

	DELMAR POLICE DEPARTMENT	
	Policy 4.9 Personal Patrol Vehicle (PPV) Program	
	Effective Date: 01/01/15	Replaces: N/A
	Approved: <u>Ivan Barkley</u> Chief of Police	
	Reference: N/A	

I. POLICY

Eligible officers participating in the program may be issued a police vehicle for on-duty and off-duty use subject to the regulations in this policy. All take-home vehicles assigned to officers will be defined as PPVs. This policy pertains to all officers assigned personal patrol vehicles and to those temporarily assigned PPVs, where applicable. Failure to properly maintain the vehicle or comply with the regulations and procedures contained within this directive, may result in the officer's suspension from the program, or in cases of multiple offenses, termination of the officer's participation in the program at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The assigning of personal patrol vehicles to members of the department is a management prerogative. It is the policy of the department to distribute PPVs in a fair and equitable manner; however, no member is entitled to a PPV. PPVs may be reassigned or replaced as part of the efficient management of the police department. Police vehicles may be driven only by authorized members of the Delmar Police Department.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE PPV PROGRAM

A. Enhance Police Presence

The greater visibility of police resulting from an increased number of police vehicles on the streets will serve to increase Delmar citizens' feeling of security, and promote the concept of omnipresence of police in the community as well as in the surrounding counties of Wicomico and Sussex.

B. Crime Deterrence

The presence of marked police vehicles in neighborhoods, shopping center parking lots, and other areas signals the presence of police officers. This should have a deterrent effect upon persons who contemplate committing violations of the law.

C. Community Relations

By using his or her vehicle for off duty purposes, the Delmar police officer is more easily recognized by the public, thus more accessible to them and wider person-to-person communication is achieved. Increased identification between the officer and the public will further mutual understanding.

D. Supplement the On-Duty Police

The regular on duty force is supplemented by additional off duty officers. Thus additional "eyes, ears, and hands" are available for handling emergency situations or for providing backups in dangerous situations.

E. Reduce Vehicle Fleet Cost

By using a patrol vehicle for only one shift, instead of around the clock, the vehicle will last much longer with fewer attendant repairs and service costs. With one operator, responsibility for proper care and maintenance is clearly fixed.

F. Enhance Officer Productivity and Fleet Appearance

With only one officer using the vehicle, and responsible for its appearance, the department expects the vehicle to have an excellent appearance at all times. Officer efficiency is enhanced when they are able to stock the assigned vehicle with all the forms, reports and equipment needed. As a result, less frequent trips to the department are required.

G. Moral

Officer morale, pride in his/her personal patrol vehicle and officer responsibility are closely related to greater motivation for higher performance and increased work productivity.

III. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

All officers, regardless of assignment, will be eligible for the PPV program subject to the limitations set forth below.

- A. Officers must reside within a location allowing a response time, from their residence to Delmar of no more than forty five (45) minutes to be eligible for the PPV program. Any exception to this general rule will be by special permission of the Chief of Police.
- B. Officers will become eligible for PPV assignment after satisfactorily completing the entry-level probationary period. PPVs will be assigned to eligible officers as the vehicles become available. PPVs may be assigned temporarily to probationary police officers at discretion of the Chief of Police.
- C. Unless extraordinary circumstances prompt a waiver by the Chief of Police, an officer who is not fit for full duty will be excluded from the PPV program and operation of a police vehicle for the duration of the disability.
- D. Officers will not allow off-duty use of their PPV by officers who are not eligible for the program. No unauthorized personnel are permitted to operate the PPV except in an emergency.

IV. OFF DUTY OPERATION

- A. While using the vehicle off-duty, officers will monitor the police radio on the frequency for the jurisdiction in which the vehicle is being operated. Officers need not advise the dispatcher when going in or out of service; however, the officer will advise the dispatcher when responding to a call.
- B. Off-duty officers will use their identification number preceded by the letter's "OD" when transmitting radio messages.
- C. Members of the officer's immediate family, to include spouse, child, brother, sister, parents or parents-in-law, grandparents, or guardians of the officer, are permitted to accompany him/her when operating his/her assigned vehicle off duty. Officers are responsible for the behavior and appearance of the passengers.
- D. Officers will not take the vehicle out of Wicomico or Sussex County's except on official business or with the authorization of their division commander or the Chief of Police.
- E. When operating a department vehicle off duty, the officer must be armed with an issued or approved sidearm, and will carry the badge and department identification card. Other enforcement equipment such as extra firearms, chemical spray, handcuffs, extra ammunition, and issued flashlight will be carried in the police vehicle. Weapons kept in the vehicle must be out of the public view.
- F. The portable radio, firearms, other weapons, and uniforms will be removed from the vehicle occupant area when the vehicle is unattended, such as when the PPV is parked at a shopping center, or is parked overnight at the officer's residence. These items should be locked in the trunk of the vehicle (a covered cargo area is not considered a trunk for the purpose of this policy) or stored in the officer's residence or station locker. This requirement does not apply when the officer is temporarily away from the PPV during the course of business, and can effectively exercise control over the vehicle. The officer will ensure that unauthorized persons do not handle department weapons or equipment.

