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## Vehicle Pursuits

### 307.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Vehicle pursuits expose innocent citizens, law enforcement officers and fleeing violators to the risk of serious injury or death. The primary purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidance in balancing the safety of the public and themselves against law enforcement's duty to apprehend violators of the law. Another purpose of this policy is to minimize the potential for pursuit-related collisions. Vehicle pursuits require officers to exhibit a high degree of common sense and sound judgment. Officers must not forget that the immediate apprehension of a suspect is generally not more important than the safety of the public and pursuing officers (ORC § 2935.031).

#### 307.1.1 PHILOSOPHY

Deciding whether to pursue a motor vehicle is a critical decision that must be made quickly and under difficult and unpredictable circumstances. In recognizing the risk to public safety created by vehicle pursuits, no officer or supervisor shall be criticized or disciplined for deciding not to engage in a vehicle pursuit due to the risk involved. This includes circumstances where Department policy would permit the initiation or continuation of the pursuit. It is recognized that vehicle pursuits are not always predictable and decisions made pursuant to this policy will be evaluated according to the totality of the circumstances reasonably available at the time of the pursuit.

The responsibility for the decision to overtake rests with the individual officer. In arriving at their decision, the officer must carefully consider all factors involved, including the seriousness of the offense, the possible consequences, and most importantly, the safety of the general public. In order to diminish the likelihood of a pursuit, officers intending to stop a vehicle should, when practical, be within a close proximity to the vehicle prior to activating the emergency lights and siren. During the course of enforcement activities, specific incidents may escalate from routine overtaking situations if the suspect attempts to evade apprehension. If this occurs, applicable pursuit policy and procedures apply.

Officers must remember that the most important factors to the successful conclusion of a pursuit are proper self-discipline and sound professional judgment. Officers conduct during the course of a pursuit must be objectively reasonable; that is, what a reasonable officer would do under the circumstances. An individual's unreasonable desire to apprehend a fleeing suspect at all costs has no place in professional law enforcement.

### 307.2 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Vehicle Pursuit** - An event involving one or more peace officers attempting to apprehend a suspect who is trying to avoid arrest while operating a motor vehicle by using high speed or other evasive tactics, such as disregarding traffic warning signs, stop signs, red lights, driving off a roadway, turning suddenly or driving in a legal manner but willfully failing to yield to an officer's signal to stop.

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**Blocking or Vehicle Intercept** - A slow-speed coordinated maneuver where two or more law enforcement vehicles simultaneously intercept and block the movement of a suspect vehicle, the driver of which may be unaware of the impending enforcement stop. The goal is containment and preventing a pursuit. Blocking is not a moving or stationary road block.

**Boxing In** - A tactic designed to stop a violator's vehicle by surrounding it with law enforcement vehicles and then slowing all vehicles to a stop.

**Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT)** - A low-speed maneuver intended to terminate the pursuit by causing the violator's vehicle to spin out and come to a stop.

**Ramming** - The deliberate act of impacting a violator's vehicle with another vehicle to functionally damage or otherwise force the violator's vehicle to stop.

**Roadblocks** - A tactic designed to stop a violator's vehicle by intentionally placing a vehicle or other immovable object in the path of the violator's vehicle.

**Serious Violent Felony** - A felony that involves an actual or threatened attack which the officer has cause to believe could result or has resulted in death or serious bodily injury (e.g. aggravated assault, armed robbery, murder).

**Tire Deflation Device, Spikes or Tack Strips** - A device that extends across the roadway and is designed to puncture the tires of the pursued vehicle.

### **307.3 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the policy of this department that a vehicle pursuit shall be conducted with at least one red or blue flashing, rotating or oscillating light, visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of, and a siren activated on an authorized emergency vehicle (ORC § 4513.21, ORC § 4511.01(D) and ORC § 4511.041).

The following policy is established to provide officers with guidelines for driving with due regard and caution for the safety of all persons using the highway.

