



**TOWN OF SENECA FALLS POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

**GENERAL ORDER**



<b>GENERAL ORDER #:</b> 524	<b>RESCINDS:</b> 07/01/13
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Police Vehicles & Inspections	<b>NYS ACCREDITATION:</b> 42.1, 42.3
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 05/12/2020	
<b>BY ORDER OF:</b> Stuart W. Peenstra, Chief of Police	

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish procedures for operating and equipping Seneca Falls Police Department patrol and unmarked vehicles.

**II. POLICY**

- A. Patrol vehicles will be conspicuously marked and equipped as necessary.
- B. At supervisory discretion, unmarked vehicles may also be utilized for patrol purposes as needed. Unmarked vehicles will be equipped as necessary.

**III. PROCEDURE**

**A. SEAT BELTS**

- i. To assure the safety of all personnel, safety belts shall be worn by drivers and passengers in all vehicles owned, leased or rented by the Seneca Falls Police Department at all times. This also applies to the operation of privately owned or other vehicles if used on- duty. Officers should not normally transport children in vehicles equipped with safety barriers; however, under exigent circumstances, when transporting children officers will ensure compliance with both state and federal laws. If a children’s car seat or booster seat are required and are unavailable, Officers will contact Seneca County Child Protective for assistance.
- ii. Any person under arrest and being transported in a Seneca Falls Police Department vehicle must be secured by a safety belt. This includes all seating positions in the vehicle for which seat belts are provided. Caution: Prisoners that are handcuffed in front may have the ability to release the handcuffs using the safety restraints latch plate.
- iii. Department personnel will use the safety belts installed by the vehicle manufacturer properly adjusted and securely fastened when operating or riding in any vehicle so equipped.
- iv. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for insuring compliance by all occupants of the vehicle they are operating.
- v. No person will operate a departmental vehicle in which any safety belt in the drivers seating position is inoperable. No person will be transported in a seating position in which the safety restraint is inoperable. Personnel who discover an inoperable driver’s restraint system will report the defect to the Lieutenant using the Vehicle Inspection Form. The vehicle will be

"removed from service" if the driver's restraint system is inoperable.

- vi. No person will modify, remove, deactivate or otherwise tamper with the vehicle safety belts. Approved safety belt extenders issued by the Chief of Police may be used by officers as needed.
- vii. When arriving at an emergency call or making traffic stops, the operator may remove the safety restraint just prior to stopping for a quick exit.

## **B. USE OF WIRELESS DEVICES, MOBILE COMPUTER TERMINALS AND PERSONAL ELECTRONICS DEVICES IN DEPARTMENT VEHICLES**

- i. Wireless devices (e.g., cellular phones) and mobile computers shall be operated in such a manner as to ensure the safe operation of a police vehicle at all times. Members shall not operate such devices in a moving vehicle if the operation of such devices could impair safe operation.
- ii. In an effort to lead by example in regard to the laws that we are charged with enforcing, it is the policy of the Town of Seneca Falls Police Department to limit the use of wireless devices to that use which is afforded to the general public by the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law. Members of the Department operating a department owned or assigned vehicle may only use wireless devices in a "hands free" mode while such vehicle is moving, unless the member is responding to a police emergency and the use of the hands free device is not practical at the time, and the use is directly related to the emergency call for service.
- iii. In the interest of personal and public safety, protection of onboard electronics systems, and the efficiency and good order of the department, the use of personal electronics devices in department owned or assigned vehicles is strictly prohibited. Personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to: DVD players, CD players, televisions, portable audio devices, satellite radios, IPOD, IPAD, MP3 players, electronic games, and personally owned computers unless being used for an official function. This includes mapping something on a cell phone, lap top etc. This does not apply to department owned or assigned electronics and surveillance equipment.

