



## *Kern County Sheriff's Office*

# **Policies and Procedures**

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| TITLE: PERSONAL PATROL VEHICLE/VEHICLE USE<br>POLICY |                        | NO: E-800              |                       |
| APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner          |                        |                        |                       |
| EFFECTIVE:<br>December 1, 1997                       | REVIEWED:<br>9/22/2017 | REVISED:<br>02/06/2014 | UPDATED:<br>9/22/2017 |

### **POLICY**

The Personal Patrol Vehicle Program has been created to improve public safety for the residents and visitors of Kern County and to increase the response capabilities of our employees. Some of the public benefits of the program include: increased law enforcement visibility, extended patrol time, and immediate response to disasters and other major emergencies. In addition, this program is intended to provide driver accountability and be a cost efficient alternative to conventional fleet management. Deputies who are involved in the Personal Patrol Vehicle Program will be provided with transportation which is familiar to the individual deputy and which is equipped with personal equipment needed for immediate response anywhere within the County of Kern.

The Sheriff's PPV Program is based on the operational need of the assignment and on the benefit to the residents and visitors of Kern County as deemed by the Sheriff-Coroner. The Sheriff-Coroner reserves the right to expand or restrict the PPV Program based on budgetary restrictions with reasonable notice to the participating employees.

Participation in the Personal Patrol Vehicle Program is voluntary. Deputies who meet the criteria for home retention of a personal patrol vehicle will be allowed to retain their vehicle at their place of residence. Deputies who choose not to participate in the home retention of a vehicle, or who do not meet the criteria for home retention, will park their assigned patrol vehicle at their work assignment in an area designated by the section lieutenant.

All personnel who use a patrol vehicle for overtime or other assignments (whether or not part of the PPV Program) **will be** subject to the applicable provisions set forth in this policy.

### **DIRECTIVE A. PPV DEFINED**

A Personal Patrol Vehicle is defined as an emergency response vehicle owned or leased by the Sheriff's Office. All Personal Patrol Vehicles must be equipped with a top mounted or mounted and stationary emergency light assembly with an operational siren. Personal Patrol Vehicles include, but are not limited to:

- Fully marked Sheriff's patrol vehicles with top mounted emergency lights and graphics.
- Unmarked "slick tops" that have mounted emergency lights and an operational siren.

- Other Sheriff's vehicles that are used in an operational capacity that have mounted emergency lights with an operational siren.

## **DIRECTIVE B. ELIGIBILITY**

In order to participate in the Sheriff's PPV Program:

- The operation of an emergency response vehicle must be a normal part of the employee's regular assignment.
- The employee must be of a classification that is authorized to operate an emergency response vehicle in a "code-three" capacity and is expected to do so as a normal part of his or her duties.
- Participation in the PPV Program is strictly voluntary. If eligible deputies choose not to participate, these deputies are not authorized to drive their assigned PPV to and from home.
- The PPV Program is inclusive of sergeants, senior deputies, and deputies. Specialized assignments as determined by the Sheriff-Coroner will be exempt.
- There will be no mileage caps; however, all participants must reside in Kern County to be eligible to take the PPV to and from home. Deputies who reside outside the County may park their assigned PPV at a substation within their section, but the deputy must comply with all other terms of the PPV Program.
- All participants will be required to authorize a payroll deduction each pay period. The Administration will review the amount of the deduction in January as part of the mid-year budget review and again in May prior to the end of the fiscal year. The amount of the deputy's payroll deduction will be dependent on budgetary requirements.

The Sheriff's Administration retains the right to increase or decrease the payroll deduction with reasonable notice to the deputy. Deputies will be allowed to enroll in the program in December and June; however, deputies may discontinue participation at any time. The Sheriff-Coroner, Undersheriff, or the Chief Deputy of the Field Operations Bureau may authorize a deputy to enroll in the program based on promotion, transfer, reassignment, or other compelling reason.

## **DIRECTIVE C. VEHICLE USE**

Participants in the PPV Program are authorized to drive their assigned vehicle between their residence and place of assignment. Participants will retain the vehicle at their residence and:

- Personnel shall not use assigned vehicles for transportation to and from voluntary overtime assignments unless the assignment mandates the use of the personal patrol

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vehicle. Use of personal patrol vehicles will be limited to and from the following locations:

