

# Bowie Police Department - General Orders



TITLE: TRAFFIC ANCILLARY SERVICES	NUMBER: 506
EFFECTIVE DATE: 2/23/12	REVIEW DATE:
_ NEW   X_ AMENDS   _ RESCINDS	DATE: 6/15/16

AUTHORITY  <b>Chief John K. Nesky</b>	ACCREDITATIONS STANDARDS CALEA STANDARDS: 61.3.1,61.4.1, 61.4.2, 61.4.3	TOTAL PAGES  6
---	---	----------------------

## I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for assisting motorists in both emergency and non-emergency situations.

## II. POLICY

To insure that requests for assistance from motorists are handled in the safest, most efficient and courteous manner possible.

## III. GENERAL PROCEDURES (CALEA 61.4.1.a)

- A. Upon being dispatched to, or locating a stranded or disabled motorist, the officer shall place his/her vehicle to prevent traffic from striking the disabled vehicle or motorist. The patrol vehicle shall have emergency equipment and flashers activated. (CALEA 61.4.1.b & .c)
- B. Upon determining that a motorist needs mechanical or towing services, the officer shall ask if the motorist would like the towing service of his or her choice to be called. If the motorist has no preference, the Officer shall contact a tow service through the DTS Towing System. (CALEA 61.4.1.b)
- C. Once a towing service has been contacted, the officer may leave the scene. However, the following factors will be considered in deciding whether to remain on the scene or not: (CALEA 61.4.1.c)
  - 1. Danger factors concerning exact location of the vehicle on a roadway. Such as the crest of a hill or in a blind turn.
  - 2. Weather such as snow, fog, or heavy rain.
  - 3. Time of day.
  - 4. Availability of officers for other calls for service.

5. At no time will a motorist be left alone in an inherently dangerous situation.

D. Officers are to provide a communications link between a disabled motorist and the needed service to help the motorist. (CALEA 61.4.1.c)

E. Prior to leaving, the officer shall place a minimum of two flares in a manner so as to divert traffic away from the disabled vehicle. (CALEA 61.4.1.c)

#### **IV. MISCELLANEOUS MOTORISTS' REQUEST (CALEA 61.4.1.b)**

A. Officers frequently get requests from motorists for directions.

1. At the Officer's discretion, the Officer may either escort the motorist (without emergency equipment) to a destination within the City of Bowie either in lieu of or in addition to providing directions to the motorist.

2. If the requested location is outside the City of Bowe, the Officer should give directions. If the location is unknown to an Officer, maps or street indexes should be checked, and/or the Communications Center should be asked for the requested information. An Officer should not provide directions if he/she is unsure as to whether the directions are correct.

B. Provisions of Assistance to Motorist

1. Assistance considered "reasonable" can include such activities as calling for a tow truck for a disabled vehicle to changing a flat tire.

2. Officers are not required to perform repairs personally and under normal circumstances, police vehicles **should not** be used to "jump-start" a privately-owned vehicle.

3. Officers providing assistance to motorists should:

a. Be aware of possible dangers to motorists stranded in isolated or heavily traveled areas and should take appropriate steps to reduce these dangers by taking the motorist to a safer location or by setting out flares to warn other motorists.

b. If time permits, and it is practical, stay with the motorist until a tow truck or service truck arrives to ensure the safety of the motorist.

c. Have the police vehicle's emergency lights and hazard warning flashers activated, and position the police vehicle so as to provide maximum protection for the Officer and motorist, and to warn other motorists of the Officer's presence.

4. An Officer may, in his discretion, assist a citizen who is locked out of his/her vehicle.

a. If the Officer is unable to gain entry, or is uncomfortable attempting entry, because of improper tools or training, or because of the potential for damage to the citizen's

vehicle, the citizen should be advised to request a service truck or locksmith.  
(CALEA 61.4.1. d)

#### 5. Stranded Motorists

In the event an Officer encounters a stranded motorist who does not have the ability to pay for roadside assistance (AAA, Credit Cards, etc.), once the vehicle is secured, the Officer should suggest that the motorist contact a friend or relative to obtain assistance. If the motorist lacks both the means to pay for roadside assistance and a mobile telephone, the officer should always transport the motorist to a safe location or provide a Departmental telephone for use by the citizen(s). (CALEA 61.4.1.c)

#### 6. Requesting Tow Trucks for Motorists

When an Officer determines that a tow truck is needed, the procedures outlined in General Order 5-50 Towing of Motor Vehicles shall be followed.

