

**East Lansing Police Department  
Policy & Procedure**

<b>Subject: Vehicle Pursuits</b>	<b>ELPD Policy #300-19</b>
<b>Effective Date: March 1, 2022</b> <b>Revised Date:</b>	<b>Distribution: Sworn Personnel</b>
<b>MACP Accreditation Standard : 3.5.2</b>	<b>MACP Standard: 3.5.2</b>

**I. PURPOSE**

Vehicular pursuit of fleeing suspects can present a danger to the lives of the public, officers, and suspects involved in the pursuit. It is the responsibility of this agency to assist officers in the safe performance of their duties.

**ii. POLICY**

To fulfill these obligations, it shall be the policy of the East Lansing Police Department to regulate the manner in which vehicular pursuits are undertaken.

**A. Definitions [3.5.2a]**

1. **Vehicular Pursuit:** An attempt by a police officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend the occupants of another moving vehicle; provided, the driver of such vehicle is aware of the attempt and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing the speed of his/her vehicle, and by ignoring the officer's direction to stop.
2. **Primary Unit:** The unit which is in closest proximity to a fleeing vehicle. The primary unit has the primary responsibility for conducting a vehicular pursuit.
3. **Secondary Unit:** The second or subsequent police unit which becomes involved in a vehicular pursuit by assignment of the dispatcher, or through spontaneous contact.
4. **Marked Vehicle:** A police vehicle that is equipped with a siren and overhead oscillating emergency lights, painted or equipped with insignias, which make it generally recognizable as a police vehicle.
5. **Semi-marked Vehicle:** A police vehicle that is equipped with a siren and emergency lights (not overhead emergency lights). May or may not be painted or equipped with insignias. (Currently not in use by ELPD)

6. Unmarked Vehicle: An unmarked vehicle without warning lights or sirens that is not generally identifiable as a police vehicle.
7. Caravanning: The operation of police units in a group either in a line or alongside each other in a vehicular pursuit situation (except primary and secondary units).
8. Paralleling: Operation of police units in emergency fashion, other than the primary and secondary units, on streets or highways parallel to the pursuit route.
9. Legal Intervention: An intentional collision by a police officer to end a pursuit.

B. Vehicular Pursuit [3.5.2b]

In the performance of their duties, department officers are to make every reasonable effort, within this policy, to apprehend the drivers of fleeing vehicles. Yet, because of the great inherent danger involved in pursuit situations, officers must consider the following when deciding whether to begin or continue a vehicular pursuit:

1. The seriousness of the crime involved.
2. The duration of the pursuit and the area through which it is occurring including traffic and weather conditions.
3. The possibility of identifying the subject at a later time.
4. The condition of the police vehicle, the road surface, and the officer's driving ability.

C. Vehicular pursuit should be attempted only when, in the judgment of the officer, the danger created by the possible escape of the fleeing suspect outweighs the danger created by the vehicular pursuit, and no reasonable alternative exists.

D. A vehicular pursuit may be initiated if both of the following criteria are met: [3.5.2c,f]

The suspect exhibits the intention to avoid apprehension by using a vehicle to flee or refuses to stop at the direction of a police officer.

AND

The officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.

### III. PROCEDURES

- A. Once a pursuit has begun, the pursuing officer shall keep the dispatcher apprised of the following: [3.5.2d]
  - 1. The reason for the pursuit.
  - 2. The license plate number and description of pursued vehicle.
  - 3. Location and direction of the pursuit.
  - 4. Number of suspects, if known.
  - 5. Other pertinent information as it becomes available.
- B. The officer who begins the pursuit shall be considered the primary unit.
- C. The dispatcher may assign a secondary unit to assist the primary unit who may operate in an emergency-fashion and assume the role of primary unit, if the need arises. The secondary unit may also become involved in the pursuit as a result of spontaneous contact with the pursuit situation. Other patrol units are not to become involved in the pursuit under emergency response conditions unless directed to do so by a supervisor. [3.5.2e,g]
- D. A semi-marked unit shall withdraw from the pursuit when a marked police unit is in position to assume the primary unit role. The semi-marked unit may serve as the secondary unit until a second marked patrol unit is in position to assume the secondary role. At that time the semi-marked unit shall withdraw from the pursuit. (Semi-marked currently not used by ELPD)
- E. Under no circumstances shall an unmarked vehicle become involved in a high-speed pursuit as the primary or secondary unit. It is permissible for officers in unmarked units to attempt to keep a fleeing subject in view when a primary or secondary unit is not readily available, but this must be done at a reasonable speed, and only until a marked or semi-marked vehicle arrives.

