

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-614

**SUBJECT: TRAFFIC ANCILLARY SERVICES**



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## **I. PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY:**

- A. Purpose: To set the policy and establish procedures for ancillary traffic services at the Monroe Police Department.
- B. Responsibility:
  - 1. It will be the responsibility of the Support Services Division (SSD) Communications Unit dispatchers to create a record for the request of services by this Department from outside agencies or service companies.
  - 2. It will be the responsibility of the SSD Commander to supervise and coordinate the handling of abandoned motor vehicles.

## **II. DISCUSSION:**

- A. This general order deals with the many diverse traffic-related services performed by a law enforcement agency. These services are basically activities having an indirect effect on traffic flow and responses to citizen-generated requests for

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assistance. Included among these services are the towing of vehicles, providing or arranging for emergency assistance, providing public information and directions, and identifying and reporting of roadway and roadside hazards. This directive establishes the procedures to be followed in the delivery or performance of these traffic ancillary services.

### III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLE: Any motor vehicle which has been left unattended within the limits of a highway or upon property of a person other than the owner of this vehicle without the consent of the property owner for a period longer than twenty-four (24) hours.
- B. HAZARD TO TRAFFIC: Any inoperable or unoccupied motor vehicle situated on the travel portion of any public highway or so close to the travel portion that it would constitute a hazard.
- C. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL: Any substance, material, or chemical agent capable of being ingested, inhaled, or absorbed into the body which may result in serious injury, illness, or death to any person.
- D. MENACE TO TRAFFIC: Any motor vehicle, the position of which, whether on or off any public highway, could constitute a menace to traffic. Any motor vehicle that has been involved in a motor vehicle traffic accident, fire, or other incident which has left the vehicle a spectacle that will, in all probability, cause passing motorists and/or pedestrians to pay more than a casual interest is a menace to traffic.

### IV. POLICY:

- A. It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department that officers discovering any situation which endangers the public safety shall immediately report this condition and act to eliminate or reduce the danger to the public.
- B. It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department that officers will not provide emergency escorts to civilian vehicles.

### V. PROCEDURES:

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- A.   HIGHWAY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: The following procedures govern the provision of assistance to highway users and include:
1.   GENERAL ASSISTANCE: Officers who encounter persons on the highway in need of assistance shall stop and render aid as is necessary or assist in arranging for necessary assistance. If necessary, calls for assistance from outside agencies or service companies shall be made through the SSD Communications Unit. Communications Unit dispatchers will maintain a record of all service requests. General assistance:
    - a.   Information: Any assistance which can be provided verbally (such as directions or information) or which entails a minimum of physical action, should be performed by the officer;
    - b.   Repairs: In any situation that requires the making of repairs to a motor vehicle, officers shall aid in the arrangement of a proper service company to assist motorists in need;
    - c.   Transport: Except in extreme situations, officers will not transport civilians in police patrol vehicles for the purpose of obtaining gasoline, other materials, or assistance;
  2.   MECHANICAL ASSISTANCE: In any situation requiring roadside repairs or the towing of a motor vehicle, the company of the motorist's choice will be contacted and requested to render service. If this company is not available or a delay will impede the flow of traffic or create a safety hazard or the motorist has no choice company, a service company that has registered with this Department will be contacted from the Departments wrecker rotation roster.
  3.   PROTECTION TO STRANDED PERSONS:
    - a.   Communications Link: Officers will make every reasonable effort to provide a communications link to obtain needed services for motorists and to provide protection for highway users stranded or disabled in hazardous locations or environments. These arrangements will be made through the SSD Communications Unit;
    - b.   Record: Communications Unit dispatchers receiving this type of

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request will cause an entry to be made in the daily log;

- c. Adverse Weather Conditions: During adverse weather conditions the officer will make every effort to arrange for transportation to a place of safety for any stranded persons;
- d. Transport Permission: In emergency situations an officer may transport stranded individuals with permission from the Patrol Division (PD) supervisor.

### 4. HIGHWAY EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

- a. Medical Assistance: Officers encountering persons in need of emergency medical assistance, shall stop and render this assistance, as may be required;
- b. Medical Transportation: Transportation to a medical facility shall be summoned through Communications Unit dispatchers who shall contact the appropriate ambulance service available;
- c. Fire: In the event of fires involving motor vehicles, officers will insure the safety of persons nearby by directing them to a safe location away from vehicular traffic and the fire hazard. Officers will request the deployment of the Fire Department personnel and maintain a traffic post to insure the safe arrival of the fire equipment and personnel. Officers may use the fire extinguisher maintained in the police patrol vehicles if this use is a life saving measure and can be accomplished in a safe manner.

- B. HAZARDOUS HIGHWAY CONDITIONS: Officers who discover hazardous highway conditions will notify the Communications Unit. The Communications Unit dispatchers who receives the information shall immediately advise the proper municipal or state highway department of the condition. Officers will take reasonable action to reduce or eliminate the hazard to the public by blocking off the hazard, or, through the manual direction of traffic around the hazard or effected area. Communications Unit dispatchers shall make an entry in the notification log noting the time of notification, the hazardous condition, and the agency notified to repair or correct the hazard. Examples of hazardous highway conditions may

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include:

1.     Debris in the road;
2.     Defects in the road itself;
3.     Lack of, or defects in, highway safety features (e.g., impact attenuation devices, reflectors, etc.);
4.     Lack of, improper, visually obstructed, or down or damaged mechanical traffic control devices and/or traffic control and informational signs;
5.     Lack of or defective roadway lighting systems; and
6.     Other roadside hazards, including vehicles parked or abandoned on or near the roadway.

