

<p style="text-align: center;">FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">GENERAL ORDER</p>	<p>SUBJECT: NORMAL VEHICLE OPERATIONS</p>		<p>NUMBER: 502</p>
	<p>EFFECTIVE DATE: January 9, 2023</p>	<p>REVIEW: January 2026</p>	
<p>RESPONSIBLE ENTITY: Criminal Justice Academy</p>			<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input type="checkbox"/> Replaces: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised 01-01-19
<p>ACCREDITATION STANDARDS</p>	<p>CALEA: 41.2.1</p>	<p>VLEPSC: OPR.01.01</p>	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines and procedures for the normal operation of police, county owned, and Department-leased vehicles.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) that all Department members operate police, county owned, and Department-leased vehicles in a safe manner in accordance with both state law and Fairfax County ordinances. The Code of Virginia requires officers to drive with due regard for the safety of others, thus except in circumstances clearly beyond the operator’s control, officers are strictly responsible for the manner in which they operate a police vehicle.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Normal Driving: Operation of a motor vehicle in a manner concurrent with normal flow of traffic, obedience to all motor vehicle laws, and requirements of posted vehicular control signs.

IV. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. **Normal Driving:** All Department members shall operate police, county owned, and Department-leased vehicles in a safe manner during periods of normal driving. Officers responding to calls for service that are neither of an urgent nor emergency nature shall do so strictly within the parameters of a normal driving response and in obedience with all motor vehicle laws.

B. **Use of Seat Belts:** Seat belts shall be worn at all times by both members and any passengers while operating a police, county owned, or Department-leased vehicle, to include commercial and/or privately owner vehicles operated while on-

duty. Prisoner transports shall be conducted in accordance with [Regulation 203, Prisoner Care and Custody](#).

- C. **Vehicle Inspections:** Operators of County-owned vehicles are responsible for conducting an inspection of the safety features of the vehicle, to include all lights, brakes, fluid levels, siren, horn, and steering prior to commencing operation. County-owned police vehicles shall not be operated without fully functional emergency equipment.
- D. **Vehicle Modifications:** Department members are prohibited from modifying, removing, deactivating, or otherwise tampering with County-owned police vehicle features, to include safety belts, supplemental restraint systems (airbags), emission control devices, the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, or any other part of the vehicle that might affect its operation.
- E. **Operationally Unsafe Vehicles:** No employee shall operate a County-owned vehicle believed to be operationally unsafe. Operators of vehicles, whenever made aware of any unsafe condition existing with the vehicle, shall notify their supervisor who shall ensure the vehicle is towed, not driven, to a Department of Vehicle Services (DVS) facility as soon as practical. DVS shall determine the condition of the vehicle and suitability for service. All weapons shall be removed from police vehicles prior to delivery to a DVS facility or other service location.
- F. **Backing and Turning of Vehicles:** Operators of County-owned or leased police vehicles shall exercise due caution prior to turning or backing the vehicle. During normal driving, vehicles shall be operated with due regard for safety at all times.
- G. **Unsecured Vehicles:** County-owned or leased vehicles shall not be left unsecured while the engine is in operation.
- H. **Weather and Road Conditions:** Operators of County-owned or leased vehicles shall recognize variable weather factors, road surface contour and conditions, and traffic congestion and operate the vehicle with due regard for these factors. During periods of inclement weather when vehicles cannot be washed routinely, operators shall ensure headlights, bar lights, and taillight lenses are kept reasonably clean under the circumstances.
- I. **Blocking Lanes of Travel:** Officers shall only block lanes of travel when conducting official police business in order to not create unnecessary traffic hazards. Where it becomes necessary to warn oncoming motorists approaching a location of a hazard, officers shall use emergency lighting, four-way flashers, traffic flares and cones, and other Department-approved warning devices.

- J. **Public Address Systems:** Officers shall only use vehicle public address systems for official purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, crowd or riot scene control, felony vehicle stops, evacuations, and other similar incidents at the discretion of the officer under articulable circumstances.

- K. **Use of Spotlights and Alley Lights:** Officers shall use police vehicle spotlights and alley lights in accordance with state law and for official purposes only. This includes vehicle stops, business checks, and other patrol-related functions.

General Order 502 becomes effective on the above date and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:

APPROVED BY:



Chief of Police



County Executive