



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 102B
Policy Name Vehicle Pursuits
Approved by *Dennis Larsen, Chief of Police*

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PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

Updated reporting procedures for Axon.

POLICY:

The Department has a duty to enforce the law and apprehend violators of the law. The decision to pursue a motor vehicle can present a danger to the lives of the public, officers, and suspects involved in the pursuit. Officers shall drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property.

SUMMARY: Procedures for pursuing vehicles.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel

DEFINITIONS:

BOX-IN – attempting to slow or stop the suspect by surrounding the suspect vehicle with police vehicles.

DANGEROUS FELONY - The felonies of murder, forcible rape, forcible sodomy, assault with a dangerous/deadly weapon, 1st degree burglary (NOT to include burglaries from attached garages), robbery, kidnapping, felony domestic with great bodily injury or strangulation, and other crimes against a person in which violence is an element to the felony offense, or the attempt to commit any of these felonies.

DEADBLOCK – the total blockade of a street or highway, leaving no path of escape.

DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE PURSUIT – the police vehicles behind the suspect vehicle actively attempting to apprehend the suspect. This includes the primary and secondary pursuit vehicles, K9 and any additional vehicles authorized by the pursuit monitor. This does not include those vehicles paralleling or blocking intersections.

ELUDING – when the operator of a motor vehicle has received a visual and audible signal (emergency lights and siren) from an officer driving a police vehicle directing the operator to bring the vehicle to a stop and the operator willfully increases speed, extinguishes lights, or willfully attempts in any other manner to avoid apprehension by the officer.

PRIMARY PURSUIT VEHICLE – the vehicle in closest proximity to the fleeing vehicle with the primary responsibility for conducting the pursuit. The primary unit may or may not be the unit that initiated the pursuit.

PURSUIT – an active attempt by an officer to apprehend one or more occupants of a moving vehicle after the officer has activated their emergency lights and siren and the officer reasonably believes that the driver of the fleeing vehicle is attempting to elude the officer.

PURSUIT MONITOR – a supervisor who assumes responsibility for, or is assigned to, monitor the pursuit. The Pursuit Monitor should preferably be the pursuing officer's supervisor, but any supervisor can monitor.

ROADBLOCK – the partial blockade of a street or highway, leaving one lane of traffic open.

SECONDARY PURSUIT VEHICLES – additional vehicles involved in the pursuit.

TERMINATION OF GROUND PURSUIT – requires that vehicles directly involved in the pursuit turn off emergency lights and siren, drop from view of the suspect, and obey the rules of the road.

PROCEDURES:

A. PURSUITS

1. A pursuit can be initiated for a dangerous felony or if the suspect presents a clear and immediate danger to the public. This will include violent felonies and crimes where such violence is an element of the offense. Officers are not automatically prohibited from pursuing traffic offenders or misdemeanor suspects. Prior to initiating a pursuit, officers will weigh the seriousness of the violation versus the risk to the public.

Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- a. Objective reason for the pursuit.
 - b. Likelihood of personal injury or property damage.
 - c. Probability of identifying the suspect.
 - d. Probability of apprehension.
 - e. Time of day.
 - f. Weather conditions and condition of road surface.
 - g. Approximate age of the suspect, if known.
 - h. Observed driving ability and behavior of the suspect (e.g., possible 10-75, weaving, moving violations which increase risk to the public).
 - i. Mechanical condition of the officer's vehicle and the suspect's vehicle, if known.
 - j. Observed number of passengers.
 - k. Availability of Air Support.
 - l. Ability to maintain clear radio communication.
 - m. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
 - n. Electronic tracking of vehicle, or other methods of tracking the vehicle.
2. After the above conditions have been evaluated, officers may, at their discretion, initiate a pursuit and/or continue the pursuit.
 3. Officers will continually evaluate these factors and will fully inform pursuit monitors of changes in these factors to assist pursuit monitors in properly evaluating the situation. When the risks outweigh the benefits of continuing the pursuit, the pursuit shall be terminated by the officer.
 4. It is the responsibility of a supervisor to monitor a pursuit. A pursuit monitor will be established as soon as reasonably possible after the initiation of a pursuit. The supervisor will then acknowledge on the radio that they are monitoring the pursuit. If a supervisor does not acknowledge on the radio, the dispatcher will assign an available supervisor to be the pursuit monitor. The pursuit monitor will not be directly involved in the pursuit. If a pursuit is initiated for other than a Dangerous Felony, the pursuit monitor will, as soon as reasonably possible, determine if the pursuit should continue.
 5. Upon initiating a vehicle pursuit, the officer will broadcast all pertinent information to the dispatcher. The dispatcher will immediately notify Air Support personnel (if on duty) and advise pursuing officers of the Air Support status. The dispatcher is responsible for notifying other talk groups and will automatically place the pursuing officer's talk group on emergency traffic (10-63). When a pursuit comes within approximately two miles of another uniform division's boundary or it becomes apparent that a pursuit will enter another uniform division's boundary, the dispatcher will patch into that uniform division's talk group.