- F. The dispatcher shall be responsible for assuring a secondary unit is assigned, for keeping other patrol units, nearby agencies, and supervisory personnel closely advised of the pursuit.
- G. The on-duty supervisor shall always retain the right and responsibility to order a vehicular pursuit terminated where, in his/her opinion, the dangers incurred as a result of the pursuit outweigh the danger that may result from the escape of the subject. [3.5.2h,i]
  - 1. Pursuing officers may discontinue the pursuit when in their reasonable opinion the seriousness of the reason for the pursuit is out-weighed by the potential for death, injury, or property damage if the pursuit continued.
  - 2. Officers may reengage the suspect of a previously terminated pursuit with supervisory permission or when exigent circumstances arise. [3.5.2j]
- H. There shall be no caravanning or paralleling by police units not involved in the pursuit.
- I. Officers in primary and secondary units involved in a vehicular pursuit shall use emergency lights and siren at all times.
  - 1. Officers in the process of transporting non-police personnel in their vehicles (prisoners, citizens, etc.) shall not become involved in vehicular pursuits except in the most extraordinary cases, and then only with the permission of a supervisor.
- J. Use of Legal Intervention During Vehicular Pursuit.
  - 1.. Officers are required to use only reasonable force in order to affect the arrest of a fleeing subject and must exhaust all other reasonable means before restoring to the use of legal intervention.
  - 2. Legal intervention shall not be used without first obtaining authorization from the supervisor responsible for monitoring the pursuit, unless exigent circumstances exist requiring such actions and obtaining such authorization would be unreasonable. Ramming of the suspected vehicle is considered deadly force.
- K. Vehicular Pursuits leaving East Lansing [3.5.2k] (Inter-jurisdictional Pursuits)

1. Pursuits originating in East Lansing by an officer of this department may be continued so long as they meet the standards of this policy.
  2. Dispatch shall contact the jurisdiction the pursuit is entering and request that one unit be dispatched to assist the pursuit if the jurisdiction has an available unit that can respond in a timely manner. Dispatch shall also provide the reason for the pursuit and other pertinent information.
- L. Vehicular Pursuits Originating in Other Jurisdictions [3.5.2k]
1. Officers may join vehicular pursuits, which have originated in other Jurisdictions as they enter East Lansing , if the pursuit does not violate any portion of this policy. Officers are not to remain with such pursuits as they leave the boundaries of East Lansing unless approved by a Supervisor. Officers are not prevented by this restriction from assisting through the use of traffic control.
- M. All officers involved in a pursuit must document it in an incident report. [3.5.2l]
- N. Reporting Procedures
1. The officer who initiated the pursuit shall document the circumstances in a Flee & Elude SRMS incident report. This includes all incidents where a driver fails to stop or flees after a reasonable effort to stop the vehicle was made by an officer.
  2. The on duty shift supervisor shall:
  3. Complete a video review and post incident investigation with the involved officers.
  4. The shift supervisors will conduct a post incident shift debrief after the administrative review.
  5. Complete the SRMS police report.
  6. Forward a copy of the incident report and Pursuit Data Form to the Division Captain.
  7. Notify the Division Captain immediately if the incident resulted in an accident with injury or death
- O. Administrative Review

1. All vehicular pursuits, regardless of outcome, shall be subject to an administrative review by the Patrol Captain to ensure compliance with this policy. [3.5.2m]
2. An annual documented analysis of all pursuit reviews will be conducted by the Patrol Captain. [3.5.2n]
3. The annual analysis will include:
  - a. General pursuit information
  - b. Reason for the pursuit initiation, both at the time of the pursuit and the actual reason, determined at the end of the pursuit.
  - c. Injuries
  - d. Property damage
  - e. Any policy violations
  - f. Any other measurable data collected during the administrative review.

### III. Cancelations

Authorized By:



Kim Johnson  
Chief of Police