#### **307.3.1 WHEN TO INITIATE A PURSUIT**

Officers are authorized to initiate a pursuit when it is reasonable to believe that a suspect is attempting to evade arrest or detention by fleeing in a vehicle that has been given a signal to stop by a peace officer (ORC § 2921.331(B)), and:

- The officer knows or has probable cause to believe the suspect presents a clear and immediate threat to the safety of other motorists and,
- Has committed or is attempting to commit a serious violent felony and,
- When the necessity of immediate apprehension outweighs the level of danger created by the pursuit.

The following factors individually and collectively shall also be considered in deciding whether to initiate or continue a pursuit:

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- (a) The seriousness of the known or reasonably suspected crime and its relationship to community safety.
- (b) The importance of protecting the public and balancing the known or reasonably suspected offense and the apparent need for immediate capture against the risks to officers, innocent motorists and others.
- (c) The apparent nature of the fleeing suspect (e.g., whether the suspect represents a serious threat to public safety).
- (d) The identity of the suspect has been verified and there is comparatively minimal risk in allowing the suspect to be apprehended at a later time.
- (e) The safety of the public in the area of the pursuit, including the type of area, time of day, the amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic (e.g., school zones) and the speed of the pursuit relative to these factors.
- (f) The pursuing officer's familiarity with the area of the pursuit, the quality of radio communication between the pursuing units and the dispatcher/supervisor, and the driving capabilities of the pursuing officers under the conditions of the pursuit.
- (g) The weather, traffic and road conditions that unreasonably increase the danger of the pursuit when weighed against the risks resulting from the suspect's escape.
- (h) The performance capabilities of the vehicles used in the pursuit in relation to the speed and other conditions of the pursuit.
- (i) Vehicle speeds.
- (j) Other persons in or on the pursued vehicle (e.g., passengers, co-offenders and hostages).
- (k) The availability of other resources, such as aircraft assistance.
- (l) The police unit is carrying passengers other than on-duty police officers. Pursuits should not be undertaken with a prisoner in the pursuit vehicle unless exigent circumstances exist, and then only after the need to apprehend the suspect is weighed against the safety of the prisoner in transport. A unit containing more than a single prisoner should not participate in a pursuit.

#### 307.3.2 WHEN TO TERMINATE A PURSUIT

Pursuits should be discontinued whenever the totality of objective circumstances known or which reasonably ought to be known to the officer or supervisor during the pursuit indicates that the present risk of continuing the pursuit reasonably appears to outweigh the risk resulting from the suspect's escape.

Operating an emergency vehicle in a pursuit with emergency lights and siren does not relieve the operator of an authorized emergency vehicle of the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and does not protect the driver from the consequences of his/her reckless disregard for the safety of others (ORC § 4511.45(B)).

The above factors on when to initiate a pursuit are expressly included herein and will apply equally to the decision to discontinue as well as the decision to initiate a pursuit. Officers and supervisors

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must objectively and continuously weigh the seriousness of the offense against the potential danger to innocent motorists, themselves and the public when electing to continue a pursuit. In the context of this policy, the term “terminate” shall be construed to mean to discontinue or to stop chasing the fleeing vehicle.

The decision to abandon pursuit may be the most intelligent course of action. Officers must continually question whether the seriousness of the crime justifies continuing the pursuit. In addition to the factors listed above, a pursuit shall be terminated under any of the following circumstances:

- (a) The distance between the pursuing officers and the fleeing vehicle is so great that further pursuit would be futile or require the pursuit to continue for an unreasonable time or distance.
- (b) The pursued vehicle's location is no longer definitely known.
- (c) The officer's pursuit vehicle sustains damage or a mechanical failure that renders it unsafe to drive.
- (d) The pursuit vehicle suffers an emergency equipment failure that causes the vehicle to no longer qualify for emergency operation use.
- (e) Extended pursuits of violators for misdemeanors not involving abuse or risk of serious harm (independent of the pursuit) are discouraged.
- (f) The hazards to uninvolved bystanders or motorists.
- (g) When the identity of the offender is known and it does not reasonably appear that the need for immediate capture outweighs the risk associated with continuing the pursuit, officers should strongly consider discontinuing the pursuit and apprehending the offender at a later time.
- (h) The prevailing traffic, roadway and environmental conditions indicate the futility of continued pursuit.
- (i) When directed to terminate the pursuit by a supervisor.

