



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 26	Subject: Routine and Emergency Vehicle Operation	Effective Date: 10/13/1997
Order of: Maureen S. Rush, Superintendent of Police		Amended Date: 02/01/2015

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for emergency and non-emergency vehicle operation, and the use of emergency warning devices. Policy

It is the policy of the University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) that its vehicles be under complete control at all times. UPPD vehicles shall be operated in such a manner as to prevent accidents, injuries, and/or property damage and to promote good community relations. Members of the UPPD shall constantly evaluate the risks involved in their vehicle operation as opposed to the potential benefits of continuing their actions. Furthermore, UPPD police officers shall adhere to statutory restrictions on the use of emergency warning devices. Such devices shall be employed only in prescribed conditions and circumstances and in ways that will minimize the risk of accidents or injuries.

II. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn police officers.

III. Definitions

- A. Emergency Vehicle: An authorized law enforcement vehicle equipped with emergency lights (red/blue/white), siren, and other emergency devices required by law and used for emergency response situations.
- B. Emergency Warning Devices: Devices placed in/on each UPPD emergency vehicle that emit audible or visual signals in order to warn others that law enforcement services are in the process of being delivered.

IV. Procedures

- A. Determining/Assigning Response Modes To Calls For Service

1. Calls for service requiring the response of a police officer will be handled at one of two priority levels. These levels are:
 - a. Emergency Response: Officers will activate all emergency warning devices and use all legal allowances reasonably necessary to expedite travel to the scene of an "emergency" incident. Officers will respond in the "emergency response mode" to the following emergency calls:
 - 1) Report of officer(s) needing immediate assistance, due to threat to well-being, "Assist Officer" calls.
 - 2) Report of a disaster or catastrophe.
 - 3) Report of an active fire.
 - 4) Report of a crime in progress.
 - 5) Report or transportation of hospital cases.
 - 6) Vehicle accident with reported or suspected injury(s).
 - 7) All alarms received by the PennComm Center: fire alarms, robbery alarms, rape/panic alarms, and burglar/intrusion alarms.
 - 8) Report of a suspicious package, suspected of being an explosive or incendiary device, or bomb threats.
 - b. Non-Emergency Response: Officers shall consider all other responses, not specifically mentioned above, as "Non-Emergency Responses" and shall proceed directly to the scene of the incident without the use of lights and sirens while strictly adhering to all traffic laws and regulations. Officers shall drive defensively in a safe and courteous manner.
 2. Shift Commanders/Supervisors shall be responsible for monitoring the use of emergency warning devices and have the authority and responsibility to upgrade or downgrade specific responses when appropriate.
- B. Use of Emergency Warning Devices While In Emergency Response Mode
1. During an emergency response, all emergency lights, siren and other emergency signal devices shall be activated as required by the Vehicles Law of Pennsylvania, section 3105.
 2. When responding to an emergency, the headlights of the emergency vehicle shall be activated to augment the emergency vehicle's visibility.

3. During an emergency response, four-way flashers shall not be used when the emergency vehicle is in motion because they may interfere with brake lights and turn signals.
4. The spotlight on UPPD marked police vehicles is primarily utilized to facilitate building and stationary vehicle checks and shall at no time be directed at the windshield or vision of oncoming traffic.
5. When responding to a crime in progress, emergency warning devices may be deactivated at a distance from the scene (to be determined by the vehicle operator) so as to not alert subjects to law enforcement proximity.
6. Prior to arriving on the scene of a barricaded person/hostage situation or a major disturbance or riot, emergency warning devices will be turned off to reduce curiosity and tension.
7. When emergency warning devices are deactivated, the operator of the emergency vehicle shall comply with posted speed limits, obey all traffic control devices and signals, and proceed in a manner consistent with normal traffic flow.

C. Use of Emergency Warning Devices While Conducting Vehicle Stops

1. Audible and visual warning devices shall be used to make adequate notice of intent to stop a motor vehicle and to provide a safe environment for the vehicle operator, officer, and public.

D. Discretionary Use of Emergency Warning Devices

1. Officers may activate emergency warning devices when required to assist in handling any perceived emergency situation, such as:
 - a. Using emergency lights as "beacons" to protect disabled motorists, accident scenes or injured persons; and/or
 - b. Using emergency lights when it is necessary to use UPPD vehicles as barriers to divert traffic. Wooden barricades should be used instead of vehicles when available.

E. Emergency Operation Authorization and Limitations

1. The Provisions Of The Vehicles Law Of Pennsylvania, Section 3105, Will Not Relieve The Driver Of An Emergency Vehicle From The Duty To Drive With "Due Regard For The Safety Of All Persons," Nor Will Such Provisions Protect The Driver Of An Emergency Vehicle From The Consequences Of Careless Disregard For The Safety Of Others.
2. Non-Sworn Passengers

- a. Officers shall not operate in the "emergency response mode" while transporting non-sworn passengers (i.e., prisoners, victims, witnesses, escorts, observers, etc.).

3. Emergency Escorts

- a. Officers should not escort vehicles to hospitals unless the need for an immediate emergency escort is obvious. The Shift Commander/Supervisor shall be advised by the officer as soon as practical.

F. Prohibited Activities

1. The use of cellular phones while operating a University owned vehicle is restricted to essential communications only and should be limited in length. When possible, officers should pull off the roadway in a safe location when using cellular phones as outlined in **UPPD Directive 100, "Use of Cellular Telephones"**.
 - a. The use of portable hands-free cellular phone devices or similar devices is prohibited while on duty.
2. Any Smoking Method or use of any tobacco product inside of a University owned vehicle is strictly prohibited as per **UPPD Directive 104, "Smoking and the Use of Tobacco Products"**.
 - a. The use of electronic smoking devices such as electronic cigarettes, cigars and pipes are considered as "smoking methods" as outlined in University Policy 704, Smoking Policy.

G. Emergency Patrol Wagon (EPW)

1. The Emergency Patrol Wagon (EPW) is an extended prisoner transport vehicle. Officers shall operate the EPW with added care, due to its size and reduced rearward visibility.
 - a. Whenever an EPW is operated in reverse a spotter should be used. A spotter **MUST** be used when backing an EPW into the UPPD HQ garage.
 - 1) Under circumstances where a spotter is unavailable, the driver shall attempt to utilize any available department personnel to act as spotters.
 - 2) Where no personnel are available to assist, the vehicle driver shall get out of the vehicle and make a complete 360° survey of the area around the EPW to determine if any obstructions are present.

H. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

I. Officers Assigned to Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

J. Application

This directive constitutes departmental policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.