

SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

Effective Date: 08/15/2013	Supersedes Policy Dated: 07/26/2007	Rescinds:	SOG Number: 405.8
Accreditation Index: 61.4.1, 61.4.2, 81.2.4			
Part Title: Operations		Chapter Title: Traffic Operations	
Chief of Police:			

Assistance to Highway Users ¹

I Policy

It is the policy of the Springfield Police Department to provide needed assistance to motorists using the streets and highways within the city. This assistance is intended to protect the highway users from harm and to ensure that the necessary aid is obtained.

II Definitions

III Procedure

- 1 The streets and other roadways within the city of Springfield are used by city residents and by visitors from various locations. Police personnel should be alert to and attempt to provide a variety of assistance to these people.
- 2 GENERAL ASSISTANCE (CALEA 61.4.1)
 - 2.1 Highway users may request or contact police personnel and request assistance for a variety of reasons.
 - 2.2 Due to the number of tourist attractions in and around Springfield, police personnel may often be asked for direction to specific locations. Personnel shall provide detailed directions to the desired locations. Personnel should be familiar with popular destinations and be readily able to supply directions.

¹ This document has been revised to meet current formatting standards. Minor grammatical and/or typographical corrections have been completed as necessary, per Policy Change Order 13-074, Effective Date 08/15/2013.

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- 2.3 Personnel shall be alert for motorists who are in need of assistance due to mechanical problems with their vehicles. Personnel should make efforts to obtain the needed help. Some typical problems may include:
 - 2.3.1 Need for towing to a repair location;
 - 2.3.2 Need for roadside repairs (change of flat tires, etc.);
 - 2.3.3 Need for fuel.
- 2.4 Personnel are encouraged to assist motorists if an obvious problem exists. Department personnel shall not make mechanical repairs to a citizen's vehicle. Consideration should be given to priority calls-for-service.
 - 2.4.1 Personnel shall attempt to obtain additional assistance for motorists who are in need of professional services.
 - 2.4.2 Personnel should attempt to cause a requested tow service to be notified.
 - 2.4.3 When a motorist knows of no tow service to call, personnel shall show the motorist a copy of the approved tow list and have the motorist select a company.
 - 2.4.3(a) Police personnel may not recommend a particular tow service.
- 2.5 If a tow service or other assistance is called for a motorist, personnel shall ensure the motorist is safe while waiting for assistance. This may require personnel to stay with the motorists, until assistance arrives.
- 2.6 Personnel should take into account the existing conditions (weather, time-of-day, location, person involved, etc.) before leaving a stranded motorist without police or other assistance being present.
- 2.7 Lockouts
 - 2.7.1 Lockout service is provided by private enterprise and Police must not create unfair competition. Instead police officers shall:
 - 2.7.1(a) Only intervene in case of an emergency to children and pets;
 - 2.7.1(b) Attempt to verify ownership prior to release of the vehicle;
 - 2.7.1(c) Not request response from the Fire Department to gain entry;
 - 2.7.1(d) Not gain access only if the vehicle is running or the keys are inside;
 - 2.7.1(e) Explain courteously if service cannot be provided and why not;
 - 2.7.1(f) Investigate criminal negligence, if appropriate.

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3 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (CALEA 61.4.1)

- 3.1 Police personnel may encounter situations that require some type of emergency assistance for motorists.
 - 3.1.1 When officers contact a motorist in need of emergency medical assistance they shall request EMT personnel to contact them at the location. Police personnel shall perform emergency first aid as required prior to the arrival of the EMTs. (CALEA 81.2.4(a))
 - 3.1.2 Police personnel may encounter motorists with vehicles on fire. (CALEA 81.2.4(a))
 - 3.1.2(a) Personnel shall immediately request assistance from the fire department.
 - 3.1.2(b) Personnel shall ensure that all vehicle occupants are out of the vehicle and are at a safe location. Personnel should not jeopardize their own safety when dealing with a fully engulfed vehicle fire.
 - 3.1.2(c) Personnel may attempt to extinguish small vehicle fires by using the fire extinguishers from the police vehicles. Caution should be used during such activities.

4 TRANSPORTING CITIZENS

- 4.1 Citizens requiring transportation should normally be referred to local taxi companies. Under extenuating circumstances, personnel may transport citizens in police vehicles. Great care must be exercised while doing this.

5 REPORTING HAZARDOUS ROADWAY CONDITIONS (CALEA 61.4.2)

- 5.1 During routine operations, police personnel shall be alert for hazardous roadway conditions. When found, these conditions shall be reported to Emergency Communications via the police radio by police personnel and then relayed to the proper authorities. (CALEA 81.2.4(a))
- 5.2 A number of situations can cause various types of debris to be in a roadway.
 - 5.2.1 Debris at crash scenes shall be removed by tow truck operators. If no tow trucks are required, personnel shall report the need for debris removal.
 - 5.2.2 Severe weather can cause tree limbs and other debris to block roadways.
 - 5.2.3 Items falling from vehicles can land on roadways.
- 5.3 Debris needing removal from city-maintained streets shall be reported to the City Service Center for removal.
- 5.4 Debris on state-maintained roadways shall be reported to the State Highway Department for removal.

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- 5.5 Personnel shall be alert to hazardous conditions involving traffic control devices.
 - 5.5.1 Personnel shall report traffic signal lights that are not functioning or have lights burnt out, etc.
 - 5.5.2 Personnel shall report traffic control devices (stop signs, etc.) that are blocked or partially blocked by tree limbs and other articles.
 - 5.5.3 Personnel shall report missing or damaged traffic control devices.
- 5.6 In many cases, personnel are able to remedy hazardous situations temporarily until assistance from the proper agency or department arrives.
 - 5.6.1 Personnel may move small items of debris off of the roadway and to the side of the road.
 - 5.6.2 Personnel may be able to correct the direction of a turned traffic information/control sign without the need of additional assistance.

IV Attachments