6. Up to two additional backing officers may join the pursuit in addition to a K9 officer. The first backing officer to arrive will assume the responsibility for radio communications upon joining the pursuit. A supervisor may allow additional police vehicles if it appears that the number of officers involved would be insufficient to arrest the number of suspects.
7. The pursuit monitor will also constantly evaluate the known circumstances. When the risks outweigh the benefits of continuing the pursuit, the pursuit should be terminated by the pursuit monitor.
8. If the pursuit continues outside the City of Tulsa, Public Safety Communications (PSC) will notify the appropriate outside agencies of the pursuit. If requested by an officer or supervisor, PSC will request assistance from the appropriate outside agencies.
9. Officers are not prohibited from paralleling the path of a suspect vehicle or blocking intersections for the protection of the public either during the pursuit or after the pursuit is terminated. Officers in the area who are not directly involved in the pursuit may use emergency lights and siren to parallel if:
 - a. It is done in a reasonable and prudent manner.
 - b. It is done in a manner that does not pressure the suspect to continue the pursuit or to increase speed.
10. When approaching any intersection officers shall take all necessary precautions, including slowing and being prepared to stop, to ensure the safety of the public and that the intersection is clear before proceeding.
11. When the Air Support crew advises that the suspect vehicle is in view, the observer will assume responsibility for the pursuit and advise officers of the suspect vehicle activity.
12. All ground units will terminate pursuit by yielding to Air Support when advised by Air Support personnel that they have the vehicle in view unless authorized to continue the pursuit by the pursuit monitor.
13. If the escape of a suspect would create a continuing threat to the public, the pursuit monitor may authorize the continuation of the ground pursuit even after the Air Support arrives. In that event, the Air Support crew will assume responsibility for radio communications when the suspect vehicle is on arterial streets.
14. Personnel trained and authorized in the use of tire deflation systems may attempt to stop a vehicle that is eluding or refusing to stop. A tire deflation system will not be used unless there is sufficient time to reach a position of safety after deployment and to notify pursuing officers of the system's location. If a tire deflation device was deployed, this information will be documented in the Stop Stick Information section of the Event Information card of the *Vehicle Pursuit Report*.
15. When motorcycle officers and officers driving low profile or unmarked police units (see 102A for definitions) initiate a pursuit, they will yield to the first marked police unit available to assist. After being relieved, these units may become one of the secondary pursuit vehicles until relieved by another marked unit. After being relieved, officers will then proceed in a reasonable and prudent manner to the termination point of the pursuit.
16. Officers will not participate in pursuits initiated by outside law enforcement agencies unless requested to do so by the pursuing agency. Simple notification by an outside agency that a pursuit is approaching or has entered into the City of Tulsa does not constitute a request for assistance. Blocking intersections for a pursuit that enters the City of Tulsa does not constitute participation in that pursuit.
17. As a general rule, officers should not pursue a vehicle driving the wrong direction on a highway, freeway or turnpike. In the event the pursued vehicle does so, the following tactics should be considered:
 - a. Request assistance from Air Support.
 - b. Maintain visual contact with the pursued vehicle by paralleling the vehicle while driving on the correct side of the roadway.

