

# Vehicle Pursuits

## Vehicle Pursuits

### 314.1 POLICY

Our policy is to protect all persons' lives, to the greatest extent possible, when enforcing the law by regulating the manner vehicle pursuits are undertaken and performed. Vehicle pursuits of fleeing suspects' present a danger to the lives of the public, officers, and suspects involved in the pursuit. Tactics used to stop a fleeing vehicle may be considered a use of force.

In addition, it is the responsibility of the department to assist officers in the safe performance of their duties.

### 314.2 MOTOR VEHICLE PURSUIT

A motor vehicle pursuit is an active attempt, by a law enforcement officer, operating a department vehicle with activated emergency equipment, trying to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving vehicle, when it is reasonably apparent the driver of that vehicle is aware of the attempt, and is resisting apprehension by:

- Refusing to stop the vehicle,
- increasing speeds in excess of the posted speed limit,
- disobeying traffic laws,
- attempting to elude the officer through evasive maneuvers or tactics, or
- any other articulable observations of the suspect's actions by the involved officer(s).

### 314.3 INITIATION OF PURSUIT

The decision to initiate a pursuit must be based on the pursuing officer's conclusion the immediate danger to the officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large.

Any law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicle pursuit when one of the following criteria is present:

- **Articulable and reasonable suspicion to believe a felony crime has been committed, is being committed, or is about to be committed by a suspect who exhibits the intention to avoid arrest by using a vehicle to flee and escape apprehension.**
- **The suspect, if allowed to flee, would represent a danger to human life or the potential to cause serious bodily harm.**

A vehicle pursuit **SHALL NOT** be initiated as a result of a misdemeanor traffic violation that becomes felony evading.

The pursuing officer should evaluate and consider the following factors prior to initiating a pursuit:

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- The nature of the offense for which the pursuit was initiated.
- The current driving behavior exhibited by the suspect(s).
- The time of day.
- Road, weather and vehicle conditions.
- Any other risks presented by the pursuit itself and alternatives to pursuit.
- Knowledge of the identity of the suspect(s), possible destination and previous activities.
- The risk of harm to others if the suspect escapes.
- Availability of assistance.
- Effects of the pursuit on the driver's actions.
- Existence of possible innocent third party inside suspect vehicle.

## 314.4 TERMINATION OF PURSUIT

**Termination of a Pursuit** – when safe and practical, officers will discontinue a pursuit by shutting off all emergency equipment, reducing speeds and transitioning to CODE1 driving.

All pursuits are constantly changing situations. It is imperative all officers involved continually reassess the pursuit to ensure it still complies with the criteria for the initiation of the pursuit.

**Any involved officer or ranking supervisor will immediately terminate any pursuit, if in the officer or supervisor's judgment, the pursuit no longer meets the criteria for the initiation of a pursuit.**

**Once a pursuit is terminated, it may only be re-initiated if the requirements set forth in DP314.3 are met, and approval is obtained from the supervisor.**

**The "PIT Maneuver" is not an authorized technique in the termination of a pursuit.**

## 314.5 PURSUIT GUIDELINES

Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, a pursuit shall consist of no more than two (2) police vehicles, a primary and a secondary unit. All other personnel shall stay clear of the pursuit unless directed to participate by a supervisor.

The primary unit will become the secondary unit when the fleeing vehicle comes under air surveillance or another unit has assumed the role of the primary unit.

All officers involved in the pursuit are responsible for their driving patterns, keeping a safe distance, clearing intersections, and driving within their abilities.

## 314.6 PURSUIT OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

During the pursuit the responsibilities of the officer involved are:

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**Primary Officer Activates All Emergency Equipment**

1. Notifies communications of the location upon engaging in a pursuit the:
  - Direction and speed of the pursuit.
  - Description of the pursued vehicle and occupants, if known.
  - Initial purpose for the stop.
  - Traffic conditions (pedestrian and vehicles).
2. Supervises the direction and control of the pursuit until relieved by a supervisor or a secondary officer.
3. Keeps communications updated on the progress of the pursuit until a secondary officer arrives.
4. Does not drive with wanton and reckless disregard for the safety of other road users or pedestrians when engaged in a pursuit.

**Secondary Officer**

1. Takes position at a safe distance behind the primary officer.
2. Assumes radio updates of the pursuit, allowing the primary officer to focus on tactics.

**314.7 SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY**

The supervisor plays an important role in the successful outcome of a pursuit.

Their responsibilities are:

1. Monitors incoming information upon notification of a pursuit in progress.
2. Elicits information from the pursuing officer(s) when necessary. Directs activities surrounding the pursuit.

**Supervisors will manage the pursuit, based upon known information, and are expected to terminate pursuits that become unreasonable, or do not conform to policy.**

3. Decides to add or delete unit(s) to the pursuit.
4. Decides whether or not unit(s) involved in a pursuit will leave jurisdiction. (see 314.10 for interjurisdictional pursuits)
5. Makes every attempt to be on scene at the conclusion of a pursuit.
6. Ensures air support has been requested.
7. Ensures a Blue Team report is completed.
8. Reviews in-car and body worn camera video to assess initiation, continuation, and conclusion of pursuit.

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## 314.8 COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibilities of Communications Operators during a pursuit are:

1. Verifies the patrol supervisor is aware a pursuit has been initiated or is entering our jurisdiction.

If the patrol supervisor does not acknowledge radio transmission, Communications will notify the Watch Commander and call the patrol supervisor. Communications will designate a supervisor if the officer's supervisor is not available.

