

Laurel Police Department – General Order  
Chapter IV, Section 300, Order 307 – Traffic Related Services  
September 29, 2016

**4 / 307.05 POLICY**

It is the policy of this Department is to perform traffic functions such as traffic control and parking control, provide emergency assistance and information to motorists, identify and report hazards, and provide traffic safety information recommendations.

**4 / 307.10. PURPOSE**

To set guidelines and procedures for traffic safety services provided by the Department.

**4 / 307.15 DEFINITIONS**

None

**4 / 307.20 PROCEDURES**

A. GENERAL

1. The general public relies upon the police for assistance and advice when faced with the many routine and emergency traffic situations which can and do develop in an urban society.
  - a. The Department regularly responds to traffic-related incidents when it is not contemplated that an arrest will be made or that unlawful activity is directly involved.
2. Because of the overall danger to the stranded or disabled motorist, and also to the motorist on the highway potentially affected by the stranded or disabled motorist, the Department will offer reasonable assistance at all times to the motorist who appears to be in need of aid.
  - a. This will apply at all hours of the day, but particularly during the nighttime hours when hazards are increased commensurate with visibility.
3. Officers shall be constantly alert for highway users who appear to need assistance.
  - a. If, at the time a stranded or disabled motorist is observed, the officer already is on a call for service the Communications Center shall be notified of the motorist's location to assure assistance is dispatched.

B. TYPES OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

1. The types of assistance provided to motorists by the Department includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Providing public information and directions;
  - b. Obtaining mechanical assistance or towing service;
  - c. Providing protection to stranded motorists;
  - d. Providing emergency assistance to roadway users;
  - e. Providing medical emergency escorts;
  - f. Identifying and reporting road hazards or potential hazards;
  - g. Control and removal of hazardous materials; and
  - h. Providing traffic safety educational materials.

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2. Providing Public Information and Directions
  - a. Officers will freely and politely provide information and directions upon request.
  - b. Officers must be familiar enough with the area to provide directions to various locations within the city and county.
  - c. Officers should keep city and county maps in their vehicles for the purpose of providing a visual aid for giving directions.
  - d. Officers should be familiar with the local service facilities and attractions in and around the City of Laurel.
  
3. Obtaining Mechanical Assistance or Towing Service
  - a. When an officer encounters a disabled motorist, the officer will determine what assistance is necessary and will make every effort to obtain or render the needed assistance.
  - b. The following areas that may fall within the scope of assistance that can be rendered:
    - 1) Calling for towing service
      - a) Shall be accomplished in accordance with standard procedures.
    - 2) Minor mechanical repairs
      - a) Department personnel are prohibited from providing mechanical repairs of disabled vehicles including jump starting dead batteries.
      - b) Department personnel may change a flat tire.
    - 3) Vehicle to vehicle pushing
      - a) Except in extreme life threatening emergencies Departmental vehicles are prohibited from being used to push disabled vehicles.
    - 4) Calling for another person
      - a) An officer may have the Dispatcher contact someone by telephone to assist the motorist or to provide transportation.
    - 5) Transporting a motorist
      - a) With the approval of a supervisor, an officer may transport a person to a location where assistance may be obtained.
    - 6) Motorist locked out of a vehicle
      - a) Shall be accomplished after a waiver form is signed by the motorist.
  
4. Providing Protection to Stranded Motorist
  - a. Stranded motorists should not be left unattended when they appear to be exposed to hazardous situations.
  - b. Due consideration shall be afforded stranded motorists for factors that contribute to hazardous conditions such as location, time of day or night, weather, and current priority of calls for service.
  - c. When circumstances preclude an officer from remaining with the motorist, flares should be placed to warn oncoming traffic and provide reasonable safety until the problem can be resolved.
  - d. Department personnel will make arrangements through the Communications Center to obtain a taxi or to summon help for a disabled or stranded motorist or pedestrian.