Upon approval of the Police Fleet Coordinator, officers may utilize a departmentally approved and supplied lockable weapon storage type box to secure equipment, such as their weapon and radio, in vehicles that do not have a trunk. The weapon box will be secured to the vehicle in an out-of-sight location. All installations will be done by an approved vendor. Officers should submit an inter-office memorandum, via their chain of command, to the Police Fleet Coordinator to request approval for installation.

- G. Unattended PPVs must be locked at all times.
- H. So as not to give the public the impression the department endorses or promotes a particular activity, political candidate, or cause, officers are prohibited from using the PPV while engaged in political activities such as setting up signs, and attending rallies, caucuses, promotional events, or fund raisers, etc. Furthermore, no bumper stickers, decals, insignia, banners, or placards of any type may be attached to, or displayed on

or within, the PPV without the prior written approval of the Chief of Police. Police organization emblems may be displayed.

- I. Off-duty officers operating police vehicles will ensure that their dress and appearance does not reflect unfavorably on the department or the police profession.
- J. PPVs will not be operated after the officer has ingested any amount of alcohol. PPVs will not be operated after the officer has ingested any drug that impairs his ability to operate the vehicle. No alcoholic beverages will be carried in the PPV except when they are seized as evidence or contraband.

V. OFF DUTY ENFORCEMENT

- A. Off-duty officers are not expected to be strict enforcers of traffic violations. However, they may not ignore flagrant traffic law violations. Transportation Article 16-112 of the Maryland Motor Vehicle laws only requires motorists to exhibit their operator's license to **uniformed** police officers. Transportation Article 13-409 requires the motorist to exhibit the registration card upon demand of **any** police officer who identifies himself as such.
- B. Fatal accidents, personal injury accidents, hit-and-run accidents when evidence or witnesses exist and accidents involving government-owned vehicles will be referred too and handled by on-duty units.
- C. Off-duty officers, while operating PPVs, are required to respond to incidents or calls for service which come to their attention through any of the following means: (1) on view; (2) citizens (3) radio monitored activity of a serious nature occurring within reasonable proximity to their location. Additionally, whenever it appears that an officer's immediate response may result in the prevention of a crime or apprehension of a criminal, he/she will respond and initiate or assist in any police action. The operating officer is responsible for the safety of all vehicle passengers.
- D. Seat belts will be used by vehicle operators and at all times by all passengers in the vehicle. Only those safety seats approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation will be used to restrain infants and toddlers. Safety seats will be removed from the passenger compartment when not in use.
- E. Minor incidents, to include disabled vehicles, stranded motorists, and citizens in need of assistance, encountered while operating a personal patrol vehicle off-duty will be handled and cleared by the off-duty officer. In situations which dictate the writing of a report by the off-duty officer, the report will be completed as soon as possible upon returning to duty. Completed off-duty initiated reports shall be forwarded to officer's supervisor.

VI. MAINTENANCE AND CARE

- A. Performance and appearance of a vehicle and any equipment in it is the responsibility of the officer to whom it is assigned. Officers assigned PPVs are responsible for scheduling preventive maintenance every 3,000 miles. Any problems which occur in scheduling of maintenance or repairs should be reported to the Fleet Coordinator.
- B. Officer will schedule the routine service and maintenance of their PPVs to be done while they are on duty. Supervisors will make the necessary arrangements to allow officers the time to take their assigned vehicles to an approved vendor/garage for routine service and preventive maintenance during their tours of duty. Officers will fuel their assigned vehicles during their tours of duty, after reporting for work, and will use their discretion concerning the fueling of PPVs on scheduled days off.
- C. When requesting repairs or maintenance, officers must complete the "Vehicle Repair/Maintenance Request Form" DPD Form 4.9-A, and deliver it to the Fleet Coordinator. Individual officers are not required to keep a service record on their assigned vehicles. They may obtain information or copies of documents from the Fleet Coordinator. Officers will not make, or have made, any adjustments or repairs except as may be necessary to get the vehicle to an approved vendor/garage for further repairs.
- D. Officers will keep the interior of their vehicle clean and will wash the exterior at least once a week, weather permitting. The department provides a car washing facility and a high volume vacuum cleaner at the police department's garage.

VII. PPV & SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT

See Policy 4.6, Secondary Employment

VIII. VEHICLE TRANSFER

Whenever a vehicle is reassigned, the commanding officer initiating the change will complete a "Vehicle Transfer Order," DPD Form 4.9-B, and forward a copy to the Fleet Coordinator.