### C.     ABANDONED VEHICLES AND TOWING OF VEHICLES:

1.     ABANDONED VEHICLES: Officers acting on complaints concerning abandoned motor vehicles, whether initiated by the officer or by citizen complaint, shall handle the vehicle in the following manner:
  - a.     Preliminary Investigation: The officer shall determine the following and include this information in a memorandum to the SSD Commander if the vehicle cannot be immediately removed. Refer to section 2 of this subparagraph in regards to towing the vehicle immediately:
    1.     Whether the vehicle is reported as having been stolen;
    2.     The identity of the owner of the vehicle in question;
    3.     The identity of the owner of the land where the vehicle is situated.
  - b.     TOW STICKER: If the vehicle cannot be immediately removed the following procedures should be followed:

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1. Motor vehicles apparently abandoned or without proper registration will have a "tow sticker" affixed. Refer to Section 14-150(c) CGS;
  2. The SSD Commander will be notified of this action by memorandum by the officer affixing the sticker to the vehicle;
  3. The SSD Commander shall notify the owner of the vehicle. Refer to Section 14-150(d),(e) CGS.
2. TOWING VEHICLES: Officers will notify the SSD Commander by memorandum anytime a vehicle is unoccupied at the time of the removal. The SSD Commander will cause the notification of the owner of the vehicle. The towing of operable motor vehicles by this Department, whether on private or public property, is restricted to when the vehicle is:
- a. A hazard or menace to traffic or to public safety or health;
  - b. Blocking a private driveway;
  - c. Illegally situated in an approved and marked handicapped parking area or fire lane;
  - d. Removed at the request of the vehicle's owner or operator; and
  - e. A lawful seizure pursuant to criminal investigation or legal process.
3. TOWED VEHICLES RECORD: Each time a vehicle is towed at the direction of an officer, the Communications Unit dispatchers will record the following information in the Department log:
- a. Time, date, and location of vehicle;
  - b. Name of officer directing the tow and reason;
  - c. Towing service used, and location where vehicle is stored; and
  - d. Any attempts at the time to contact rightful owner if the vehicle was

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unoccupied.

- D.    **TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS:** Preparation and dissemination of traffic safety educational materials support enforcement efforts, enhance public understanding of traffic safety programs, and promote voluntary compliance with traffic laws and regulations. This Department will participate in the education of the public through:
1.    Public announcements to heighten the public's knowledge and awareness;
  2.    Dissemination of printed materials;
  3.    Public appearances to address general or specific issues of interest or safety.
- E.    **WRECKER SERVICE SELECTION:** When an officer properly decides that towing a motor vehicle is required, the officer will select the wrecker service according to the following procedures:
1.    **OWNER'S REQUEST:** If the wrecker service to be summoned is selected by request of the owner/operator, the officer will so specify and Communications Unit dispatcher will record "owner's request" in the log;
  2.    **OFFICER'S REQUEST:** If the wrecker to be summoned is to be selected by the Department, the officer will so notify the Communications Unit and indicate the state and registration marker number for each vehicle to be towed. Communications Unit dispatcher will log the marker number and assign the appropriate wrecker service. The Communications Unit dispatcher must notify the field officer what wrecker service has been assigned to what marker number. Communications Unit dispatchers will record "officer's request" on the log.
- F.    **WRECKER SYSTEM:**
1.    **QUALIFICATIONS:** To qualify for consideration for placement on this Department's wrecker rotation roster, the wrecker service must meet the following requirements. No wrecker service will be added to the roster until the specified qualifications have been complied with and the Chief of Police

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so orders the service's inclusion. The wrecker service must:

- a.     Established Business: Be an established area business and must be licensed as a "repairer" or "dealer" in Connecticut and available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week
- b.     Storage Area: Have a storage area adequate to keep all towed vehicles until claimed or released by the Police Department;
- c.     Insurance: Maintain insurance that indemnifies this Police Department from liability and maintain insurance on the business itself and all vehicles used in the towing service;
- d.     Response Time: Respond to the scene of incident within twenty (20) minutes from the time the service is called;
- e.     Broom and Shovel: Maintain a broom and shovel on each wrecker, as the service will be responsible for cleaning the scene of an accident of all debris which could create a hazard;
- f.     Application: (Owner(s) or officer(s), if a corporation) make written application to the Chief of Police, specifically stating that the wrecker service seeking entry onto this Department's rotation roster, complies, and will continue to comply, with the specified qualifications enumerated above.

### 2.     INABILITY, FAILURE, OR REFUSAL TO PROVIDE SERVICE:

- a.     Inability: In the event that a Department wrecker service refuses or is unable to respond to a request for service, that service shall immediately acknowledge this fact to the police Communications Unit dispatcher, who shall then call the next service on the rotation list;
- b.     Failure or Refusal: The SSD Commander shall be notified if a Department wrecker service fails to respond promptly to a call for service, or indicates a lack of cooperation, or has otherwise offered unsatisfactory service. The SSD Commander shall investigate the matter and submit a written report to the Chief of Police. The Chief of



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Police may, after a conference with the wrecker service, remove the wrecker service from the list for a period of three (3) months for the first occurrence. The Chief of Police may, after any additional occurrence of unsatisfactory service, remove the wrecker service permanently from the list.