### **V. PROVIDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (CALEA 61.4.1.d)**

#### 1. Officers arriving on the scene of a roadway emergency shall:

- a. Assess the situation;
- b. Request the appropriate services immediately from police communications;
- c. Provide basic life support;
- d. As necessary and as Officer safety will allow, engage in fire suppression activities prior to the arrival of the Fire Department by using the fire extinguisher in the police vehicle (not all fire extinguishers will suppress all types of fires); and,
- e. Obtain additional assistance as the situation may require.

2. Officers providing basic or advanced life support will ensure that they wear, at a minimum, Department-issued protective equipment (i.e., rubber gloves, surgical mask as necessary, etc.).

3. When communicating to Communications, Officers should be very specific as to the nature of injuries and/or road emergency that exist so the appropriate emergency equipment can be dispatched.

### **VI. DANGEROUS ROADWAY CONDITIONS (CALEA 61.4.2)**

Every Officer is responsible for remedying roadway hazards. To that end, an Officer shall follow the procedures set forth in this directive with respect either to debris/removable hazards or to defects/deficiencies of a structural nature, whether requiring an engineering assessment or not.

If a citizen appears at a police facility or calls the Department directly to report a deficiency that appears to be of an emergency nature in the City of Bowie a City Officer will be dispatched. If the incident is outside of the City and if it appears that the on-scene presence of an Officer would be in the best interest of public safety, the citizen's information will be forwarded to PGPD Communications for dispatch.

#### **A. DEBRIS/REMOVEABLE HAZARDS IN ROADWAY**

An Officer encountering debris in the roadway that is a hazard shall remove it, providing the Officer is able to do so and that contact with the and/or the removal of hazardous debris will not endanger the Officer's health or safety.

1. If the Officer is unable to remove the debris or requires specialized equipment to do so, the City of Bowie Public Works Department, County Department of Public Works and Transportation, or State Highway Administration shall be notified, as appropriate.
2. If Public Works has jurisdiction over the problem and appropriate Public Works personnel are on duty, Officers shall notify Public Works directly.
3. When appropriate Public Works personnel are not on duty, the Officer should assess the problem to determine whether one of the Public Works on-call representative should be notified for assistance. For example, a call regarding a tree limb that has fallen but that is not blocking a street may wait until the next business day while a tree limb that has fallen and which is blocking a street and/or preventing emergency equipment access would require an immediate notification.
4. If Public Works does not have jurisdiction, the Officer should request that Communications notify the agency that maintains the street, highway, parking lot, or property.

#### **B. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CONTROL AND REMOVAL**

Generally, the clean-up of hazardous materials spills/leaks must be handled by a State-licensed contractor, under the supervision of a representative from the Environmental Protection Agency.

1. At the scene of a hazardous materials incident, the Fire Department Incident Commander will be in command of the scene and will make the request through his/her dispatcher for the clean-up assistance.
2. Prior to the arrival of the fire/rescue personnel, an Officer arriving on the scene of a hazardous materials incident will follow the below listed procedures, which can be found in his EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDEBOOK:
  - a) Approach the scene from an upwind direction, if possible;
  - b) Move and keep people away from the scene;
  - c) Refrain from walking into or touching any spilled materials;

- d) Avoid inhaling fumes, smoke and vapors, even if no hazardous materials are involved and do not assume that gases or vapors are harmless because of lack of odor.
- e) Rescues of contaminated persons should be left to appropriately equipped rescuers, as an Officer cannot help others until the Officer knows what he/she is facing, and because police are not appropriately equipped.
- f) By radio and/or other means, request assistance and, if at all possible, be specific as to what is needed.
- g) To assist in possibly identifying the material(s) Officers should consult their hazardous materials "Emergency Response Guidebook."
- h) Be particularly cognizant of where the police vehicle is positioned/parked at the scene, as it can provide a source of ignition for vapors, fumes, etc.