#### 307.3.3 SPEED LIMITS

The speed of a pursuit is a factor that should be evaluated on a continuing basis by the officer and supervisor. Vehicle speeds shall be taken into consideration to prevent endangering public safety, officer safety and the safety of the occupants of the fleeing vehicle.

Should high vehicle speeds be reached during a pursuit, officers and supervisors shall also consider these factors when determining the reasonableness of the speed of the pursuit (ORC § 4511.24):

- (a) Pursuit speeds have become unreasonably unsafe for the surrounding conditions.
- (b) Pursuit speeds have exceeded the driving ability of the officer.
- (c) Pursuit speeds are beyond the capabilities of the pursuit vehicle, thus making its operation unsafe.

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#### **307.4 PURSUIT UNITS**

Pursuit units should be limited to three vehicles (two units and a supervisor). However, the number of units involved will vary with the circumstances. If more assistance is specifically requested, the amount will be determined by:

- Nature of the offense
- Number of suspects
- Whether the participating units have more than one officer
- Other clear and articulated facts that would warrant the increased hazard.

Only the officer in charge, or other supervisor, may authorize more than three units to be in active pursuit. All other units will be aware of the direction and progress of the pursuit but shall not actively participate, and shall not respond or parallel the pursuit on adjacent streets unless specifically authorized to do so. If three units are already engaged in a pursuit that leaves the City of Beachwood, no Beachwood Police units will leave the city to “assist” or support the pursuit without authorization from a supervisor.

Any officer who drops out of a pursuit may then, if necessary, proceed to the termination point at legal speeds, following the appropriate rules of the road.

Distinctively marked patrol vehicles should replace unmarked vehicles involved in a pursuit whenever practicable.

##### **307.4.1 MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS**

A distinctively marked patrol vehicle equipped with emergency overhead lighting should replace a police motorcycle as primary and/or secondary pursuit unit as soon as practicable.

##### **307.4.2 VEHICLES WITHOUT EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT**

Vehicles not equipped with a red or blue emergency light and siren are prohibited from initiating or joining in any pursuit. Officers in such vehicles may provide support to pursuing units as long as the vehicle is operated in compliance with all traffic laws (ORC § 4511.041 and ORC § 4513.21).

##### **307.4.3 UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLES**

Officers operating unmarked vehicles (provided the vehicle is equipped with emergency lights and siren) may engage in pursuit only when the fleeing vehicle presents an immediate and direct threat to life or property. Whenever a marked unit becomes available to take over the pursuit, the unmarked vehicle will withdraw from active pursuit and serve in a support role. (ORC 4511.041 and ORC 4513.21)

##### **307.4.4 POLICE SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES**

Officers operating marked pursuit-rated SUV type police vehicles (Ford Interceptor Utility/ Chevrolet Tahoe if pursuit rated) may participate in a pursuit. Officers operating traditional SUV police vehicles (Ford Expeditions / F-250 traffic pickup) may pursue until a pursuit-rated marked unit is available to assume the pursuit responsibilities. However, circumstances could exist where

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a traditional SUV type police vehicle (Expedition / F-250) may be desired in a slower pursuit for their performance capabilities in adverse weather conditions or for off road maneuvering.

#### 307.4.5 PRIMARY UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

The initial pursuing officer will be designated as the primary pursuit unit and will be responsible for the conduct of the pursuit unless it is unable to remain reasonably close enough to the violator's vehicle. The primary responsibility of the officer initiating the pursuit is the apprehension of the suspect without unreasonable danger to him/herself or other persons.

The primary unit should notify the Dispatch Center, commencing with a request for priority radio traffic, that a vehicle pursuit has been initiated, using the actual word "pursuit", and as soon as practicable, provide information including, but not limited to:

- (a) The exact reason for the pursuit, including known law violations.
- (b) The location and direction of travel.
- (c) The speed of the fleeing vehicle.
- (d) The description of the fleeing vehicle and license number, if known.
- (e) The number of occupants.
- (f) The identity or description of the known occupants.
- (g) The weather, road and traffic conditions.
- (h) The identity of other agencies involved in the pursuit.
- (i) Information concerning the use of firearms, threat of force, injuries, hostages or other unusual hazards.