- c. Request other officers to monitor exits available to the suspect.
18. Backing officers may utilize a roadblock to protect the safety of the public and others. Roadblocks shall be set up to keep traffic out of the path of the pursuit or to utilize a tire deflation device. Because of obvious risks in initiating a roadblock the following consideration should be given:
- a. Notify the pursuing officers and pursuit monitor of the location of the roadblock, if possible.
 - b. Identify the location by utilizing emergency flashing lights.
 - c. Leave on at least one lane open for the pursuit to utilize.
 - d. Ensure officers are in protected positions a safe distance away from the approaching suspect vehicle.

B. PURSUIT REPORTING

1. When a pursuit is terminated, or when the offender escapes, and suspect information is known, the initiating Officer will complete an Eluding report and conduct the follow-up investigation.
2. The pursuit monitor will complete the Axon Standards *Vehicle Pursuit Report* after reviewing In-Car Video and interviewing the officers involved. The pursuit monitor will submit copies of related reports (e.g., *Arrest and Booking Data Sheet*, *a collision report*, etc.) to the division commander through the initiating officer's chain of command via Axon Standards. If the initiating officer was working outside of their normal assignment, the report(s) will be routed through the chain of command where the officer was assigned.
3. The officer(s) directly involved in a pursuit will submit an Interoffice Correspondence to the pursuit monitor, if requested to do so, detailing the factors that were evaluated during the initiation and continuation of the vehicle pursuit. The pursuit monitor will attach the correspondence(s) to the pursuit report on in Axon Standards via the Files Section.
 - a. The summary section of the Vehicle Pursuit report shall contain the following information:
 - 1) A summary of the incident from initiation to conclusion.
 - 2) Initial Reason for Vehicle Stop.
 - 3) Route of the Pursuit.
 - 4) Location of Top Speed.
 - 5) Year, make, model of suspect vehicle.
 - 6) Was the driver's name known or could it have been determined?
 - 7) Was the driver believed to be a juvenile prior to termination?
 - 8) Shift Commander Notified & Notifying Supervisor.
 - 9) Duties of the officers involved.
 - 10) Factors used in the judgment to continue or terminate the pursuit.
 - 11) If vehicle was stolen, when was it determined?
 - 12) Any other relevant information that is not collected elsewhere?
 - b. Use of force injuries sustained by the suspect(s) during apprehension should not be documented in the pursuit report but rather documented in the *Use of Force Report*. If suspect injuries were sustained from a collision during or after the pursuit, or before force was used (i.e. foot pursuit or inanimate object), the injuries will be documented on the Interactive Body Outline in the "Injuries Sustained Without Direct Force" section in the Response Action Card in the *Use of Force Report*.
4. The *Vehicle Pursuit Report* and video evidence will be reviewed by the officer's chain of command, and forward to the Operations Bureau Deputy Chief via Axon Standards.