2. Declares a Code Red if the pursuing officers have failed to do so and ensures that all channels receive the Code Red and pursuit information.
3. Monitors, relays when appropriate, and coordinates all radio traffic involved in the pursuit.
4. Logs all pertinent information to include direction and speed, description of vehicle, initial purpose for the stop, traffic conditions, and termination of pursuit (if applicable).
5. Receives, records and researches all information regarding the suspect vehicle and suspect(s) in the vehicle.
6. Advises other dispatchers when the pursuit is headed toward adjacent areas.
7. Advises supervisor when the pursuit is heading towards neighboring jurisdictions. The responsibilities of Communications Supervisors during a pursuit are: Ensures the above Communications Operator's responsibilities are completed.
8. Advises or has a designee advise neighboring jurisdictions when the pursuit is headed in their direction, giving direction, status, and description of the vehicle.
9. Contacts or has a designee contact other agencies when HPD officer request assistance, describing the circumstances and specific assistance requested. Remains in contact unless a common radio channel is available to both agencies.

## 314.9 PURSUIT TACTICS

**Use Marked Vehicles When Possible** – When feasible, patrol units with the most prominent markings and emergency lights shall be used to pursue, particularly as the primary unit. When a unit other than a marked unit initiates a pursuit, that unit will relinquish primary and then secondary responsibilities to a marked unit when feasible.

**Supervisor as Primary Unit** - A supervisor who initiates a pursuit will remain as the primary unit until another unit can take over primary unit functions. The supervisor will then adhere to DP314.7.

**Police Motorcycle Restrictions** – Motorcycles may be used in pursuits under exigent circumstances and when weather and related conditions allow. The motor officer will relinquish primary and then secondary unit responsibilities to a marked unit when feasible.

**Use of Vehicles Without Emergency Equipment Prohibited** – The use of any police vehicle not equipped with a police radio, emergency lights and siren of a Department approved type are prohibited from use in a pursuit.

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**Safe Driving** – Officers involved in a pursuit should use caution when approaching intersections by, slowing or stopping to ensure the intersection is clear of vehicles or pedestrians.

**Paralleling** – Officers shall not follow pursuits on parallel streets unless directed to do so by the supervisor.

**Use of Intervention** – Decisions to discharge firearms at or from a moving vehicle, intentional ramming or blocking in of a moving vehicle or to use roadblocks are prohibited, except in extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary circumstances exist when all other reasonable avenues have been exhausted and it is necessary to terminate the pursuit for public safety. Whenever possible, use of intervention should be approved by a supervisor.

**Tire Deflation Devices** - Use of Tire Deflation Devices may be used consistent with DP703 Tire Deflation Device.

**At Pursuit Conclusion** – Once the pursued vehicle is stopped, officers shall utilize the appropriate officer safety tactics; taking the suspect into custody per training (felony traffic stop) and in a manner that is reasonably safe for all parties.

**Securing Suspect Vehicle** – Should the suspect(s) abandon the vehicle, involved officers will ensure an officer remains with the suspect vehicle prior to the initiation a foot pursuit. The officer remaining with the vehicle or a supervisor will request additional resources as needed to secure the vehicle.

## 314.10 INTER-JURISDICTIONAL PURSUITS

**Leaving Our Jurisdiction** – The primary officer will relinquish control of the pursuit to officers of another jurisdiction, provided the other jurisdiction is willing to assume control.

Should the controlling jurisdiction refuse to assume the pursuit, the involved supervisor will decide whether the continuation of the pursuit is within the best interest of the Department.

**Entering Our Jurisdiction** – When unit(s) involved in a pursuit enter(s) our jurisdiction and the agency in pursuit requests our assistance, it will be the decision of the supervisor whether, and to what degree, we will assist.

Under no circumstances will we assume the control of a pursuit that does not meet our requirements for the initiation of a pursuit.

Officers will not become involved when unit(s) involved in a pursuit from another jurisdiction enter(s) our jurisdiction unless directed to do so by a supervisor.

This does not prevent an officer from engaging in traffic control when, in their opinion, public safety would best be served by controlling traffic in the area of an approaching pursuit.

## 314.11 DOCUMENTATION OF PURSUITS

All officers who participate in a vehicle pursuit will complete, either an original or supplemental report, detailing the circumstances of the pursuit and their involvement. The on-scene supervisor will complete a supervisor's review in Blue Team.

# **Vehicle Pursuits**

**The Training & Development Section will:**

Compile an annual review and analysis of Vehicular Pursuit Reports and reporting procedures.

Forward the Annual Review and Vehicular Pursuit Report analysis to the Chief of Police with a copy to the Office of Professional Standards

**314.12 TRAINING**

The Training & Development Section will develop training to correct any issues identified during the analysis and review process of the incident on a case-by-case basis. The analysis of the incident may be performed by the Training & Development Section, depending on the circumstances surrounding the incident.



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**Accreditation Standards**

CALEA 41.2.2 Pursuit of Motor Vehicles  
CALEA 41.2.3 Roadblocks and Forcible Stopping

**References**

DP300 Use of Force

**Revision History**

<b>Date Effective</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
10-02-13	DM-0461 "Vehicular Pursuits" changed to DP314, same title. Changed to new format. DM-0461 rescinded upon effective date of this change.
02-19-14	Corrected routing procedure of Blue Team report. Added "See Narrative" to BlueTeam when a department report is also completed on the incident. Added annual review and analysis of pursuits by Training Bureau.
01-20-15	Removed "After Action Report" in 314.7 and referenced BlueTeam.
04-05-18	Numerous changes throughout 314.6 – 314.11 which update the documentation protocols.
07-30-19	Minor changes based of Bowman Group recommendations
05-28-20	A complete re-write of the entire policy.
05-17-21	Added 314.8 (4) for Communications responsibility to log information. Change in subsequent numbering.
07-13-22	Biennial review. 314.11 Updated to follow changes to DP300. Changed supervisor's review from "and Blueteam" to "in Blueteam".