EXAMPLE: "12-27 to Radio I am in pursuit of a (vehicle description) for (state the crime) on Chagrin Blvd. westbound at Green Rd." Then proceed with additional radio traffic to include number of occupants, speed, road conditions etc.

Failure to provide the above information will be cause for the officer in charge to order termination of the pursuit.

Unless relieved by a supervisor or secondary unit, the officer in the primary unit shall be responsible for broadcasting the progress of the pursuit. Unless circumstances reasonably indicate otherwise, the primary unit should relinquish the responsibility of broadcasting the progress of the pursuit to a secondary unit or aircraft joining the pursuit to minimize distractions and allow the primary unit to concentrate foremost on safe pursuit tactics.

#### 307.4.6 SECONDARY UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Assistance will be coordinated by dispatch under the direction of the officer in charge. The initiating unit will be advised of the identity and location of backup units who can assist. The second officer in the pursuit is responsible for:

- (a) Immediately notifying the dispatcher of his/her entry into the pursuit.

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- (b) Remaining at a safe distance behind the primary unit unless directed to assume the role of primary officer, or if the primary unit is unable to continue the pursuit.
- (c) Broadcasting the progress of the pursuit unless the situation indicates otherwise.
- (d) Serving as backup to the primary unit once the subject has been stopped.
- (e) If the initiating unit is a one-person unit, the assisting unit may assume radio communications responsibility, allowing the initiating unit to devote full attention to driving
- (f) Assisting units shall, at all costs, avoid intersecting the path of an oncoming high-speed vehicle.
- (g) If the initiating unit becomes disabled, the assisting unit will become the primary unit. The dispatcher will advise the officer in charge and other units that a new backup unit is needed, and the next unit to join the pursuit will be designated as the backup unit.

#### 307.4.7 PURSUIT DRIVING TACTICS

The decision to use specific driving tactics requires the same assessment of considerations outlined in the factors to be considered concerning pursuit initiation and termination. The following are tactics for units involved in the pursuit:

- (a) Officers, considering their driving skills and vehicle performance capabilities, will space themselves from other involved vehicles such that they are able to see and avoid hazards or react safely to maneuvers by the fleeing vehicle.
- (b) Officers may proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation (ORC § 4511.03).
- (c) Because intersections can present increased risks, the following tactics should be considered:
  - 1. Available units not directly involved in the pursuit may proceed safely to controlled intersections ahead of the pursuit in an effort to warn cross traffic.
  - 2. Pursuing units should exercise due caution when proceeding through controlled intersections.
- (d) As a general rule, officers shall not pursue a vehicle driving the wrong way on a roadway, highway or freeway unless specifically authorized by the officer in charge. In the event the pursued vehicle does so, the following tactics should be considered:
  - 1. Requesting assistance from an available air unit.
  - 2. Maintaining visual contact with the pursued vehicle by paralleling on the correct side of the roadway.
  - 3. Requesting other units to observe exits available to the suspect.
- (e) Notify the Ohio State Highway Patrol or other law enforcement agency if it appears the pursuit may enter their jurisdiction.
- (f) Officers involved in a pursuit shall not attempt to pass other units unless the situation indicates otherwise or they are requested to do so by the primary unit and a clear understanding of the maneuver process exists between the involved officers.

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#### **307.4.8 TACTICS/PROCEDURES FOR UNITS NOT INVOLVED IN THE PURSUIT**

There should be no paralleling of the pursuit route. Officers are authorized to use emergency equipment at intersections along the pursuit path to clear intersections of vehicular and pedestrian traffic to protect the public. Officers should remain in their assigned area and should not become involved with the pursuit unless directed otherwise by a supervisor.

The primary unit, secondary unit and supervisor should be the only units operating under emergency conditions (emergency lights and siren) unless other units are assigned to the pursuit.

