

Emergency Response/Pursuit

Policy No. **26-010**

has been renumbered

Emergency Response/Pursuit

Policy No. **P-64-2013**

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Title: Emergency Response/Pursuit Policy**Resolution:** 395-2013**Special Notes/Cross Reference:****Peace Officer Guide****Revised****Next Review Date:****POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Town of Westlock Municipal Enforcement Services Department authorizes the use of Emergency Response to calls for service utilizing emergency lights and / or siren. Responding to calls for service in an Emergency Response capacity will only be conducted following the guidelines of this policy. The Town of Westlock Municipal Enforcement Services Department **PROHIBITS MOTOR VEHICLE PURSUITS** as set out in this policy.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the Town of Westlock policy on the use of Emergency Response to certain calls for service, establishing guidelines and proper procedures for responding to emergencies, proper reporting procedures and training guidelines for all officers within the department.

The purpose of the Town of Westlock Municipal Enforcement Services Department Pursuit Policy is support the Solicitor General's strict prohibition on motor vehicle pursuits based on the current requirements of the Solicitor General's office.

GUIDELINES/AUTHORIZATION/PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **AUTHORIZATION:** officers will be granted the ability to respond to calls for service utilizing emergency equipment once all requirements of this policy have been met. The Town of Westlock, as an Authorized Employer of Community Peace Officers, shall have the authority for Emergency Response added to their Employer Appointment before any specific Officers apply for this authorization.

Individual Peace Officers will ensure all requirements have been met and Authorization has been added to their Peace Officer Appointment before they respond to any calls for service in an Emergency Response capacity.

2. All Community Peace Officers wishing to have the Authorization added to their Peace Officer Appointment must successfully complete a forty (40) Hour **Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC)** that is based on a police curriculum.

Note: The pursuit driving elements of the EVOC training are for skill development only. In no manner does this training suggest that Peace Officer's will engage in Motor Vehicle Pursuits.

All Peace Officers employed by the Town of Westlock Municipal Enforcement Services Department will undergo recertification in the EVOC training course every three (3) years.

3. Peace Officers may respond to calls for service utilizing emergency equipment under the following circumstances:

- Injury Collisions;
- Providing backup to Police or Peace Officers where there is a reasonable belief that the Officer is in serious danger and the Peace Officer is, or may be the closest assistance available;
- Attending a fire or medical emergency at the specific request of the Fire or EMS Department. (It will not be standard practice to provide a co-response to all fire or medical situations unless other arrangements have been made with those departments);
- Any emergency situation if requested by the Police Service to attend in an emergency response capacity.

Emergency Response will **NOT** be conducted for:

- Non-Injury Motor Vehicle collisions;
- Providing backup to Police or Peace Officers where there is a Police Officer closer and already responding to the situation, unless requested by the Police Service to attend;
- Any other non-urgent situation.

**** All situations where there is a possibility of an Emergency Response will be evaluated by the Peace Officer to continually assess the risk between providing services on-scene, and the increased risk to the Peace Officer and the Public while responding in an Emergency capacity. Public safety and safety of the Peace Officer will remain the primary concern in all Emergency Response situations **.**

4. All Peace Officers will use the following guideline and response codes for Emergency Response situations:

Code 1 Response Non-Emergency Response, No Lights / No Siren activated, all rules of the road will be followed.

Code 2 Response Emergency Response, Lights activated / No Siren activated, rules of the road may be violated using proper techniques and safety precautions.

Code 3 Response Emergency Response, Lights and Siren activated, rules of the road may be violated using proper techniques and safety precautions.

5. Any Peace Officer who has responded to a call for service will document all pertinent information about the Emergency Response in an incident report. This report will include the following;

- ID of unit responding;
- Unit's departing location;
- Time of Departure;
- Nature of call for service Unit is responding to;
- Unit's destination;
- Time of Arrival;
- Level of Response; and,
- Any other information that is pertinent to the situation.

*** Any collisions resulting from an Emergency Response by a Peace Officer will be reported to the Municipal Enforcement Service Department supervisor and the Director of Law Enforcement as a sensitive / serious occurrence on the approved form.***

PURSUIT GUIDELINES

All Peace Officer employed by the Town of Westlock Municipal Enforcement Services Department will adhere to the current policy set forth by the Solicitor General's Office as defined in the Peace Officer Manual as follows:

Peace Officer Manual Requirements s. 24.7 Pursuits

Pursuit definition:

A motor vehicle pursuit occurs when a Peace Officer follows a vehicle with the intent to stop or identify the vehicle or driver, and the driver, being aware of the Peace Officer's actions, fails to stop, and the driver makes an overt action identifying the peace officer is behind him and initiates evasive action or ignores directions to stop/avoid apprehension.

A motor vehicle pursuit presents an extreme risk to public safety and shall not be conducted by any Peace Officer appointed under the *Peace Officer Act*. Peace Officers are prohibited from engaging in pursuits by the Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security Motor Vehicle Pursuit Guidelines (2007) and this policy.

Upon encountering an individual who has chosen not to stop their vehicle when directed to do so, a Peace Officer will immediately cease all efforts to stop the vehicle. This will include turning off all emergency equipment and reducing speed and MUST change the direction of travel of the emergency response vehicle. Contact, on an urgent basis, should be made with the police service of jurisdiction, to advise them of the circumstances, providing a description of the vehicle and direction of travel.

A pursuit may involve high or low speeds and vehicles other than automobiles.

CLOSING THE DISTANCE

Maneuvers may only be performed when there is a reasonable likelihood for apprehension of the suspected offender.



The paramount purpose behind these policy decisions is public safety. Failure to abide by these policies could expose the public to an unacceptable risk or the Peace Officer to legal action. Solicitor General and Public Security views the issue of motor vehicle pursuits involving Peace Officers very seriously and will actively follow up on any pursuits involving Peace Officers with a view to ensuring that enforcement activities are conducted within legislated constraints and that corrective action is taken where necessary.

“Closing the distance” or “Catch up situations”

In some cases an emergency response vehicle will attempt to close the distance on a suspected violator to further a law enforcement effort. These situations are not considered pursuits unless some overt action by the suspected offender suggests an attempt to avoid apprehension. This practice is commonly referred to as “closing the distance” or “catch up.” In these situations an emergency response vehicle is being operated in a manner that is different from normal traffic patterns.

The *Traffic Safety Act* states: “a siren on an emergency vehicle shall be operated only when the vehicle is being used in response to an emergency.”

Closing the distance is **NOT** normally considered an emergency. A Peace Officer involved in such a situation must continually evaluate all factors that involve public and officer safety. If the risk assessment indicates a risk to public safety the procedure shall be terminated.

SPIKE BELTS/ROADBLOCKS

No Peace Officer will participate or assist in the deployment of a spike belt or other similar device.

No Peace Officer will participate or assist in the implementation of a roadblock technique.

Peace Officer's who encounter a vehicle that has initiated evasive action or has fled, shall not continue to follow the offender vehicle regardless of distance. The contact with the vehicle shall be terminated which includes shutting off emergency equipment and going the opposite direction as the direction of travel of the offending vehicle. Should an offender choose to flee before identification has been made of the vehicle, driver or license plate, all Peace Officers shall cease any effort to identify the offender vehicle and contact the Police Service of jurisdiction on an urgent basis and advise them of last known direction of travel.



Town Manager Signature

Mayor Signature