

11.3 Motor Vehicle Law and Traffic Enforcement

Deputies are empowered to enforce all sections of the Maryland Vehicle Law; however, this activity is not their primary responsibility. Absent guidance from covenant or custom with other law enforcement agencies, this directive addresses the Office posture regarding the enforcement of motor vehicle laws and traffic enforcement (also see *Chapter 1.3, Inter-Agency Memoranda of Agreements*, in this General Orders Manual).

11.3.1 Law Enforcement Relationships and Jurisdiction

Within the boundaries of the city of Annapolis, the Annapolis Police Department is recognized as the primary law enforcement agency. The remainder of Anne Arundel County, excepting Federal enclaves, is patrolled by the Anne Arundel County Police Department. Since traffic enforcement is not a primary responsibility of the Sheriff's Office, deputies are not to engage in traffic patrol or stationary traffic details.

Traffic stops should be effected to correct violations of the Motor Vehicle Law. While transporting prisoners, deputies will only effect traffic stops as specified in *Chapter 15.1, Prisoner Handling and Transportation*, of this General Orders manual.

Deputies will not make traffic stops outside the boundaries of Anne Arundel County except when it is obvious a violator is impaired or similarly jeopardizing public safety. Deputies effecting a traffic stop outside the boundaries of Anne Arundel County shall immediately request the assistance of the applicable primary law enforcement agency.

11.3.2 Latitude and Discretion

When enforcing motor vehicle laws, deputies possess the discretion to issue written warnings, citations, or to effect arrests. Deputies shall apply sound and reasonable judgment in enforcement. All operators will be treated objectively, fairly, and in a nondiscriminatory manner.

11.3.3 Traffic Stops

All traffic stops and violations of law will be handled in a manner consistent with legal mandates, training, accepted practices, and the administrative policies and

procedures sanctioned by a locale's primary law enforcement agency. Primary law enforcement agencies may be relied upon to provide back-up units, procedural guidance, arrest processing, drug detection, and impaired-driver validation services (e.g., intoximeter, Drug Recognition Expert, and drug detection canine). A vehicle occupant's race, ethnicity, age, or gender will not be used as the sole justification to initiate a traffic stop.

The agency *Traffic Coordinator* will insure compliance with State mandated race and gender based reporting requirements for traffic enforcement.

11.3.4 Radio Communications

Any deputy effecting a traffic stop will transmit the following: exact location and direction of travel; license plate number and state; make, model and color of vehicle; and number of occupants.

11.3.5 Traffic Direction and Control

The primary duty of traffic direction or control is not a responsibility of the Sheriff's Office. Deputies who encounter any situation requiring direction or control of traffic will apprise the primary law enforcement agency. In situations which pose a direct hazard to the safe and efficient flow of traffic, deputies may utilize hand signals, flares, or vehicle placement to direct traffic until relieved by the primary law enforcement agency. Common situations include fires, traffic collisions, disabled vehicles, adverse road or weather conditions, and inoperable automated traffic control devices. Personnel who engage in traffic control details will wear reflective clothing (e.g., high-visibility reflective vest).

11.3.6 Traffic Accidents

Handling motor vehicle accidents is not a primary responsibility of the Sheriff's Office. All accident investigations, information collection, and associated activities will be conducted by units of the primary law enforcement agency. Prior to the arrival on scene of such units, deputies should identify injured persons and fire hazards, and protect the collision scene and property belonging to the participants.

11.3.7 Response to Emergency Traffic Situations

While deputies may provide cursory or emergency assistance to the public as the first law enforcement officer to arrive at a scene, involved requests or needs will be deferred to the appropriate primary law enforcement agency. Perfunctory assistance includes providing information, relaying towing requests and personal

notification information, the transport of stranded persons off the roadway, and providing first responder medical care.

Citizen complaints regarding traffic engineering deficiencies, soliciting concentrated enforcement in a particular area, requesting that abandoned vehicles be removed, or any other non-emergency, non-time imperative request will be directed to the appropriate primary law enforcement agency for resolution.

11.3.8 Traffic Coordinator

The Sheriff will appoint a *Traffic Coordinator* to fulfill the administrative aspects of traffic enforcement activities. Deputies who regularly operate an Office motor vehicle will be issued a copy of the Maryland Motor Vehicle Law, a booklet enumerating offense fines, and a Maryland Uniform Complaint and Citation book. The Traffic Coordinator will maintain a secure log of all citation books issued and will forward completed citations to the Maryland Automated Traffic System for adjudication.

11.3.9 Inherent Obligations

This policy in no way excuses a deputy's obligation to safeguard the interests of the public or to provide assistance to other law enforcement units engaged in traffic enforcement activities.

11.3.10 Seat Belt Policy

Absent exigent circumstances, all occupants of Sheriff's Office vehicles shall use seat belts when the vehicle is in use.