#### **307.4.9 PURSUIT TRAILING AND CARAVANNING**

In the event that the initiating unit from this agency relinquishes control of the pursuit to another unit or jurisdiction, that initiating unit may, with permission of a supervisor, trail the pursuit to the termination point in order to provide information and assistance for the arrest of the suspect.

The term "trail" means to follow the path of the pursuit at a safe speed, while obeying all traffic laws and without activating emergency equipment. If the pursuit is at a slow rate of speed, the trailing unit will maintain sufficient distance from the pursuit units to clearly indicate an absence of participation in the pursuit.

There shall be no caravanning by field units not directly involved in the immediate pursuit.

#### **307.4.10 AIRCRAFT ASSISTANCE**

When available, aircraft assistance should be requested. Once the air unit has established visual contact with the pursued vehicle, it should assume control over the pursuit. The primary and secondary ground units should consider whether the participation of an aircraft warrants their continued involvement in the pursuit.

The air unit should coordinate the activities of resources on the ground, report progress of the pursuit and provide officers and supervisors with details of upcoming traffic congestion, road hazards or other pertinent information to evaluate whether to continue the pursuit. If ground units are not within visual contact and the air unit determines that it is unsafe to continue the pursuit, the air unit should recommend terminating the pursuit.

### **307.5 SUPERVISORY CONTROL AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the policy of this department that available supervisory and management control will be exercised over all vehicle pursuits involving officers from this department. As with any tactical field problem, it is not necessary that the officer in charge be physically present in order to begin the coordination and assert control of the pursuit.

The field supervisor of the officer initiating the pursuit, or if unavailable, the nearest field supervisor will be responsible for the following:

- (a) Upon becoming aware of a pursuit, immediately notifying involved officers and the Dispatch Center of supervisory presence and ascertaining all reasonably available information to continuously assess the situation and risk factors associated with the pursuit in order to ensure that the pursuit is conducted within established Department guidelines.

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- (b) Engaging in the pursuit, when appropriate, to provide on-scene supervision.
- (c) Exercising management and control of the pursuit even if not engaged in it.
- (d) Ensuring that no more than the number of required law enforcement units needed are involved in the pursuit under the guidelines set forth in this policy.
- (e) Directing that the pursuit be terminated if, in his/her judgment, it is not justified to continue the pursuit under the guidelines of this policy.
- (f) Ensuring that aircraft assistance is requested, if available.
- (g) Ensuring that the proper radio channel is being used.
- (h) Ensuring the notification and/or coordination of outside agencies if the pursuit either leaves or is likely to leave the jurisdiction of this agency.
- (i) Controlling and managing BPD units when a pursuit enters another jurisdiction.
- (j) Preparing a post-pursuit critique and analysis of the pursuit for training purposes.
- (k) The officer in charge should proceed to the termination point of the pursuit to provide guidance and necessary supervision. If the pursuit ends at a location more than two miles outside Beachwood's city limits, an officer designated by the officer in charge shall respond and assume supervisory responsibilities.

#### **307.5.1 OFFICER IN CHARGE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Upon becoming aware that a pursuit has been initiated, the Officer in Charge should monitor and continually assess the situation and ensure the pursuit is conducted within the guidelines and requirements of this policy. The Officer in Charge has the final responsibility for the coordination, control and termination of a vehicle pursuit and shall be in overall command.

The Officer in Charge shall review all pertinent reports for content and forward them to the Captain.

#### **307.6 COMMUNICATIONS**

If the pursuit is confined within the City limits, radio communications will be conducted on the primary channel unless instructed otherwise by a supervisor or communications dispatcher. If the pursuit leaves the jurisdiction of this department or such is imminent, involved units should, whenever available, switch radio communications to an emergency channel most accessible by participating agencies and units.

##### **307.6.1 THE DISPATCH CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Upon notification that a pursuit has been initiated, the Dispatch Center will be responsible for:

- (a) Receiving and recording all incoming information on the pursuit and the pursued vehicle.
- (b) Immediately notifying the officer in charge and any other road supervisor when a pursuit is initiated.
- (c) Clearing the radio channel of any unnecessary traffic and advising all other units that a pursuit is in progress, providing all relevant information, being careful not to interrupt radio traffic from pursuing vehicles.

