



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 108A

Policy Name Vehicles Reported Stolen

Approved by *Dennis Larsen, Chief of Police*

Effective Date 08/21/2025

Approved Date 08/18/2025

Previous Date 06/16/2020

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

Updated to meet Oklahoma State Law.

POLICY:

Proof of ownership is required before a stolen vehicle may be broadcast or entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). However, situations may arise where the vehicle needs to be broadcast and entered into NCIC when proof of ownership cannot be obtained in a timely fashion. These include situations where a vehicle is taken in a robbery, homicide, etc. In situations such as these, and with approval from a field supervisor, an Incident Report shall be made and the information broadcast and entered into NCIC. Determining the reliability of the information obtained will be the responsibility of the officer taking the report and the field supervisor approving its entry into NCIC.

If the officer assigned will be delayed in responding to the call, with approval of a supervisor and after ensuring that the vehicle checks to the person reporting, a COS (check to own satisfaction) may be broadcast.

In other situations where it appears that a vehicle theft has occurred, but the victim has no proof of ownership, an Incident Report shall be made at the scene. An NCIC entry will not be authorized in these cases until ownership is verified. A COS may be broadcast.

SUMMARY: Procedures to be followed when investigating incidents of stolen or embezzled vehicles.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel

DEFINITIONS:

EMBEZZLEMENT OF A VEHICLE – includes test drives, leased or rented vehicles, vehicles obtained by a rental-purchase agreement, and vehicles taken with the owner's permission.

PROOF OF OWNERSHIP – ownership may be established by a vehicle registration, vehicle title, or a 10-28 return which checks to the victim. Ownership may also be established by any two of the following documents: current insurance verification card or insurance policy, manufacturer's certificate of origin, legal sales contract, loan papers from a financial institution, or lease or rental contract from a rental agency.

PROCEDURES:

1. Officers will be assigned to investigate auto thefts/embezzlements when one of the following conditions exist:
 - a. The owner/agent insists on seeing an officer.
 - b. The theft/embezzlement has taken place within the Tulsa city limits.
 - c. The owner/agent reports the vehicle stolen within the city limits, but the owner/agent resides outside the city limits. The officer may go outside the city limits to investigate if authorized by a field supervisor.

2. During the preliminary investigation, determine whether the vehicle has been towed or repossessed. If the vehicle has not been towed or repossessed, complete an Incident Report and turn it in by the end of the shift.
3. If the vehicle was taken as loot in another offense, do not make a separate auto theft report. Include the vehicle as property taken in a burglary, armed robbery, etc., on the *Property Supplemental*.
4. If the suspect is known to the victim and did not have consent to take the vehicle, or the owner has no proof of ownership, indicate this on the Incident Report. The vehicle information will not be entered NCIC but may be broadcast as a COS and should be entered into TRACIS as a locally stolen vehicle. This will be accomplished by the officer completing the incident report and calling Records to complete the vehicle theft cover sheet.
5. A leased or rented vehicle is not considered stolen or embezzled until 5 days past, 48 hours for heavy equipment, the due date on the contract. A copy of the lease or rental agreement must accompany the original report for prosecution to take place.
6. Dirt bikes, trailers, boats, construction and farm equipment are not considered vehicles for the purpose of a stolen vehicle report. List these items as property taken in a larceny, burglary, etc.
7. Upon completion of the initial investigation, contact the Records Section and provide the clerk with the victim and vehicle information. Include the name of the records clerk who was contacted in the original report. Ensure that if a title is used as proof of ownership, the title number is included in the report. If an insurance policy is used as proof of ownership, ensure the policy number and insurance information is included in the report.
8. If the owner lives outside the city limits, complete an Incident Report. If the owner does not have proof of ownership, broadcast a COS and instruct the victim to provide a copy of the title or registration to the Auto Theft Unit. Do not send an out-of-town victim home without taking a report.
9. Ensure victims understand that if they recover their vehicle, they need to call for an officer to cancel the original report.

REGULATIONS: None

REFERENCES:

108B, *Recovery of Stolen Vehicles*