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- e. Citizens residing within the City of Laurel and the greater Laurel area may be transported to their home by Department personnel with the approval of the shift supervisor.
    - 1) Communications shall be notified
      - a) Of the transport
      - b) Name(s) of the individual(s) being transported
      - c) Destination address
      - d) Start and termination odometer reading of the transport vehicle
    - 2) The Communications dispatcher will note this information on a CAD entry.
  - f. If assistance cannot be obtained for the citizen, the citizen may be transported to the lobby of the Department where a telephone is available, with the approval of the shift supervisor.
    - 1) Communications shall be notified
      - a) Of the transport
      - b) Name(s) of the individual(s) being transported
      - c) Destination address
      - d) Start and termination odometer reading of the transport vehicle
    - 2) The Communications dispatcher will note this information on a CAD entry
  - g. During adverse weather conditions, Department personnel shall make an effort to transport or to arrange for transportation to a place of safety for persons who are stranded.
  - h. This assistance to stranded motorists includes drivers and passengers of vehicles that have been impounded as a result of traffic violations, accidents, or driver's arrest, etc.
    - 1) The Department is aware that certain stranded motorists may be hostile.
    - 2) A shift supervisor should review and approve the transport.
5. Providing Emergency Assistance to Roadway Users
- a. Officers will normally respond to reports of requests for emergency assistance for first aid, medical assistance, or fire fighting.
  - b. Officers arriving upon the scene of any highway emergency shall request the dispatcher to obtain the needed assistance (i.e., fire, medical, mechanical) and will remain with the motorist.
  - c. The officer also may render emergency assistance in the form of medical first aid and fire suppression.
  - d. The officer will act as a communications link to ensure a rapid and timely response to the motorist.
6. Control and Removal of Hazardous Material
- a. General Information
    - 1) The Prince George's County Fire and Rescue Service has the responsibility for the control and removal of hazardous materials.
      - a) Once the Fire and Rescue service arrives on the scene they will assume full command of the scene.
      - b) Officers will provide whatever assistance that is requested
    - 2) A hazardous material is defined as: Any element, compound, or combination thereof which is flammable, corrosive, explosive, toxic, radioactive, an oxidizer, or is highly reactive and which, because of handling, processing and packaging may have a strong tendency to explode or cause life-threatening situations.

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- 3) Radioactive materials are in current use in hospitals, research laboratories, and numerous industrial and military applications, and are transported throughout the state by truck, rail and air.
  - a) In addition, numerous hazardous materials are transported throughout the state every day.
- 4) While many of these are in common use, accidents or spills present a serious threat to the public, especially to the officer who happens to be first on the scene.
- 5) Many accidents and other emergencies involve more than one agency and require a cooperative emergency response.
  - a) It is of extreme importance for all officers to be aware of what actions they should take during hazardous material emergencies.
- b. Response to Hazardous Materials
  - 1)The officer should always be aware of the hazards involved when examining a suspicious or potentially dangerous object
  - 2)Actions to be taken and not taken by the responding officer:
    - a) Do not move or touch the object;
    - b) Do not turn lights on or off in the area; and
    - c) Note the particulars about the object
      - i. Size
      - ii. Shape
      - iii. Color and
      - iv. Exact location
- c. Responding to Down Wires and other such hazards.
  - 1)Ascertain the location of the hazard prior to arrival
  - 2)Park vehicle at a distance from the hazard while investigating
  - 3)After determining that a hazard exists, notify the proper authority and stand by until the hazard can be neutralized
  - 4)Block the area off until it can be made safe
  - 5)Do not touch or allow untrained persons to touch Down Lines
- d. Responding to Other public Safety and/or Health Hazards.
  - 1)Park up-wind of the incident if possible
  - 2)Move and keep people away from the incident scene
  - 3)Do not walk into or touch any spilled material
  - 4)Avoid inhalation of all gases, fumes and smoke even if no hazardous materials are involved
  - 5)Do not assume that gases or vapors are harmless because of lack of smell
  - 6)If more than one person is involved in an emergency response action, it is very important that an on-scene leader be designated and that the officer knows who is in-charge of handling the incident
  - 7)Take only the actions known to be safe
  - 8)Keep unnecessary personnel out of the area
  - 9)Contact the appropriate agency or person as soon as possible to assist in neutralizing the hazard

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7. Traffic Safety Educational Materials
  - a. Traffic Safety Education Materials are made available to the public both in the main lobby of station and through the Community Outreach Unit.
  - b. The ultimate Traffic Safety goal of the Department is to achieve voluntary compliance with traffic laws and regulations.
  - c. The Department will prepare, disseminate or make available Traffic Safety Educational materials that support efforts and enhance public understanding of traffic safety programs.
  - d. The Community Outreach Unit will be responsible for coordination of the Department's efforts in traffic safety education.
  - e. A variety of materials will be made available to the public dealing with traffic laws and related topics.

**4 / 307.30 GOVERNING LEGISLATION AND REFERENCES**

None

**4 / 307.30 ANNEX**

None

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