



# COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL ORDER

### SUBJECT: **PERSONAL PATROL CAR PROGRAM**

### NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*

GEORGIA MILTENBERGER  
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

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This general order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. Policy
- II. Objectives of the PPV Program
- III. Program Eligibility
- IV. Off-Duty Operation of PPV
- V. Off-Duty Enforcement
- VI. Maintenance & Care
- VII. PPV & Secondary Employment
- XIII. Equipment
- IX. Operational Radius/Restrictions/Requirements
- X. Administrative Sanctions
- XI. Compensation

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this general order is to establish basic guidelines for Police Officers participating in the Personal Patrol Car Program. This order does not supersede any other order relating to the operation, maintenance, and care of Town owned police vehicles.

### **I. POLICY**

Eligible officers participating in the program may be issued a police vehicle for off-duty use subject to the regulations in this directive. All take-home vehicles assigned to officers will be referred to as PPVs. This policy pertains to all officers assigned personal patrol vehicles and to those temporarily assigned PPVs. Failure to properly maintain the vehicle or comply with the regulations and procedures contained within this directive, may result in the officer's suspension from the program,

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or in cases of multiple offenses, termination of the officer's participation in the program at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The assigning of personal patrol vehicles to members of the department is a management prerogative. It is the policy of the department to distribute PPVs in a fair and equitable manner. PPVs may be reassigned or replaced as part of the efficient management of the police department. Police vehicles may only be driven by authorized members of the Cottage City Police Department.

## **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE PPV PROGRAM**

### **A. Enhanced Police Presence**

The greater visibility of the Police Department, resulting from an increased number of police vehicles on the streets, will enhance the community's feeling of security.

### **B. Crime Deterrence**

The presence of police vehicles in residential neighborhoods, business communities, and other areas, will have a deterrent effect upon persons who contemplate committing violations of the law.

### **C. Community Relations**

By using the PPV to and from work, court, and part-time, the Cottage City Police Officer is more easily recognized by the public and increased person-to-person communication is achieved. The increased identification between the officer and the public will benefit the concept of effective community policing. In addition, "branding" of the Town of Cottage City is realized by citizens and the business community seeing the Town of Cottage City markings on the police vehicle.

### **D. Reduced Vehicle Fleet Costs**

By using a patrol vehicle for only one shift, instead of around the clock, the vehicle will last longer with fewer attendant repairs and service costs. With one operator, responsibility for proper care and maintenance is clearly fixed. A greater return on investment will be realized by the Town.

### **E. Enhanced Officer Productivity and Fleet Appearance**

With only one officer responsible for the PPV appearance, the Department expects the vehicle to have an excellent appearance at all times. Officer efficiency is enhanced when the specific Officer is responsible to stock the PPV with all the forms, reports and needed equipment.

### **F. Morale**

Officer morale, pride in the assigned PPV and Department, and officer responsibility are closely related to greater motivation for higher performance and increased work productivity.

### **III. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

All officers will be eligible for the PPV program subject to the limitations set forth below:

A. Officers must reside in the State of Maryland and live within a 35 mile straight line distance from the Cottage City Town Hall to the Officer's residence in order to take the PPV to and from their residence. Officers living outside of the 35 mile straight line distance, are still eligible, however, they must park the PPV at a Public Safety facility located within the 35 mile distance. The Public Safety facility (Police, Fire, EMS. etc) will provide written authorization to the Officer and the authorization form will be forwarded to the Chief of Police by the participating Officer.

B. Officers participating in the PPV will have \$25.00 per pay period automatically deducted from their payroll.

C. Officers are eligible for PPV assignment after satisfactorily completing the entry-level probationary period. PPVs will be assigned to eligible officers as the vehicles become available. PPVs may be assigned temporarily to probationary police officers at Chief of Police discretion.

D. Unless circumstances prompt a waiver by the Chief of Police, an officer who is not fit for full duty will be excluded from the PPV program and operation of a marked police vehicle for the duration of the duty restriction.

E. Officers will not allow off-duty use of their PPV by officers who are not eligible for the program.

### **IV. OFF-DUTY OPERATION OF PPV**

A. While operating the vehicle in an off-duty capacity, officers will monitor the police radio on the frequency for the PGPD district in which the vehicle is being operated.

B. Off-duty officers will use their identification number when transmitting radio messages.

C. Members of the officer's immediate family, to include spouse, child, brother, sister, parents or parents-in-law, grandparents, or guardians of the officer, are permitted to accompany him/her when operating his/her assigned vehicle off duty. Officers are responsible for the behavior of the passengers.

D. Officers will not take the vehicle out of the State except on official business or with the authorization of the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police may grant continuing authorization to officers attending undergraduate or graduate programs of higher education in the Baltimore/Washington area. Other types of authorization will be on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

E. When operating a department vehicle off duty, the officer must be armed with an issued or approved sidearm, and will carry the badge and department identification card.