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- (d) Performing relevant record and motor vehicle checks.
- (e) In as calm a manner as possible, controlling all radio communications during the pursuit.
- (f) Coordinating assistance under the direction of the officer in charge.
- (g) Continuing to monitor the pursuit until it has been terminated.
- (h) Notifying and coordinating with other involved or affected agencies as practicable.
- (i) Assigning an incident number and logging all pursuit activities.

#### **307.6.2 LOSS OF PURSUED VEHICLE**

When the pursued vehicle is lost, the primary unit should broadcast pertinent information to assist other units in locating the vehicle. The primary unit will be responsible for coordinating any further search for either the pursued vehicle or suspects fleeing on foot.

#### **307.6.3 TERMINATION OF PURSUIT**

When a pursuit is terminated, the officers involved shall:

- (a) Acknowledge pursuit termination via police radio
- (b) Resume legal speed
- (c) Turn off overhead lights and siren
- (d) Turn off at the next intersection
- (e) Return to the City of Beachwood

#### **307.7 INTERJURISDICTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

When a pursuit enters another agency's jurisdiction, the primary officer or supervisor, taking into consideration distance traveled, unfamiliarity with the area and other pertinent facts, should determine whether to request the other agency to assume the pursuit. Unless entry into another jurisdiction is expected to be brief, it is generally recommended that the primary officer or supervisor ensure that notification is provided to each outside jurisdiction into which the pursuit is reasonably expected to enter, regardless of whether such jurisdiction is expected to assist.

##### **307.7.1 ASSUMPTION OF PURSUIT BY ANOTHER AGENCY**

The dispatch center, with the approval of the officer in charge, will notify outside agencies if this department is in pursuit in their jurisdiction. The dispatcher will specify that the call is either a request for assistance or merely a courtesy notification with no participation desired.

Beachwood Police Department officers will discontinue the pursuit when another agency has assumed the pursuit, unless continued assistance of the Beachwood Police Department is requested by the agency assuming the pursuit. Upon discontinuing the pursuit, the primary unit may proceed upon request, with or at the direction of a supervisor, to the termination point to assist in the investigation.

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The role and responsibilities of officers at the termination of a pursuit initiated by this department shall be coordinated with appropriate consideration of the units from the agency assuming the pursuit.

Notification of a pursuit in progress should not be construed as a request to join the pursuit. Requests to or from another agency to assume a pursuit should be specific. Because of communication limitations between local agencies, a request for another agency's assistance will mean that its personnel will assume responsibility for the pursuit. For the same reasons, when a pursuit leaves another jurisdiction and a request for assistance is made to this department, the other agency should relinquish control.

#### 307.7.2 PURSUITS EXTENDING INTO THIS JURISDICTION

The agency that initiates a pursuit shall be responsible for conducting the pursuit. Officers shall not become involved in another agency's pursuit unless specifically authorized by the officer in charge, or unless it is clearly demonstrated that a unit from an outside agency is unable to request assistance or the emergency nature of the situation dictates the need for assistance. In these instances, all departmental pursuit driving policies are in effect.

Beachwood officers will only remain engaged in a pursuit initiated by another jurisdiction to the extent that the safety concerns for the officer(s) from another jurisdiction are being met. In situations that lack immediate officer safety concerns, Beachwood officers will not become actively involved in the pursuit. In these cases, Beachwood officers will maintain awareness of the pursuit, attempt to mitigate safety concerns to the general public in the direction of the pursuit, and be prepared to render immediate assistance should the pursued vehicle stop within the City of Beachwood.

If requested by another jurisdiction and approved by a supervisor, tire-deflation equipment may be utilized to assist in the termination of the inter-jurisdictional pursuit in accordance with the policy and procedures for use of such equipment.

When a request is made for this department to assist or take over a pursuit from another agency that has entered this jurisdiction, the supervisor should consider these additional factors:

- (a) Ability to maintain the pursuit.
- (b) Circumstances serious enough to continue the pursuit.
- (c) Adequate staffing to continue the pursuit.
- (d) The public's safety within this jurisdiction.
- (e) Safety of the pursuing officers.