C. PURSUIT REVIEW BOARD (PRB)

1. The Pursuit Review Board (PRB) will review pursuits initiated by the Tulsa Police Department found to be out of policy, or questionable, by the Division Commander. The PRB will also review all pursuits resulting from an outside agency that requested and received assistance. The chairman of the PRB will select one lieutenant, one sergeant, and one officer from within the uniform divisions, and one Law Enforcement Driver Training (LEDT) instructor to serve on the Board for a period of one (1) year. If any PRB personnel are involved in a pursuit, they will not vote on that pursuit.
2. The PRB will consist of the following individuals:
 - a. Chairman, Operations Bureau Deputy Chief.
 - b. Uniform Division Commanders.
 - c. Training Division Commander (or designee).
 - d. Special Investigations Division Commander.
 - e. Special Operations Division Commander.
 - f. Lieutenant, uniform division.
 - g. Sergeant, uniform division.
 - h. Officer, uniform division.
 - i. LEDT instructor.
 - j. Public Affairs Section Major (non-voting member).
 - k. PSC Director (non-voting member).
 - l. Safety Analyst (non-voting member).
 - m. Headquarters Representative (non-voting member).
3. The duties of the PRB will be to:
 - a. Thoroughly review Vehicle Pursuit Report and any additional reports pertaining to a pursuit, including, if necessary, audio and video recordings.
 - b. Hear direct testimony, when necessary, from officers and witnesses.
 - c. Develop findings and make recommendations to the Chief of Police in the following areas:
 - 1) Whether the pursuit complied with policy.
 - 2) Tactical considerations.
 - 3) Training considerations.
 - 4) The quality of supervision.
 - 5) The process and quality of the post-incident investigation.
 - d. The Chairman (or designee) of the PRB will prepare a written report with recommendations that address the factors listed in Procedure 1 and forward it to the Chief of Police.
 - e. If the Chief of Police determines that additional investigation is required, he will assign the possible violation for investigation.
 - f. The Police Information Technology Division will maintain the Axon Standards database, listing the information and recommendations contained within all *Vehicle Pursuit Reports*. Quarterly and annual reports will be prepared addressing the factors listed in Procedure 24, c.1 through c.5, and include recommendations concerning pursuit tactics and training. Additionally, the lead LEDT instructor will complete an annual, documented analysis of all *Vehicle Pursuit Reports*. The analysis will include conclusions, recommendations, and proposals if applicable.

REGULATIONS:

1. Officers directly involved in a pursuit shall use emergency lights and siren for the duration of the pursuit.
2. Units authorized to be directly involved in the pursuit are the primary, secondary vehicles, a K-9 officer, and any

additional units authorized by the pursuit monitor. The pursuit monitor shall not be directly involved in the pursuit.

3. The Pursuit Monitor will determine if a pursuit should continue. Additionally, the Pursuit Monitor will determine if pursuits for non-dangerous felonies will continue as soon as reasonably possible after initiation.
4. There shall be no attempt by any officer to box-in, pass, or drive along-side a suspect vehicle that is being pursued. Officers shall not use vehicle containment tactics in pursuit situations. No officer shall pass the primary pursuit vehicle or any other pursuit vehicle unless requested to do so by the pursuing officer, pursuit monitor, or other supervisor.
5. Only officers driving marked, low profile, or unmarked police units, or motorcycles may initiate a pursuit. Officers driving low profile, unmarked police units, or motorcycles shall yield to the first marked unit. Only officers driving pursuit-rated vehicles, properly equipped with lights and siren as required by State law, may initiate or be involved in a pursuit.
6. Pursuing officers who are ordered by the pursuit monitor, supervisor, or commanding officer to terminate a pursuit shall do so immediately. The pursuing officer has the discretion to terminate a pursuit that has become too dangerous to continue.
7. Officers with passengers that are not Department employees or Reserve Police Officers, such as citizens, chaplains, interns, prisoners, witnesses, and victims, will not participate in pursuits unless they are the initiating pursuit vehicle or first backing officer – even then to be relieved as the primary or backing vehicle at the first opportunity.
8. Officers with ride-alongs engaged in a pursuit shall immediately notify the pursuit monitor of the presence of the ride-along and request relief from their role in the pursuit.
9. Tire deflation systems shall only be used by authorized personnel who have been trained in their use. Tire deflation systems shall not be used on two or three wheeled vehicles.
10. Pursuits of motorcycles, utility vehicles (ATV and UTV) and other ‘non-traditional’ vehicles shall not be initiated for other than a dangerous felony.
11. Deadblocks are not authorized and shall not be initiated.

REFERENCES:

47 O.S. 11-106
102A, *Vehicle Operations/Response Codes*
304A, *Complaints Against Police Employees*
IACP Model Policy
TOG 1001, *Use of Air Support*
TOG 1005, *Foot Pursuits*
TOG 1006, *Handcuffing and Custodial Transportation*
TOG 1007, *High Risk Vehicle Stop*
TOG 1015, *Unknown Risk Vehicle Stop*
TOG 1016, *Vehicle Containment*
TOG 1017, *Vehicle Tire Spike Use*
TOG 2014, *Radio Communications*
TOG 2017, *Law Enforcement Driving*