F. The portable radio, laptop, and firearms will be removed from the vehicle when the vehicle is unattended, such as when the PPV is parked overnight at the officer's residence or at an approved Public Safety facility. The aforementioned items will be stored in the Officer's residence or stored in the station locker. This requirement does not apply when the officer is temporarily away from the PPV during the course of business and can effectively exercise control over the vehicle.

G. Unless an emergency situation occurs, unattended PPVs must be locked at all times.

H. Officers are prohibited from using the PPV while engaged in political activities such as setting up signs, attending rallies, caucuses, promotional events, or fund raisers, etc. No bumper stickers, decals, insignia, banners, hats, or placards of any type may be attached to, or displayed on or within, the PPV without the prior written approval of the Chief of Police.

I. Off-duty officers operating police vehicles will ensure that their dress and appearance does not reflect unfavorably on the department. Officers are prohibited from smoking or using tobacco products while operating the PPV.

J. PPVs will not be operated after the officer has consumed any amount of alcoholic beverages. PPVs will not be operated after the officer has ingested any drug that impairs the Officer's ability to operate the vehicle. No alcoholic beverages will be transported in the PPV except when they are seized as evidence or contraband.

## **V. OFF-DUTY ENFORCEMENT**

A. Officers off duty will refrain from employing police powers while outside the jurisdictional boundaries of the Town, unless it is an emergency and falls within the scope of authority granted by the Annotated Code of the State of Maryland.

B. Officers encountering a motor vehicle accident, while off-duty in a PPV, will notify the appropriate public safety communications dispatcher and if necessary for safety issues, remain on the scene until the appropriate law enforcement agency arrives.

C. Off-duty officers, while operating PPVs, are required to respond to incidents or calls for service within Cottage City which come to their attention through any of the following means: (1) on view; (2) citizens (3) or radio monitored activity of a serious nature occurring within reasonable proximity to their location. Whenever an officer's immediate response may result in the prevention of a crime or apprehension of a suspect, the Officer will respond and initiate or assist in any police action.

D. Seat belts will be used at all times by vehicle operators and by all passengers in the vehicle. Only safety seats approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation will be used to restrain infants and toddlers. Safety seats will be removed from the passenger compartment when not in use.

E. Minor incidents, to include disabled vehicles, stranded motorists, and citizens in need of assistance, encountered while operating a personal patrol vehicle off-duty in Cottage City will be handled and cleared by the off-duty officer.

## **VI. MAINTENANCE AND CARE**

A. Performance and appearance of a vehicle, and any equipment in it, is the responsibility of the officer to whom it is assigned. Officers assigned PPVs are responsible for scheduling preventive maintenance every 7,000 miles or according to the mileage as stipulated in the owner's manual.

B. Officers will schedule the routine service and maintenance of their PPVs to be done while they are on duty. Officers will fuel their assigned vehicles during their tours of duty, after reporting for work.

C. Officers will keep the interior of their vehicle clean and will wash the exterior at least once a week, weather permitting.

D. Officers who are not eligible for the Personal Patrol Car will be assigned to a pool vehicle and are responsible for keeping the interior and exterior of their assigned pool vehicle clean. Officers assigned to a pool car will pay for car washes at an approved facility and be reimbursed for (2) automatic car wash per month through normal petty cash procedures.

E. Officers assigned a Personal Patrol Car will pay for car washes without compensation or reimbursement:

## **XII. SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT**

Officers may use their Personal Patrol Car for secondary employment inside the Town of Cottage City. Officers requesting to use the PPV for secondary employment outside of the Town of Cottage City, within the specified thirty-five mile radius in the State of Maryland, must receive written approval from the Chief of Police

## **XIII. Equipment**

A. After market equipment, accessories, emblems, decals, stickers, etc., will not be installed in or on any police vehicle without the permission of the Chief of Police.

B. Any mechanical repairs or equipment will be made by or installed by an approved vendor unless otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police.

### **IX. Operational Restrictions**

In addition to operating the assigned PPV during the normal tour of duty, the participating officers may operate their assigned police vehicle under the following circumstances/restrictions:

- A. Traveling to and from their residence.
- B. Traveling to and from approved secondary employment
- C. Travelling to and from court appearances, training assignments authorized educational classes, or an overtime assignment.
- D. When conducting Departmental business outside the Town authorized by the Chief of Police.

### **X. Administrative Sanctions**

- A. Administrative removal of a Personal Patrol Car from an officer is authorized in circumstances where an officer is deemed to have been neglectful or abusive in the use and/or care of their assigned vehicle. This includes multiple instances of red light camera and/or speed camera violations.
- B. The Personal Patrol Car is a benefit and responsibility. Its use is considered a privilege and not a right. As such, an administrative removal from the program by the Chief of Police may be deemed appropriate under certain circumstances.
- C. Temporary removal from the Personal Patrol Car program may be made by an officer designated by the Chief of Police.
- D. Documentation with justification for the temporary removal must be forwarded, to the Chief of Police within twenty-four (24) hours of removal.
- E. Permanent removal will be by the sole discretion and authority of the Chief of Police.
- F. Administrative removal of an officer from the program may be made with or without subsequent disciplinary action to the officer being removed.

**END OF DOCUMENT**