



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Patrol*

Number: *205-B*

Effective Date: *January 1, 2001*

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Rescinds: *Police Department Policy 300, 300 - 343*
205 Patrol
205-A Patrol

Dated: *1977*
January 1, 2001
September 2, 2003

Approved By:

PURPOSE

To establish procedures, guidelines and regulations for patrol functions.

PROCEDURE

1. The primary and most important function of the Myrtle Beach Police Department is to provide a safe and secure environment in which citizens and visitors may live, work and visit. This is accomplished through visible patrols conducted by both uniformed, officers and at times, plain clothed officers. This service is provided 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year.
2. All officers are to respect and protect the rights of each citizen and to perform their duties without prejudice. Officers should remember their basic functions are to protect life and property, preserve the peace, prevent crime, detect and arrest violators of the law, and enforce all Federal, State and Local laws and ordinances within departmental jurisdiction.
3. All Vehicles used in routine patrol or general patrol service must be equipped with operational emergency lights and sirens.
4. Violations of the law are against the State and not the individual officer. Officers should assume a fair and impartial attitude at all times and not take personal issue or sympathize with either side in a complaint or controversial matter. All citizens are guaranteed equal protection of the law, and officers

are not to show partiality or prejudice because of race, creed, color, age, nationality or sexual preference.

5. Officers are to be immediately and readily available to the public during duty hours and answer all calls for public assistance or calls from other officers unless occupied with other police business. Remember that emergency calls take precedence but do not relieve the officer from the obligation of answering all other calls assigned.
6. Officers are to become familiar with their assigned area, taking into consideration the crime-prone areas, the closed/vacant places of business or residences, conditions creating a hazard, public service property (telephone or power lines, lights, street conditions, etc.). Officers should patrol their assigned area as frequently as possible, observing everything that takes place within sight or hearing, investigating anything that appears to be of a suspicious nature or an unusual condition and taking proper police action deemed necessary to correct any condition that comes to their attention.
7. Officers are to promptly answer all radio transmissions directed to them and take appropriate action as required, respond to their calls and avoid referral of calls or complaints to other members of the department. Each officer is to maintain contact with the department through radio, telephone or in-car computer. Upon completion of any call or assignment, the officer will contact the dispatcher and advise their availability status and the disposition of the previous assignment.
8. Briefings will be held during the beginning of each shift. Each officer is responsible for checking and complying with new orders issued. Briefings will be held daily in the first 15 minutes of each shift.
 - a. The Patrol Shift Supervisor will brief on-coming officers with information regarding daily patrol activity, with particular attention given to unusual situations and changes in the status of wanted persons, stolen vehicles and major investigations. The Shift Supervisor will notify officers of schedules and assignments and any changes therein. Officers will be notified of any new directives or changes in directives and will be evaluated by their supervisor regarding their readiness to assume patrol. Such evaluation may include a personnel inspection. It is the duty of each officer to write down any BOLOs for wanted persons or vehicles.
 - b. If briefing is delayed for some or all officers for any reason, the shift supervisor will contact each officer and conduct an informal roll call to ensure the officer has the information necessary to properly perform his/her duties.

9. Officers will take necessary action regarding all traffic offenses committed in their presence unless otherwise occupied with official police business. Officers in plain clothes should not make traffic arrests unless the offense is a flagrant violation of the law or in complete disregard for life and/or property.
10. Officers are to remain in their assigned areas when a serious or unusual situation occurs in another area unless directed otherwise by a supervisor, dispatch, or have a reason that can be justified. This is not intended to limit checks on other officers who have not contacted the station within a reasonable time. Radio transmissions are to be kept at a minimum when a serious or unusual situation develops that warrants radio silence.
11. Officers should patrol at a speed that will enable effective patrol of their assigned areas. Although the posted speed limit may be 45 miles per hour, an officer cannot effectively observe, record and perform required police functions at this speed. A recommended speed below the posted limit will better enable officers to effectively patrol their area; however, patrol at a speed that will not interfere with the normal traffic flow.
12. Officers should patrol assigned areas observing, recording and investigating any unusual or strange occurrence and should not establish routine patrol patterns. In order to properly check a building, officers should manually check each door, window or entrance by hand. (This cannot be done from a patrol car). A spotlight is an aid to checking buildings, but it is not sufficient to merely spotlight doors, windows and entrances. Closer inspection may prove an important detail has been overlooked.
13. Officers assigned to respond to a call for service are to make personal contact with the complainant whenever possible so the complainant will know the call was answered and what action, if any, was taken. A complaint has not been fully answered until the complainant has been contacted. Please remember that a complaint that is routine to the officer may be the most important event in the life of a complainant. In many cases, this will be the first or only contact a citizen will have with a police officer; and the interest shown by the officer is the best public relations our department can have. Officers who find themselves in a position where no action can be taken shall advise the complainant of this fact and further explain why the officer is unable to take action. Officers should show discretion if advising the complainant of other courses of action open to them. In the event the officer is not sure of a course of action, the officer should not advise the complainant but contact a supervisor.
14. Always be on the alert to aid, assist or help any lost, helpless, injured or ill person. Whenever possible, officers are encouraged to follow up on anyone

who goes to or is admitted to the hospital as a result of any injury sustained that the officer is investigating.