As soon as practicable, a supervisor or the Officer in Charge should review a request for assistance from another agency. The Officer in Charge or supervisor, after consideration of the above factors, may decline to assist in or assume the other agency's pursuit.

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Assistance to a pursuing outside agency by officers of this department will terminate at the City limits provided that the pursuing peace officers have sufficient assistance from other sources. Ongoing participation from this department may continue only until sufficient assistance is present.

In the event that a pursuit from another agency terminates within this jurisdiction, officers shall provide appropriate assistance to peace officers from the outside agency including, but not limited to, scene control, coordination and completion of supplemental reports and any other assistance requested or needed.

#### **307.8 PURSUIT INTERVENTION**

Pursuit intervention is an attempt to terminate the ability of a suspect to continue to flee in a motor vehicle through tactical application of technology, tire deflation devices, blocking, boxing, PIT (Pursuit Intervention Technique), ramming or roadblock procedures.

In the course of a high-speed pursuit, deliberate contact between vehicles or forcing the pursued vehicle into parked cars, ditches, or any other obstacle, boxing in, heading off, ramming, or driving alongside the pursued vehicle while it is in motion shall be prohibited. Exceptions may be made for pursued vehicles that are stopped or traveling at very low speeds if such maneuvers are a safe way to keep the pursuit from continuing. Reckless or hazardous driving maneuvers shall not be duplicated by any pursuing vehicle (unless specifically authorized by the officer in charge).

##### **307.8.1 WHEN USE IS AUTHORIZED**

Use of pursuit intervention tactics should be employed only after approval of a supervisor. In deciding whether to use intervention tactics, officers/supervisors should balance the risk of allowing the pursuit to continue with the potential hazards arising from the use of each tactic to the public, the officers and persons in or on the pursued vehicle. With this in mind, the decision to use any intervention tactic should be reasonable in light of the circumstances apparent to the officer at the time of the decision.

It is imperative that officers act within legal bounds using good judgment and accepted practices.

##### **307.8.2 USE OF FIREARMS**

The use of firearms to disable a pursued vehicle is not generally an effective tactic and involves all the dangers associated with discharging firearms. Officers should not utilize firearms during an ongoing pursuit unless the conditions and circumstances meet the requirements authorizing the use of deadly force. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any officer from using a firearm to stop a suspect from using a vehicle as a deadly weapon.

##### **307.8.3 INTERVENTION STANDARDS**

Any intervention tactic, depending upon the conditions and circumstances under which it is used, may present dangers to the officers, the public or anyone in or on the vehicle being pursued. Certain applications of intervention tactics may be construed to be a use of force, including deadly force, and are subject to Department policies guiding such use. Officers shall consider these facts and requirements prior to deciding how, when, where and if an intervention tactic should be employed.

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- (a) Blocking or vehicle intercept should only be considered in cases involving felony suspects or impaired drivers who pose a threat to public safety, and when officers reasonably believe that attempting a conventional enforcement stop will likely result in the driver attempting to flee in the vehicle. Because of the potential risk involved, this technique should only be employed by officers who have received training in such tactics and after giving consideration to the following:
  - 1. The need to immediately stop the suspect vehicle or prevent it from leaving substantially outweighs the risk of injury or death to occupants of the suspect vehicle, officers or other members of the public.
  - 2. All other reasonable intervention techniques have failed or reasonably appear ineffective.
  - 3. Employing the blocking maneuver does not unreasonably increase the risk to officer safety.
  - 4. The target vehicle is stopped or traveling at a low speed.
  - 5. At no time should civilian vehicles be used to deploy this technique.
- (b) The use of the PIT maneuver is prohibited.
- (c) Ramming a fleeing vehicle is prohibited, unless the use of deadly force is justified. In such situations, ramming should be done only after other reasonable tactical means at the officer's disposal have been exhausted. This tactic should be reserved for situations where there does not appear to be another reasonable alternative method.
- (d) Boxing is allowed at low speeds only. As with all intervention techniques, pursuing officers should obtain supervisor approval before attempting to box a suspect vehicle during a pursuit. The use of such a technique must be carefully coordinated with all involved units, taking into consideration the circumstances and conditions apparent at the time, as well as the potential risk of injury to officers, the public and occupants of the pursued vehicle.
- (e) The use of a tire deflation device is not considered an application of deadly force in that they produce a slow controlled deflation of the pursued vehicle's tire which normally will not cause the vehicle to lose control. Tire deflation devices should be deployed only when it is reasonably apparent that only the pursued vehicle will be affected by their use. Prior to the deployment of spike strips, the officer shall notify pursuing units and the supervisor of the intent and location. Officers should carefully consider the limitations of such devices as well as the potential risks to officers, the public and occupants of the pursued vehicle. If the pursued vehicle is a motorcycle, a vehicle transporting hazardous materials or a school bus transporting children, officers and supervisors should weigh the potential consequences against the need to immediately stop the vehicle. Tire deflation devices may be deployed covertly in the path of a fleeing vehicle. All uses of the tire deflation device must have the specific prior approval of the officer in charge. All uses of a tire deflation device will be documented on an incident report and a reportable use of force report, copies of which will be forwarded to the chief of police.

