

Department of the Interior Law Enforcement Policy

Effective Date: January 15, 2016

Series: Law Enforcement and Security

Chapter 12: Law Enforcement Vehicle Standards

Originating Office: Office of Law Enforcement and Security

12.1 Purpose. This chapter establishes minimum standards for vehicles assigned to law enforcement officers (LEOs), vehicle operations, training requirements, record keeping, and the Department (DOI) Home-to-Work Transportation Program.

12.2 Scope. This policy applies to all DOI bureaus/offices with law enforcement programs.

12.3 Authority. This policy is issued pursuant to 112 DM 17 and 212 DM 17.

12.4 Responsibilities.

A. Director, Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) is responsible for policy development and provides program guidance and oversight of the Department's law enforcement programs.

B. Bureau Directors of Law Enforcement (BDLE) are responsible for promulgating and complying with this policy, and the corresponding *Law Enforcement Handbook*.

12.5 Policy. Bureaus/offices will create bureau/office policy and procedures that apply to all law enforcement vehicles and for all LEOs utilizing those vehicles in the performance of their duties. Bureaus and offices must ensure that:

A. All law enforcement vehicles and vehicle operations meet the minimum established standards.

B. All LEOs operating law enforcement vehicles meet the minimum training standards.

C. Complete and accurate records are maintained for all law enforcement vehicles and their operators.

D. Bureaus/offices that have implemented the Home-to-Work Transportation Program strictly adhere to the program requirements.

12.6 **Standards.** Bureau/office law enforcement programs will establish and implement procedures that comply with this chapter and meet requirements specified in the corresponding *Law Enforcement Handbook*.

Law Enforcement Handbook

Chapter 12: Law Enforcement Vehicle Standards

Date Issued: February 19, 2016

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12.1 What does this chapter do? This chapter establishes policy and minimum standards for vehicles assigned to Department law enforcement officers (LEOs).

12.2 What are the minimum vehicle standards? Bureaus/offices will establish policies/SOPs for all vehicles used in law enforcement operations, emergency response and pursuits to include the following requirements:

- 1) Vehicles should be chosen for the specific law enforcement environment in which they are utilized and should have all appropriate equipment to fulfill operational needs.
- 2) Disabling seat belts and airbags is prohibited.
- 3) Installed law enforcement equipment must be compatible and not interfere with Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) vehicle safety equipment.
- 4) Vehicles should be clearly identifiable to the public using a bureau specific marking plan. Exceptions are permitted for vehicles used for plain clothes personnel, surveillance, undercover operations or administrative use.
- 5) There is currently no U.S. industry standard for the visibility/conspicuity of markings for law enforcement vehicles. Bureaus/offices will develop minimum safety and visibility standards for reflective decals, markings, etc.
- 6) All vehicles will meet or exceed law enforcement warning equipment (lights/sirens) standards established by state law or bureau/office policy, whichever is more restrictive. Exceptions are permitted for vehicles used for plain clothes personnel, surveillance, undercover operations or administrative use.
- 7) Bureaus/offices will create minimum performance equipment standards for all vehicles utilized in pursuits.

12.3 What are the operating standards for law enforcement vehicles?

Bureaus/offices will establish policies/SOPs for the operation of vehicles used in law enforcement operations, emergency response and pursuits to include the following requirements:

- 1) Operators will exercise reasonable diligence at all times in the care of their assigned vehicle.
- 2) All operators will have a valid driver's license.
- 3) Seat belt use is required at all times. Bureaus/offices may create specific exceptions (e.g., high risk warrant service, tactical responses, etc.).
- 4) Ensure that only trained LEOs operate vehicles in an emergency or law enforcement capacity.
- 5) If marked vehicles are operated by non-law enforcement personnel, vehicles should be clearly identified as "Out of Service".
- 6) Ensure that vehicles are parked/stored in locations that offer reasonable protection from theft or damage. Vehicles will be locked when not in use.
- 7) Establish safety inspection standards for all mechanical, safety and special equipment. Maintenance issues will be reported and repairs initiated in accordance with established schedules and procedures.
- 8) LEOs will notify their supervisor within 24 hours following receipt of a moving violation while on duty and in a government vehicle.
- 9) LEOs will immediately notify their supervisor upon any change in driver's license status (e.g. suspension, revocation).
- 10) Report all vehicle collisions involving a government vehicle in accordance with law and bureau/office policy regardless of fault and damage amount.
- 11) Shall not operate a vehicle while affected by alcoholic beverages or other drugs including prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- 12) Limit vehicle use to Official Business Only.

12.4 What are the training requirements for operating a law enforcement vehicle?

Prior to operating a vehicle in a law enforcement capacity, LEOs will successfully complete a bureau/office approved operator's training course for all vehicle types used in the performance of their duties. Training curricula and certification must include the following elements:

- 1) Vehicle Fundamentals (e.g. routine vehicle inspection, operation, maintenance and safety features).
- 2) Emergency vehicle operation including a review of emergency operation procedures, pursuit policy, and legal reviews.
- 3) Vehicle operation training records will be maintained for all LEOs.

12.5 What are the record keeping and reporting requirements for law enforcement and emergency vehicles?

Bureaus/offices will document and maintain a record of all vehicles in accordance with applicable FBMS, bureau/office and GSA fleet management standards.

12.6 What are the requirements for employees utilizing government vehicles as part of the Home-to-Work Transportation Program? Bureaus/offices that choose to implement Home-to-Work Transportation Programs will establish policies/SOPs, which contain the following requirements:

- 1) All programs must be managed in accordance with the *August 1, 2008 Secretary Authorization – Use of Government Passenger Carrier(s) for Home-to-Work Transportation of Those Employees Essential for the Safe and Efficient Performance of Criminal Law Enforcement, Protective Services, or Intelligence Duties*.
- 2) A written determination will be prepared for each program.
- 3) A written directive and annual agreement will be signed by each employee participating in the program.
- 4) Each participating employee will maintain a log or record documenting all vehicle use under the auspices of the home-to-work authorization.
- 5) Annual supervisory and management review of all determinations, directives, agreements, and logs/records.