15. Officers shall check with hospital personnel for permission to interview, question or interrogate any person confined to a hospital.
16. Officers first arriving at the scene are responsible for summoning medical assistance as required to prevent loss of life or further injury, arresting any violator and preserving the crime scene.
17. The first officer to arrive at the scene of a major crime, where it has been established that the suspect(s) have fled the scene, shall initiate a crime scene log and preserve the crime scene by not permitting unauthorized persons to enter the premises or the immediate area and contaminate evidence. (Officers are reminded that in many instances evidence has been destroyed by an unintentional act of officers or interested citizens).
18. At the scene of major crimes such as shootings, armed robberies or burglaries in progress, the first officer to arrive shall take up a vantagepoint giving the most advantageous view to prevent the escape of the suspect until help arrives. Officers shall not enter a building or premises alone during the commission of a serious crime with the exception of threat of loss of life or exigent circumstances.
19. The ranking officer shall take charge at all crime scenes when such action is deemed necessary to accomplish the police purpose. The officer to whom the area is assigned shall be in charge until the arrival of a supervisor.
20. Officers arriving at a fire scene shall give all pertinent information to the dispatcher who shall immediately notify the Fire Department.
21. Pending arrival of the Fire Department, the officer shall endeavor to secure the safety of all persons in the building. Absent an immediate and imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death to any person threatened by the fire, police officers should refrain from entering into any structure, building, home or vehicle on fire. If entry becomes necessary, it is recommended that officers follow the two in, two out practice of firefighters. That means two officers cannot enter without two officers standing by outside. Nothing herein prohibits police employees from taking emergency action to save a life.
22. The ranking officer of the Fire Department is in charge at the fire, and their instructions shall be followed explicitly.
23. Officers are to immediately contact a supervisor when a serious complaint, incident or felony is brought to their attention.

24. Officers are to contact a supervisor on any case the officer cannot handle and forward any intelligence information to their supervisor immediately or as soon as practicable.
25. Officers will stay on patrol or assignment until properly relieved. Officers are expected to continue their patrol until called to the station by their supervisor or dispatch and are not to loiter around the station waiting for their relief.
26. Information of a confidential nature shall not be transmitted by radio as other people monitor the radio. Officers should keep a notepad in their assigned patrol cars to list complaints, avoiding excessive use of the radio. (This is for complaints of a minor nature, such as broken streetlights, road conditions, water lines, etc.) Before the end of their tour of duty, officers shall turn the list over to the Communications Section and bring to the attention of the Supervisor any complaint(s) that should be forwarded to another agency.
27. When stopping a vehicle for any reason, officers should attempt to find the most advantageous spot to pull the violator to the curb so as not to create a traffic hazard or place anyone in jeopardy. Practicing reason and using good judgment in stopping vehicles and issuing traffic summons is of the utmost importance.
28. Prior to stopping or checking any vehicle, officers are to notify dispatch of the location, license number, color and make of vehicle involved. If possible, an officer should write down a license number before stopping a vehicle.
29. Officers should not handle any billfold, purse, pocketbook or wallet when offered to them by a suspected law violator. When identification is required, the officer should request the information be removed from its container and handed to them by the suspected law violator. This is for the officer's protection if the suspected person alleges a charge against the officer. An officer is within their rights to request the driver or passenger of a vehicle to step out and away from the vehicle.
30. When two or more officers are stopping a vehicle, only one officer shall contact the vehicle operator; the second officer should seek a position so as to furnish assistance if needed.
31. Unless otherwise occupied with official business, officers closest to a police service call are to handle the call and should notify dispatch if they are closer to the service call than the unit dispatched. If an officer is assigned to a Special Operations area (Boulevard, BTW, Canal Street, etc.) and no other officer is available, the officer will advise the dispatcher that he/she will take the service call.

32. All personal items are to be removed from patrol vehicles when an officer is relieved of duty. Officers being relieved will be responsible for the inspection and removal of all foreign objects from their assigned vehicles.
33. Officers who fail to hear any radio transmission for a fifteen-minute period shall immediately request a radio test signal from the Communications Center.
34. Officers are never considered off duty although they are periodically relieved from their routine performance of duty. They are at all times subject to orders of supervisory personnel and shall take immediate action in emergency situations. While being off duty does not relieve the officer of taking proper police action on matters coming to their attention, in most cases off-duty officers are not encouraged to actively engage in enforcement of minor offenses where there is no immediate emergency. These offenses include minor traffic violations, parking violations, animal violations or technical violations involving neighborhood disturbances. A serious breach of peace, crimes of violence, theft, etc., requiring immediate action, however, should be enforced by an officer when brought to their attention, whether technically on or off duty. General Order 803 regulates and addresses compensation issues relative to off duty actions.
35. All warrants, summons and reports are to be completed by officers by the end of their tour of duty unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.