



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: VEHICLE POLICIES – USE OF SEATBELTS		NO: E-500	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: August 1, 1990	REVIEWED: 9/22/2017	REVISED: 4/16/2007	UPDATED: 11/12/2007

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Sheriff's Office to require the use of safety belts by drivers and passengers in all vehicles so equipped, except where the use of safety belts would pose a risk of injury to the passengers or the person attempting to secure the passenger.

When an officer believes it necessary to protect their identity in an undercover operation, they will not be required to abide by this seat belt policy. They will begin abiding by the seat belt policy just as soon as they possibly can without compromising their identity.

In all vehicles controlled by the Sheriff's Office, all occupants under six (6) years of age or weighing less than 60 pounds will be properly secured in a child seat restraint system in the rear seat of the vehicle or seat belts in compliance with CVC Section 27360(c)(1).

DIRECTIVE #1

Members of the Sheriff's Office operating vehicles assigned to the Sheriff's Office or owned or leased by the county, shall use seat belts in vehicles so equipped, and shall ensure that all passengers are restrained by safety belts, where such belts are provided in the vehicle, except:

- Where the use or attempted use of the safety belt would aggravate an existing injury to, or medical condition of, the person being restrained;
- Where the use or attempted use of the safety belt would expose to injury, or cause injury to, the person applying the safety belt, or the person being restrained, as in attempting to restrain combative or violent prisoners;
- Where the person is transported to the rear of the front seat, as provided by law.

DIRECTIVE #2

Members of the Sheriff's Office in the performance of their duties transporting children under six (6) years of age or weighing less than 60 pounds will properly secure them in a child passenger restraint system (CPRS). Children transported in a CPRS will be properly restrained in the rear seat of the vehicle, except under the following circumstances:

- There is no rear seat.
- The rear seats are side-facing jump seats.

- The rear seats are rear-facing seats.
- The child passenger restraint system cannot be installed properly in the rear seat.
- All rear seats are already occupied by children under the age of 12 years.
- Medical reasons necessitate that the child or ward not ride in the rear seat.

When any of the above exceptions preclude transporting the child in the rear seat of the vehicle, the CPRS will be properly secured in the front seat of the vehicle.

DIRECTIVE #3

Children under one year of age or weighing less than 20 pounds will not be transported in the front seat of a motor vehicle in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system with an active passenger air bag. Members of the Sheriff’s Office will deactivate the passenger airbag when transporting children under these circumstances. In those cases where the child under one year of age or weighing less than 20 pounds cannot be transported in the rear seat and the passenger side air bag cannot be deactivated, the Sheriff’s Office member will seek a reasonable transportation alternative such as transporting the child in another vehicle.

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