


<b>FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>  <b>GENERAL ORDER</b>	SUBJECT: <b>VEHICLE ESCORTS</b>		NUMBER: <b>507</b>
	EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>August 11, 2022</b>	REVIEW: <b>August, 2025</b>	
RESPONSIBLE ENTITY: OPERATIONS SUPPORT BUREAU			<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input type="checkbox"/> Replaces: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised: 01-01-19
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	CALEA: 61.3.3 VLEPSC: OPR. 07.09		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines and procedures for all motor vehicle escorts provided by the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD).

II. POLICY

Requests for vehicle escorts are routinely received by the Police Department for reasons including, but not limited to, funeral processions, dignitary protection, and hazardous material transportation. It is the policy of the FCPD that, under special circumstances, sworn officers may escort motor vehicle processions throughout Fairfax County with due regard for the safety of all individuals, to include other motorists. Officers shall refuse any motor vehicle escort request that presents an unreasonable hazard to their safety or the safety of the public or presents an unreasonable disruption to normal traffic flow. Escorts of non-emergency equipped vehicles in emergency situations, to include civilian vehicles, is strictly prohibited.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. **Requests for Vehicle Escorts:** All vehicle escort requests shall be forwarded to the Traffic Division of the Operations Support Bureau (OSB). The Motor Section supervisor shall review the request and, where staffing constraints exist, may request patrol assistance as necessary.
- B. **Use of Vehicle Equipment:** Escorts should be conducted with marked police cruisers and/or police motorcycles whenever available in order to provide maximum police visibility to other motorists. Officers involved in traffic control during a motor vehicle escort assignment shall have their vehicle's emergency lighting fully activated at all times. Intermittent use of the siren

may be required at times to warn other vehicles, and escorted vehicles shall not be allowed to exceed the posted speed limits.

- C. **Public Official and Dignitary Motor Vehicle Escorts:** Escort requests of public officials and dignitaries shall be coordinated with personnel representing the official or dignitary and the OSB Commander through the Traffic Division Commander. Where the request is approved, the Motors Section supervisor shall be responsible for establishing specific duties and assignments for all FCPD personnel participating in the escort. Where escorts are done in conjunction with security details for the official or dignitary, all policies and procedures established in [FCPD General Order 524](#), Dignitary Protection shall be adhered to.
  
- D. **Motor Vehicle Escort Routes:** Designated lead officers assigned to motor vehicle escorts shall determine the travel route, accounting for time of day, traffic conditions, workload, known road hazards, permit requirements, and/or weather conditions. Where the requesting party does not agree to the selected route, they will be advised to proceed at their own discretion or, in the case of hazardous materials or oversized loads, be informed they cannot lawfully travel through Fairfax County unless they agree to the selected route and conditions.
  
- E. **Funeral Motor Vehicle Escorts:** Designated lead officers on funeral escorts shall determine the manageable number of vehicles that can be escorted based upon available personnel, route, and weather conditions. Where the lead officer anticipates refusing the funeral escort request, they shall notify their immediate supervisor. Processions with less than fifteen (15) motor vehicles will not be escorted absent unusual circumstances. Where a funeral procession is larger than anticipated and cannot be accomplished with available personnel, the lead officer shall advise the procession coordinator that the procession will be delayed to request additional resources, or the procession may proceed without an escort at its own risk. Officers may also elect to transport a manageable number of vehicles, to specifically include family members and the funeral coach. Funeral home personnel shall be requested to have all participating vehicles activate their headlights and four-way flashers and keep placards in the lead and rear vehicles.
  
- F. **Entering Into Intersections:** Whenever possible, officers shall enter controlled intersections on green traffic signals, however, any officer may take control of an intersection, regardless of traffic signal color, whenever so required by traffic conditions. Once this is initiated, control shall be maintained until the last vehicle in the procession has passed through the intersection.

- G. **Passing Other Vehicles:** When officers pass vehicles in procession in order to reach the front, they shall not pass within the same traffic lane as the escorted vehicles and shall exercise due regard for their safety and the public. Escorted vehicles shall not be allowed to proceed against a red traffic signal, unless at the direction of a police officer.
- H. **Traveling on Interstate Highways:** Use of interstate highways should generally be avoided for funeral escorts. When the route of travel includes the interstate highway system, officers will advise a funeral home representative that the procession may not be assisted onto the interstate by the police. Exceptions may include line of duty deaths, military or public safety personnel members killed in the performance of duty, or other dignitary escorts, and shall require pre-approval by a Motors Squad supervisor.

#### IV. LEGAL REFERENCES

- A. [Va. Code Ann. § 46.2-828](#); Right-of-way for funeral processions under police or sheriff's escort; improper joining of, passing through, or interfering with processions prohibited; use of high beam headlights and hazard lights by vehicles traveling in funeral processions.
- B. [Va. Code Ann. § 46.2-829](#); Approach of law-enforcement or fire-fighting vehicles, rescue vehicles, or ambulances; violation as failure to yield right-of-way.
- C. [Va. Code Ann. § 46.2-834](#); Signals by law-enforcement officers, crossing guards, and flaggers.
- D. [Fairfax County Code Section 82-1-18](#); Driving through funeral or other processions; manner of driving in funeral processions.
- E. [Fairfax County Code Section 82-1-19](#); Identification of vehicles in funeral processions; right-of-way.

General Order 507 becomes effective on the above date and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subjects.

ISSUED BY:

  
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Chief of Police

APPROVED BY:

  
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County Executive