

Germantown Police Department

Policies and Procedures

Number: 11-1
Effective Date: January 1, 2003
Subject: Vehicle Usage
Previous Revisions:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the operation of Germantown Police Department vehicles, which are owned by the City of Germantown

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Germantown Police Department that all officers and authorized personnel will operate Department vehicles in a safe manner, adhering to all city, state, and federal traffic laws and will extend common driving courtesies to fellow motorists at all times. Due to the high visibility of marked police vehicles, Department personnel should consider themselves being held to a higher driving standard and accountability.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Assignment of Police Vehicles:

1. The Chief of Police shall be responsible for the replacement and assignment of police vehicles with the emphasis on minimum maintenance costs. The Chief of Police shall issue vehicles in the best interest of the operations of the Department.
2. Unauthorized personnel are not to operate any Department vehicle at any time.

B. Operation of Assigned Vehicles:

1. Department personnel shall be accountable for the safety and care of assigned vehicles.
2. Department personnel shall obey all traffic laws while operating any assigned vehicle.

3. Department personnel must have seat belts fastened when operating any assigned vehicle. Passengers must also fasten seat belts.
4. Department personnel shall maintain assigned Department vehicles in a clean and neat condition.
5. Department personnel are responsible for:
 - a. resolution of violation of such laws which result in speeding, parking, or other moving violation.
 - b. payment of tickets or citations.

C. Travel Outside the County:

All travel in assigned Department vehicles outside of Shelby County, Tennessee, shall be approved through the chain of command. Any extended travel outside of Shelby County, Tennessee, will follow all travel and expense regulations of the City of Germantown travel policy.

D. Prohibited Use of Assigned Vehicles:

1. No assigned Department vehicle shall be utilized for personal use not connected with the mission of police service.
2. Department personnel are prohibited from consuming any alcohol prior to or while operating any Department vehicle.
3. Department personnel are prohibited from smoking while driving or riding in any Department vehicle. Passengers are prohibited from smoking while riding in any Department vehicle.
4. No weapon shall be left in an unlocked vehicle under any circumstances.

E. Vehicle Accidents:

1. Department personnel involved in an on the road or off the road accident must immediately notify Germantown Police Department Communications and the shift supervisor. The extent of personal injuries, property damage, and the need for medical attention should be immediately stated. Department personnel shall fully cooperate with officers investigating the accident.
2. Department personnel involved in an on the road or off the road accident outside the City of Germantown should immediately notify the local

authorities and cooperate with officers investigating the accident. Notification of accident should be made as soon as possible through chain of command.

3. Failure to report vehicle accidents or property damage may result in disciplinary action.

F. Off Duty Use of Marked Vehicles:

1. Assignment of Department marked vehicles may be made to officers outside their normal work period for a Department purpose.
2. When officers are operating an assigned marked vehicle while off duty, the police radio will be turned on and kept on the appropriate frequency. The officer will not be required to check in and out of service, but shall advise the dispatcher if he/she is near an emergency call.
3. Off duty officers operating an assigned marked vehicle may be required to respond to an emergency call in his/her proximity. If dressed in civilian clothing, the officer shall display his/her badge or official identification when appropriate.
4. Off duty officers operating an assigned marked vehicle shall not bypass any traffic accident.
5. Off duty officers operating an assigned marked vehicle may summon an on duty officer to handle minor incidents. The off duty officer will stand by to assist until the on duty officer(s) arrives. In emergency situations requiring immediate action, the off duty officer shall handle the situation himself/herself.
6. Off duty officers operating an assigned marked vehicle may be required to handle felony calls or calls requiring the protection of life and/or property. In those cases, he/she may also be required to secure and preserve evidence.
7. Off duty officers assigned a marked vehicle, if called out in emergencies, may transport children and household members in their assigned marked vehicles to places of safety, such as relatives or babysitters, when no other practical means is available.
8. Except in emergency circumstances, off duty officers shall not transport civilians or household members in assigned marked vehicles. Civilian employees of the Germantown Police Department, City of Germantown, or civilians involved in police business or activities that further the objectives of

the Germantown Police Department may be transported in assigned marked vehicles.

9. Use of marked vehicles outside the City of Germantown for off duty details is prohibited. The Chief of Police shall authorize any exceptions in writing, prior working such details.

G. Off Duty Use of Unmarked Command Staff and Investigative Division Vehicles:

1. The Chief of Police may assign unmarked Department vehicles to Department Command Staff members subject to recall and Investigation Division officers designated in an active "on call" status.
2. Command Staff and Investigative Division officers may use assigned unmarked Department vehicles for personal use. Such use shall be confined within the boundaries of Shelby County. Passengers are limited to the officer's household members.
3. Command Staff and Investigative Division officers may transport their household members in assigned unmarked Department vehicles when no reasonably convenient means of transportation is available, to and from school and work, to and from babysitters, child care centers, residences and businesses of family members, friends and neighbors, or any other reasonable destination where the safety, security, comfort, and well being of household members will be secured or promoted when the employee is required to respond to a call to perform legitimate and necessary Department business.
4. Command Staff and Investigative Division officers shall not utilize unmarked Department vehicles for travel to or from off duty employment or unapproved Department training/education classes without the prior express written approval of the Chief of Police.
5. Command Staff and Investigative Division officers are discouraged from making traffic stops outside of the City limits (except in an emergency) and engaging in pursuits in assigned unmarked Department vehicles, and shall adhere to the Germantown Police Department's pursuit policy.

IV. REVIEW PROCESS

An annual review of this policy shall be conducted to determine if it should be revised, cancelled or continued in its present form.

This order shall remain in effect until revoked or superseded by competent authority.