## **C. VEHICLE INSPECTION**

- A.** Personnel are required to inspect their assigned vehicle at the start and end of their tour of duty. In an emergency, this inspection can be postponed but should be completed as soon as possible when time permits. The vehicle inspection form will be submitted to the shift supervisor at the end of each shift. The following inspection/equipment check will be made:

### **1. TOUR INFORMATION:**

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| - Shift Start Date | - Shift             |
| - Member           | - Post              |
| - Submit to        | - Vehicle           |
| - Fuel Level       | - Starting Mileage  |
| - Tire Pressure    | - Ending Mileage    |
| - Oil Change Due   | - Number of Gallons |

- NYS Inspection Due

## **2. VEHICLE EQUIPMENT CHECK:**

- Head Lights
- Marker Lights
- Turn Signals
- Vehicle Horn
- Warning Lights
- Windshield Wipers
- Seatbelts
- Tail Lights
- Brake Lights
- Reverse Lights
- Siren/Horn
- Brakes/Parking Brake
- Spotlight

## **3. APPEARANCE:**

- Interior of Vehicle
- Exterior of Vehicle

## **4. OFFICER SAFETY:**

- Front Seat Checked
- Back Seat Checked

## **5. ENFORCEMENT EQUIPMENT:**

- Radar Unit
- Parking Tickets
- Warning Tickets

## **6. TURNING FORK TEST:**

- Low Speed
- High Speed

## **7. LPR UNIT:**

- Cameras On/Lens Clean
- Connected to EOC
- Connected to GPS

## **8. TRUNK EQUIPMENT:**

- Lock-out set
- Flares (12 in each container)
- Fire Extinguisher (ABC)
- Crime Scene Tape
- BIO Gear/Boot Covers
- Medical Gloves
- Medical Kit
- Flex-cuffs (10)
- Traffic Cones (2 Green)
- Blanket
- Rope Throw Bag
- Evidence Collection Items
- Spit Hood
- Stop Sticks
- Level IV Plate Carrier "POLICE " ID panels
- 6" Diagonal Pliers (Orange Handle)

## **9. PANDEMIC KIT:**

- Face Shield
- Surgical Masks (4)
- Hand Sanitizer (3)
- Plastic Garbage Bag
- N95 Masks (3)
- Tyvek Coverall
- Paper Bags (3)
- Spray Bottle of Hydrogen Peroxide

**10. PATROL EQUIPMENT:**

- Alco-Senor W/Straws
- Camera (Charger)
- Flashlight (With Charger)
- Shot Gun (6 Rounds)
- "GO-BAG" 3-AR Mags,  
3-Glock 21Mags  
5-12G Rounds
- Tint Meter
- AED (Mask Kit Attached)
- Computer/Printer
- Patrol Rifle (3, 28 Round Mags)
- Seneca County Service Cards
- Police Mobile Radio

**11. END OF TOUR INSPECTION – OFFICER SAFETY CHECK:**

- Any non-PD member or animal detained/transported
- Backseat re-checked & clear of any fluids, dirt, etc.

**12. VEHICLE MAINTENANCE/REPAIR:**

- Was patrol vehicle taken out of service for any of the above reasons
- Item
- Comment
- Item Comment

**13. SUBMITTER SIGNATURE:**

- Officer Signature

**14. APPROVAL SECTION:**

- Sgt. Approved
- Sergeant
- Further Action Needed
- Lt. Approved
- Lieutenant

- i. The patrol vehicle computer and AED shall be taken out of the patrol vehicle if the vehicle is remaining parked for any length of time when the outside temperature is below forty degrees Fahrenheit or in excess of ninety degrees Fahrenheit. For the AED to remain in a state of readiness, it must be stored in compliance with the manufactures operating temperature ranges.
- ii. Brakes, including the parking brake, are to be in working condition.
- iii. Head and taillights, turn signals, 4-way hazard lights and the spotlight are to be in working condition.
- iv. Windshield, side windows, and wipers should be clean and in working order.

- v. Exterior and interior check of the vehicle noting any damage or broken or missing parts. The interior check will include an inspection for contraband or any items that could pose a threat to officer safety.
- vi. Any damage, mechanical malfunction or missing equipment will be reported to an on-duty supervisor. The reporting officer will also complete any required forms documenting the problem. Depending on the circumstances, a supervisor will have the vehicle/equipment repaired/replaced or assign another vehicle.
- vii. Except in an emergency, no officer will attempt to repair/replace or alter any equipment on a police vehicle without authorization from the Fleet Manager. This does not include normal maintenance checks: fuel, oil, window washer fluid, flares, etc.
- viii. Except in an extreme emergency, no officer will drive or be directed to drive a vehicle that is unsafe. This will not prevent the operation of a malfunctioning vehicle directly to a repair facility.
- xi. Any officer encountering mechanical trouble with a police vehicle will report it immediately to the on-duty supervisor. The supervisor will determine whether the vehicle should be removed from service and reported to the Fleet Manager.
- ix. All vehicle inspections shall be opened, and documented at the start of the officer's tour of duty. The records management system, Aladtec, will be used for documentation purposes. The form will be electronically submitted to the on-duty supervisor, or the next oncoming supervisor at the end of each shift. Sergeants will submit this document to the Lieutenant.
- x. An assigned employee will complete quarterly inspections of all department owned vehicles to ensure that this policy is being followed. All inspections will be documented on the standardized departmental form.