### **C. ROADWAY DEFECTS OTHER THAN DEBRIS OR REMOVABLE HAZARDS**

1. An Officer who encounters a defect in a City street shall report the problem directly to Public Works immediately if it poses an imminent threat to the public safety or needs immediate attention.
2. If an Officer encounters a defect that does not require immediate attention, the Officer should notify Public Works as soon as possible.
3. Defects in county roadways or State roadways should be reported as soon as possible to the respective agency maintaining the roadway in question through Public Safety Communications.
4. If an Officer is unsure as to whether City, County, or State maintains the roadway in question, the Officer should so advise his supervisor and request assistance in making the determination.

## **VII. ACTIVITIES RELATED TO TRAFFIC ENGINEERING**

- A. Coordination and cooperation between the Department, the State of Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the City of Bowie Department of Public Works are essential to maintenance and improvement of a safe traffic system. Although traffic engineering is not a direct law enforcement function, police agencies have a responsibility to contribute to its formulation from data received by them. Police agencies can provide traffic law enforcement, collision management and traffic service information to the public. The end result is improvement in traffic engineering so as to reduce traffic collisions and traffic law violations. (CALEA 61.3.1.a)
- B. **RESPONSIBILITIES:** Traffic engineering functions are the responsibility of MDOT, City of Bowie Public Works Department, the Director of Planning and Community Development and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC). The Patrol Division Commander or his/her designee (Traffic Officer) is the liaison between this Department and the appropriate engineering authority, and is responsible for activities related to traffic engineering. Computer data, collision by location/type and monthly enforcement observations assist the Patrol

Division Commander in identifying possible problems. This data may include, but is not limited to: (CALEA 61.3.1.a)

1. Site distance studies;
2. Collection and analysis of collision, traffic and enforcement data;
3. Diagrams recorded on Automated Accident Reports (ACRES); and,
4. Traffic volume reports from officers assigned to problem areas.

As directed by the Chief of Police or designee, members of the Department will assist local and regional traffic engineering authorities by:

1. Collecting and compiling selected traffic data;
2. Conducting or assisting with the conduct of traffic surveys and/or studies;
3. Analyzing accident reports; and/or,
4. Preparing special statistical reports and/or making recommendations concerning the efficient use of traffic control devices.

**C. COLLISION RELATED REPORTS:** The City of Bowie Police Department is mandated to complete an ACRES report for all qualifying traffic collisions. These reports are forwarded to the Maryland State Police Central Records with copies retained by the Department's Records Section. A portion of the report calls for examination of the road for defects. Where a collision involves a road defect, the investigating officer will: (CALEA 61.3.1.b)

1. Contact PG Communications immediately to make notification to the appropriate engineering agency and report the defect. If the defect is of a serious nature that would be a danger to citizens and/or property, the officer will immediately contact the on-duty Shift Supervisor, who will make a decision on whether to close the road, detour traffic or to set up temporary traffic devices, as needed.
2. Forward a copy of the ACRES report to the Patrol Division Commander, with a memorandum describing the defect and any actions, if any, taken by the officer or an appropriate engineering agency.

**D. CITIZEN REPORTS/COMPLAINTS:** (CALEA 61.3.1.a)

1. If an Officer is advised by a citizen of the existence of a structural deficiency or hazard requiring a traffic engineering solution that is posing an immediate threat to the public safety, and the Officer can immediately respond to the scene, the Officer shall do so. If the Officer is unable to respond to the scene immediately, he shall notify Communications to dispatch another Officer. If a structural deficiency or hazard requiring traffic engineering is identified by a citizen but does not pose an immediate danger, the Officer shall respond to the scene as soon as possible.

2. When an Officer observes the existence of such a condition, he shall notify his supervisor, who shall be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate traffic engineering agency (i.e. Traffic Signal Engineer, Public Works, State Highway Administration, etc.) is notified.

3. If an Officer has personal knowledge of a hazard, deficiency, etc., the officer will communicate this information as soon as practical (unless the hazard/deficiency is life threatening, in which case it will be reported immediately) to the appropriate engineering authorities.