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- (f) Because roadblocks involve a potential for serious injury or death to occupants of the pursued vehicle if the suspect does not stop, the intentional placement of roadblocks in the direct path of a pursued vehicle is prohibited.

#### 307.8.4 CAPTURE OF SUSPECTS

As a general rule, when a pursuit ends, a felony traffic stop is the preferred course of action to secure the occupant(s) of the pursued vehicle.

Proper self-discipline and sound professional judgment are the keys to a successful conclusion of a pursuit and apprehension of evading suspects. Officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary under the circumstances to properly perform their lawful duties.

Unless relieved by a supervisor, the primary officer should coordinate efforts to apprehend the suspect following the pursuit. Officers should consider safety of the public and the involved officers when formulating plans to contain and capture the suspect.

#### **307.9 REPORTING AND REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

All appropriate reports shall be completed to comply with local and state regulations.

- (a) The officer initiating the pursuit shall complete an incident report.
- (b) Copies of all related mobile video shall be safeguarded.
- (c) Mobile video footage shall also be submitted as evidence in cases where an arrest is made or probable regarding the violator.
- (d) The officer in charge may require supplemental reports by supporting officer(s) and dispatcher(s).
- (e) The officer-in-charge of the shift when a pursuit occurs will evaluate all facets of it to include a review of the affiliated dashboard and body worn camera images. This evaluation should include a review of the conduct of all officers who may have engaged in the pursuit whether or not that information was broadcasted. This evaluation shall culminate in a departmental memo that addresses the following:
  - 1. Their findings as to policy compliance,
  - 2. Recommendations for discipline or additional training in regards to violations of the policy or standards of conduct,
  - 3. Recommendations for commendation, and
  - 4. Recommendations for any policy changes.
- (f) The prepared memo shall be forwarded to the patrol captain or chief of police.
- (g) The patrol captain, chief of police, and/or supervisor of the traffic bureau will review the submitted memo as prepared by the shift OIC as well as the affiliated dash/body camera images. Results of the pursuit analysis may be distributed to all police officers for training purposes depending upon their training value.
- (h) Pursuit driving reports and analysis shall be maintained on file by the traffic bureau supervisor or patrol captain, who shall analyze the information recorded in the reports annually. Results of the analysis shall be reported to the chief of police and included

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### *Vehicle Pursuits*

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in the annual report. This report shall also be used by the training coordinator to assist in determining in-service training needs.

#### 307.9.1 REGULAR AND PERIODIC PURSUIT TRAINING

In addition to initial and supplementary training on pursuits, all sworn employees will participate, no less than annually, in regular and periodic training addressing this policy and the importance of vehicle safety and protecting the public at all times. Training will include a recognition of the need to balance the known offense and the need for immediate capture against the risks to officers and others.

#### 307.9.2 POLICY REVIEW

Sworn members of this department shall certify in writing that they have received, read and understand this policy initially and upon any amendments (ORC § 2935.031).