#### **D. SECURING POLICE VEHICLE EQUIPMENT**

- i. To insure the security of police vehicles and equipment, the officer assigned to the vehicle shall:
  - a. Lock the police vehicle whenever it is parked and not under the officers immediate control.
  - b. Remove portable radios, batons, tint meters and any other equipment not permanently assigned to that vehicle from the vehicle at the end of each tour of duty.
  - c. Remove all weapons, computer and other police equipment, and deactivate the mobile radio transceiver before leaving the vehicle at a repair facility.

## **E. POLICE VEHICLE REPAIRS**

- i. Except in an emergency, no officer will attempt to repair/replace or alter any equipment on a police vehicle without authorization from the Fleet Manager. This does not include normal maintenance checks: fuel, oil, window washer fluid, flares, etc.
- ii. Except in an extreme emergency, no officer will drive or be directed to drive a vehicle that is unsafe. This will not prevent the operation of a malfunctioning vehicle directly to a repair facility.
- iii. Any officer encountering mechanical trouble with a police vehicle will report it immediately to the on duty supervisor. The supervisor will determine whether the vehicle should be removed from service and reported to the Fleet Manager.

## **F. GENERAL OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- i. Police vehicles will only be used for police business unless otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police.
- ii. Personnel must have a valid New York State operator's license of the proper class to operate a police vehicle.
- iii. No unauthorized person is allowed to operate or ride in a police vehicle.
- iv. Personnel will remove the ignition key and lock all doors before leaving the immediate vicinity of their assigned vehicle. There are exceptions to this procedure that include:
  - a. Another employee is at or near the vehicle.
  - b. The vehicle's emergency lighting is needed to provide warning, illumination, etc. If left running, the vehicle will be locked.
  - c. Adverse weather conditions cause the vehicle readiness to become effected, requiring the vehicle heating/defrost to run to maintain readiness.  
\*NOTE: In all circumstances, if the vehicle is running, it will be locked.
  - d. Except in an emergency, police vehicles will only be operated on constructed roadways, drives, parking lots or any area where a vehicle can be safely operated.

- e. Except in an extreme emergency, police vehicles will not be used for pushing or towing of another vehicle or object.
- f. No unauthorized stickers, banners or insignia will be affixed to a police vehicle.
- g. Each quarter of the year, the Fleet Manager will direct an officer to do a thorough inspection of police vehicles, utilizing the Vehicle Inspection Form.
- h. At the conclusion of ANY patrol vehicle use, the officer operating the vehicle shall ensure that the vehicle has a full tank of fuel, any equipment used during the tour is replaced, all garbage is removed, and all personal items are removed from the vehicle.
- i. Departmental vehicles shall remain in a constant state of readiness. In order to maintain a professional appearance, the patrol vehicle must remain clean, both interior and exterior. The department shall provide the necessary equipment and supplies to accomplish this task.

**G. RESPONSIBILITY:**

- i. It shall be every employee's responsibility to report any safety issue regarding patrol vehicles. Everyone plays a role in officer safety; therefore, this policy will be strictly enforced.
- ii. Any officer failing to complete a vehicle inspection at the beginning of their tour of duty could face disciplinary action.
- iii. Any violations of this policy shall be reported at the time of inspection/discovery. The item or issue being reported shall be the responsibility of the last officer operating that patrol vehicle.

## **H. STATION PARKING:**

- i. All patrol vehicles are required to be backed into their respective parking space at all times while at the station. This does not apply to situations involving transport of prisoners to the secure corridor.
- ii. At no time will a marked patrol vehicle be parked in the spaces designated for the; Chief of Police, Lieutenant, or Investigators.
- iii. The unmarked parking space closest to the building shall only be used by the supervisor on-duty or the officer in charge.
- iv. At no time will patrol cars be parked along the curb near the building.

[Revised: 05/05/2020]