other police equipment.
- D. All occupants of a departmental vehicle will be restrained by the use of safety belts or child safety restraints while the vehicle is in operation.
- E. Vehicle Maintenance
 - 1. The officer assigned shall be fully responsible for the general maintenance and proper care of the vehicle. In the event multiple officers are assigned to the same vehicle, all officers are equally responsible for maintenance.
 - 2. All maintenance and repairs will be performed at the city service center by service center employees or at a place designated by the service center superintendent.
 - 3. Only fuel, oil, lubricant, or other additives provided by the service center are authorized to be used in departmental vehicles.
 - 4. Officers are prohibited from any alterations to departmental vehicles without the prior approval of the Chief of Police and the Service Center Superintendent.
 - 5. Officers are prohibited from adding any decorative element or other feature that changes the appearance of a police vehicle without the prior approval of the Chief of Police.
 - 6. All weapons shall be removed when a police vehicle is left for maintenance or repairs.
 - 7. Officers operating a departmental vehicle are responsible for keeping the vehicle cleanliness of the interior and exterior of the vehicle.
 - 8. Officers are required to perform a pre-shift inspection of their vehicle which will include:
 - a. Coolant and oil are at acceptable levels.
 - b. Visually inspect tires for general condition and inflation.
 - c. Visually inspect to ensure that the vehicle is equipped with an inflated spare tire, jack, first aid kit, and any other equipment assigned to the vehicle.
 - d. Visually inspect the vehicle and report new damage.
 - e. Fuel levels are sufficient. Officers should ensure the fuel level at the end of a shift is at sufficient level for the following shift as there may not be time to fuel the vehicle.

- F. Unattended vehicles will be turned off and locked.
 - G. Officers should be aware of the poor public image presented by the parking of several marked units at any one location. Therefore, no more than three marked police vehicles shall be parked at one location, whether on- or off-duty, except on official business.
 - H. Two or more officers assigned to attend the same school or meeting out of the jurisdiction should ride together, if practical.
- II. Home-storage
- A. The Home-Storage Program is designed for the purpose of:
 - 1. Enhancing public safety through increased police visibility on the streets of the city.
 - 2. Maximizing the quality of vehicle maintenance.
 - 3. Providing quick and effective response to disasters, disorders or other incidents which may require the recall of off-duty personnel.
 - 4. Enhancing the ability of the department to provide police service commensurate with the need for such service.
 - B. Marked Patrol Home-Storage is available only for officers who reside in the city of Mesquite.
 - C. Unmarked Home-Storage is available to all officers assigned a vehicle who live within the city of Mesquite.
 - D. Unmarked Home-Storage is available to officers assigned unmarked cars who live outside the city of Mesquite with the following restrictions:
 - 1. Officers must live within the current approved mileage limit. When calculating mileage eligibility for a Home-Storage unit, it will be the distance from the closest city limit to the officer's primary residence in a straight line. Officers will not be permitted to park the vehicle between the two locations in order to qualify for a Home-Storage vehicle or reduce the employees cost sharing.
 - 2. Operation of these vehicles off-duty would be restricted to travel to and from work.
 - E. Officers are prohibited from taking any vehicle home other than their assigned vehicle.
 - F. Violation of any provisions of this order may result in revocation or suspension of Home-Storage privileges.
- III. Supervision
- A. Inspection and supervision of the maintenance and care of a police vehicle is the responsibility of the officer's assigned supervisor.
 - B. An off-duty officer operating a police vehicle is subject to supervision by on-duty supervisors.
 - C. Any supervisory officer may stop a police vehicle operated by an off-duty officer upon cause that the officer is operating the vehicle contrary to regulations. If corrective action cannot be taken at that time, the vehicle shall be taken to police headquarters by another officer. Deficiencies will be documented in writing by the supervisory officer.
- IV. Off-duty Operation
- A. Officers are authorized to use home-storage vehicles for personal use within the city of Mesquite.
 - B. Operation of a home-storage vehicle for personal use, including travel to and from work, does not constitute work time or hours worked for purposes of overtime calculation.
 - C. Non-police personnel may accompany officers as passengers when the vehicle is being operated off duty. Because the officer is subject to recall to active duty at any time, discretion must be exercised in the transportation of civilian passengers. The officer should consider the following:
 - 1. The security of police operations and procedures.

2. The welfare and personal safety of the passenger, together with the possibility of related liability
 3. The integrity of the passenger
- D. The safety of passengers rests solely with the officer operating the vehicle. The officer shall discharge civilian passengers at a safe and convenient location before responding to a call or making an emergency run.
 - E. Radio communications shall be maintained at all times while a police vehicle is in operation in accordance with current departmental procedures.
 - F. The officer shall inform the Communications Center of his availability and shall receive clearance before responding to any call while off duty.
 - G. An officer operating a police vehicle as an emergency vehicle shall do so in accordance with the current General Order regulating Operation of Emergency Vehicles.
 - H. An officer in civilian clothing should initiate traffic stops or violator contacts only in order to prevent an ongoing violation constituting an immediate hazard. In most cases, the better practice is to refer violations to a uniformed officer.
 - I. An officer operating a departmental vehicle off duty shall wear appropriate attire so as to not reflect unfavorably on the department. The officer is responsible for the conduct and personal appearance of passengers who shall meet the same dress standards.
 - J. Police vehicles shall not be used by officers or passengers who have consumed alcoholic beverages. No alcoholic beverages shall be transported in the vehicle for personal or social purposes.
 - K. The vehicle shall not be used for carrying heavy or bulky loads. No objects shall be allowed to protrude from the windows or trunk.
 - L. A police vehicle may be driven to and from a part-time job within the city of Mesquite, provided the vehicle is not used as part of the employment, unless specifically authorized.
 - M. A police vehicle shall not be loaned to, or borrowed by, an officer to whom it is not assigned for use at a part-time job.

EFFECTIVE: April, 1986; REVISED: September, 1990; FORMERLY: E/84-6, E/86-6; REVISED: January, 1992; REVISED: March, 1994; REVISED: January, 1996; REVISED: March, 1997; REVISED: August, 2011; REVISED: March, 2013; REVISED: July, 2017; REVISED: February, 2018.

