



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Foot Pursuits*

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PURPOSE

To develop general guidelines for Officers of the Myrtle Beach Police Department to use when weighing the dangers associated with foot pursuits against the need to apprehend/detain a suspect.

DEFINITIONS

1. Foot Pursuit – A situation in which an officer, on foot chases a suspect in an effort to detain or arrest that individual who he has a reasonable suspicion to believe is about to commit, is committing, or has committed a crime and who is resisting apprehension by fleeing from the officer.
2. Police Officer – for the purpose of this operating procedure, the term “police officer” refers to any officer or employee of this Department sworn to uphold the laws and statutes and any non-sworn employee/officer assigned to control and deal with inmates.
3. Offender – Offender means an individual who flees on foot to avoid apprehension or detention.

PROCEDURE

1. Officers of this Department maintain the discretion to initiate a foot pursuit when an offender attempts to flee from an investigative detention or arrest. Once an officer decides to engage/continue a foot pursuit, the officer must conduct a continuous risk assessment. The objective of any pursuit is its successful termination with apprehension without causing unnecessary injury to the officer,

suspect, or a member of the public. In order to insure maximum safety in such situations, the following procedures are in effect regarding foot pursuits:

- A. Alternatives to a foot pursuit – To the extent resources are **available**; officers should consider the following alternatives to a foot pursuit:
 - 1) Area Containment
 - 2) Additional Officers
 - 3) Surveillance until additional resources **becomes** available.
- B. Conditions to consider in a foot pursuit - Officers involved in a foot pursuit must take a number of conditions into consideration when determining whether to initiate or continue a foot pursuit. These conditions include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) The nature of the offense(s) i.e. does he or she pose a threat to the community if allowed to escape;
 - 2) The probability of injury to the offender or officers;
 - 3) The safety of the public in the area of the foot pursuit;
 - 4) Whether or not the suspect is known and can be identified or apprehended at a later time;
 - 5) The environment where the pursuit is taking place;
 - 6) Radio Frequency and coverage;
 - 7) Officer awareness of location – able to identify location with accuracy during the pursuit.
- C. Notifying Dispatch - Officers involved in a foot pursuit must notify dispatch of the pursuit as soon as possible and must provide the following information:
 - 1) Officer Identifier;
 - 2) Location;
 - 3) Description of the fleeing offender/offenders;
 - 4) Direction of travel;
 - 5) Any known weapons;
 - 6) The nature of the offense.
- D. The primary officer should maintain sufficient tactical gap between the officer and the fleeing suspect to allow time for obtaining cover and allow for the arrival of backup officers, if possible, before engagement.
- E. It is highly recommended that, when applicable, charges of resisting arrest and/or assault on a police officer be made.

2. Dispatch, upon notification of a foot pursuit, will immediately clear the channel of all radio traffic not pertaining to the foot pursuit. Normal radio traffic will resume upon termination of the foot pursuit.

3. PROHIBITED ACTIONS IN A FOOT PURSUIT

- A. A single officer will not enter a building, structure or area of limited or no cover without a back-up officer present.
- B. Specialized vehicles, i.e. bicycles and T3's can be used as the primary means of pursuing a suspect fleeing on foot. They also may be used when responding to back-up an officer involved in a foot pursuit, however, all Department Procedures, State and Local laws governing their utilization will be complied with.
- C. Specialized vehicles will not be used as a launching platform for the takedown of fleeing suspects.

4. TERMINATION OF FOOT PURSUITS

Foot pursuits will be immediately terminated if any of the following conditions exist:

- 1) If the officer becomes disarmed or loses possession of their service weapon;
- 2) If the officer loses contact with their fellow officers or dispatch;
- 3) If the officer believes that the danger to pursue outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension;
- 4) If ordered to terminate pursuit by a supervisor.

5. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The supervisor will monitor radio traffic of the pursuit and direct resources in an attempt to safely bring the pursuit to conclusion.
- B. The supervisor will immediately assess the situation to determine if additional resources are needed, for example: canine or additional personnel to establish a perimeter.
- C. If the supervisor determines that the danger to the public, suspect(s) or officer(s) is greater than the need to immediately apprehend the suspect, the supervisor will immediately terminate the foot pursuit.
- D. Upon termination of the pursuit, the duty supervisor will critique the pursuit with all officers involved.

- E. The supervisor will insure that all required reporting is accomplished. In the event that a Use of Force Report or Officer Injury Report is required, the supervisor will insure that the details of the pursuit are included in the report.
- F. The supervisor of the officer initiating the pursuit shall be responsible for submission of a Foot Pursuit Form (attached) through the chain of command to the Supervising Lieutenant on the next workday following the incident. The Lieutenant is responsible for submitting the completed pursuit package to the Division Captain within 72 hours of the pursuit.

6. INVESTIGATION

- A. In the event of a foot pursuit, the primary unit's supervisor will be responsible to see that proper paperwork is completed and the radio tape is submitted to his/her Lieutenant's office within 48 hours. The Foot Pursuit Report must be submitted to the appropriate Lieutenant by the end of shift and forwarded to the Division Captain on the next workday.
- B. If the investigating supervisor or any supervisor in the review of the foot pursuit identified a need for a critique, they have the right to request one.
- C. Upon completion of the Division Commander's review, a copy of the report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police and Training Lieutenant for review and inclusion of the "lessons learned" into in-service training.