1. Regular duty work assignments.
  2. Mandatory court appearances.
  3. Mandatory training classes.
  4. Emergencies authorized by the Sheriff's Office.
  5. Any other activity approved by the Sheriff-Coroner.
- b. No one other than the assigned deputy shall operate the personal patrol vehicle unless authorized by a supervisor. Exception is made for other deputies when riding as a partner or maintenance personnel and other members of the Sheriff's Office when transporting the vehicle for maintenance. A supervisor may authorize other personnel to drive a county vehicle during an emergency.
- c. Assigned deputies shall be in complete uniform when operating the personal patrol vehicle to and from their regular work assignment. At all other times deputies shall be dressed appropriately and possess a Sheriff's Office authorized handgun, badge, and Sheriff's identification.
- d. Travel time to and from work in a county vehicle will not be compensable.
1. Police action taken while enroute to or from the participant's residence is compensable with the approval of the on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander.
- e. Personal patrol vehicle radios shall be on and the deputy shall monitor radio traffic and be able to contact the Communications Center at all times when operating the vehicle on or off duty. If the Personal Patrol Vehicle is equipped with a Mobile Data Computer (MDC), the deputy shall use the MDC in conjunction with the communications radio. Deputies will take appropriate enforcement action consistent with Sheriff's Office Policy when a violation is observed and the deputy is operating the personal patrol vehicle. When off duty and enforcement action is to be taken, the deputy will identify himself to the Communications Center by use of his/her CAD Identification Number unless the deputy is assigned a permanent call sign.
- f. The use of any tobacco products is prohibited in all County owned or leased vehicles.
- g. When a deputy assigned to a personal patrol vehicle is on vacation, sick leave, or other extended absences for more than five (5) working days, the personal patrol vehicle will be parked at the deputy's work assignment. Deputies shall drive their assigned PPV or other assigned vehicle to and from work unless they are off work for more than five (5) working days. Deputies may leave their vehicles at their duty assignment on an as needed basis with the permission of a supervisor.

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- h. Personal patrol vehicles shall be locked at all times when unattended. Weapons stored in vehicles will be locked. Portable radios will not be stored in patrol vehicles unless they are stored in the trunk.
- i. Assigned deputies shall complete all forms and accurately maintain all vehicle records deemed necessary by the Sheriff's Office.
- j. Deputies involved in a traffic accident, with a personal patrol vehicle, will notify their section lieutenant or the on duty Watch Commander immediately. The existing policy for vehicle accidents will then be followed.

Misuse or abuse of personal patrol vehicles may result in the loss of program privileges and/or disciplinary action.

#### **DIRECTIVE D. CARE & MAINTENANCE**

- a. Routine preventive maintenance shall be performed prior to each shift by the deputy assigned to the personal patrol vehicle. This maintenance shall minimally include:
  - 1. Check engine oil and add engine oil to the crankcase if necessary.
  - 2. Check the radiator coolant level and add water if necessary.
  - 3. Check battery cables and water level if applicable.
  - 4. Check power steering fluid level.
  - 5. Visually inspect brake fluid level.
  - 6. Check and maintain proper tire inflation.
- b. The assigned deputy of a personal patrol vehicle is responsible for arranging routine maintenance and repair through the Fleet Management Unit, or approved private vendors in the deputy's assigned area. Receipts shall be delivered to the Fleet Manager.
- c. Preventive maintenance will be performed on the personal patrol vehicle every 3,000 miles.
- d. Overtime is not authorized for arranging preventive maintenance. Fleet personnel can handle arrangements for vehicles in the metropolitan patrol area. Substation sergeants should make arrangements to facilitate the service of cars assigned to their areas.
- e. Assigned deputies shall not add or delete any equipment installed on the personal patrol vehicle other than equipment which is authorized by the Chief Deputy of the Law Enforcement Bureau.
- f. Assigned deputies shall maintain a clean vehicle, exterior and interior, at all times.

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- g. Any theft of equipment or vehicle damage shall be reported to the Sheriff's Office immediately.
- h. Personal patrol vehicles are to be parked in a legal manner at the residence of the assigned deputy. The personal patrol vehicle is intended to be a highly visible symbol of the presence of the Kern County Sheriff's Office in our communities and will therefore be parked in public view.
- i. Personal patrol vehicles left parked at a deputy's assignment will be parked in an area designated by the section lieutenant.

Deputies requiring extensive maintenance on their personal patrol vehicle shall make arrangements with the Sheriff's Office Fleet Manager to have the vehicle repaired. Service and repairs should be scheduled during the deputy's non-duty hours or days off whenever possible.

#### **DIRECTIVE E. ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS**

When driving an assigned vehicle to and from work or training outside of the jurisdiction of the Kern County Sheriff's Office, a deputy shall not become involved in enforcement actions except in those circumstances where a potential threat to life or serious property damage exists.

Deputies driving marked vehicles shall be armed at all times.

Deputies may render public assistance, e.g. to a stranded motorist, when deemed prudent.

#### **DIRECTIVE F. VEHICLE INSPECTION**

All County owned vehicles are subject to inspection and or search at any time by a supervisor and no employee assigned to or operating such vehicle shall be entitled to any expectation of privacy with respect to the vehicle or its contents.

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