

**PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT
MANUAL OF GENERAL ORDERS**

General Order: 36.01	Effective: 04/20/2020	Supersedes: 06/03/2019	Number of Pages: 3
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PURSUIT POLICY: GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A. A motor vehicle pursuit is defined as an active attempt by a law enforcement officer to stop a moving motor vehicle when the driver of that vehicle is aware of the attempt, and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing the vehicle's speed, or by otherwise disregarding the officer's signal or order to stop.

- B. Absent extenuating, articulable circumstances **AND** supervisor approval, officers may initiate and engage in pursuits **ONLY** under the following circumstances, and when doing so does not violate any other section of this policy:
 - 1. The suspect is wanted for, or suspected of committing, a felony offense involving violence, or the threat of violence to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, murder, rape, robbery, felonious assault, felonious sex offense, and abduction.

- C. Officers are **prohibited** from initiating, engaging in or continuing pursuits under any of the following circumstances, absent extenuating, articulable circumstances **AND** supervisor approval:
 - 1. The suspect is wanted for traffic offenses only, to include Driving Under the Influence.
 - 2. The suspect is wanted for, or suspected of committing, a misdemeanor or non-violent felony.
 - 3. The pursued vehicle is a motorcycle, ATV, motorbike, go-cart, or moped.
 - 4. The pursuit goes off-road.
 - 5. Weather, pedestrian or traffic conditions, which adversely impact roadway or visibility conditions.

- D. Unless otherwise directed by the controlling supervisor, no more than two police vehicles, exclusive of a K-9 Unit, will become involved in the active pursuit of the suspected vehicle. The responsibility of the second unit shall be to serve as a back-up and, when practicable, update the dispatcher with current pursuit information (location, direction, speed, etc.), thereby allowing the primary unit to focus full attention on the suspect vehicle. Other members shall be alert to the progress and location of the pursuit.

When appropriate, the controlling supervisor may direct units to trail the pursuit in accordance with General Order [28.09 Answering Routine and Emergency Calls](#). These units shall not be actively involved in the pursuit unless otherwise directed by the controlling supervisor.

- E. Unless otherwise authorized by the controlling supervisor, only the following vehicles will be used in pursuits: standard marked police sedans, slick top marked cruisers, and marked Ford Interceptor Utility vehicles. Operators of pursuit-rated SUVs must attend a familiarization-training course at the Academy EVOC prior to driving the vehicle in a pursuit. .
- F. Members may assist with pursuits by other law enforcement agencies that enter Prince William County, with supervisory approval, as outlined below:
 - 1. When pursuits enter Prince William County, members may become actively involved in the pursuit when it meets this Department's pursuit criterion as defined by section B of this General Order.
 - 2. If a single unit from the outside agency is involved, a Prince William County unit may actively assist that unit. Involved members must comply with all other provisions of this Department's General Orders. This Department may also be requested to assume the pursuit in accordance with the provisions of the Northern Virginia Pursuit Policy (General Order [36.04 Northern Virginia Pursuit Policy](#)).
 - 3. If two units from the outside agency are engaged in the pursuit, or if the pursuit does not meet this Department's criteria for engaging in pursuits, no Prince William County units are permitted to become actively involved. In such cases, members may be directed by a supervisor to attempt to follow along the pursuit route in a support role. This will allow for the better positioning of back-up units should the pursuit end.
 - a. When directed to assist in a support role, members shall **at all times** operate their vehicles within the provisions of General Order [28.09 Answering Routine and Emergency Calls](#).
 - b. No more than two Prince William County units, including a K9 Unit, will be permitted to follow along in a support role
 - c. If a pursuit enters Prince William County and subsequently leaves, all Prince William County units shall terminate their involvement except as follows:
 - 1. If the pursuit meets our Department's criteria for pursuits, and the termination of the involvement of Prince William County units would leave the outside agency's unit alone, a single Prince William County unit may continue outside of the County, without supervisory approval, until such time as another unit is able to assume the support role.
 - 2. Once units from the entered jurisdiction or the State Police are in position, the Prince William County unit shall immediately terminate their involvement.
 - 3. To minimize the risk to others, nothing in this General Order shall be construed to prohibit a supervisor from directing the deployment of tire deflating devices during pursuits that otherwise do not permit the involvement of Prince William County units.
- G. Upon stopping the pursued vehicle, members should employ high-risk traffic stop procedures.

- H. A pursuit will be voluntarily terminated by members under any one of the following conditions:
1. In the opinion of the pursuing member(s) or the controlling supervisor, the pursuit must be terminated in consideration of all criteria set forth within departmental pursuit policies.
 2. The identity of the suspect(s) has been established to the point that later apprehension can be accomplished, and there is no longer any need for immediate apprehension.
 3. The location of the pursued vehicle is unknown.
- I. A non-controlling supervisor shall conduct a thorough post-pursuit review and will complete a Vehicle Pursuit Report within forty-eight (48) hours of each pursuit. The report, to include audio from PSCC, will be routed through Blue Team, or other authorized means, to the Chief of Police. This report is in addition to any other reports that may be required.
- J. The Office of Professional Standards will be responsible for conducting an analysis of the pursuit reports, as well as a review of pursuit policies and reporting procedures. These will be conducted annually and documented in a memo to the Chief of Police.
- K. The Academy will ensure an annual review of the pursuit policy is conducted by all sworn personnel.