



ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 40.37

TITLE: Assistance to Roadway Users

SERIES NUMBER: 40

SERIES TITLE / SUBJECT: Law Enforcement Operations

TOPICS/ REFERENCE: Debris, Hazard, Stranded, Tow

APPENDICIES: None

ORIGINAL / EFFECTIVE ISSUE DATE: January 21, 2009

DATE OF LAST REVISION: May 01, 2013

THIS ORDER REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RESCINDED

CALEA STANDARDS: 61.4.1 - 61.4.2

Policy:

It is the policy of Rockford Police Department to provide all practical assistance to motorists within the City of Rockford whether in emergency situations or routine troubles encountered by travelers.

Purpose:

The purpose of this General Order is to establish procedures to be used for providing general and emergency assistance to the public and to identify road hazards.

These guidelines are not meant to be all-inclusive, since each incident must be dealt with on an individual basis, but are intended as broad guidelines to assist the employees and supervisors involved.

This Order is comprised of the following numbered sections:

- I. GENERAL ASSISTANCE
- II. TOW SERVICES
- III. STRANDED MOTORISTS
- IV. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO MOTORISTS
- V. HAZARDOUS ROADWAY CONDITIONS
- VI. EFFECTIVE DATE
- VII. REVIEWS, REVISIONS AND CANCELLATIONS

I. General Assistance:

- A. As part of the Department's overall traffic management function a wide range of traffic related services are performed. Such services include:
 1. Providing reasonable assistance to a motorist who appears to be in need of aid.

2. Identifying and reporting highway hazards to the 911 Center, which in turn will be responsible for notifying the appropriate city service for clean up or repair.
 3. Providing general information and direction to the public
 4. Locating and removing abandoned vehicles (see General Order *40.06 – Impounding or Towing of Motor Vehicles* for additional information).
 5. Providing assistance to motorists who have run out of fuel. This assistance may include:
 - a. Transporting the motorist to the nearest service station, obtaining fuel and returning the motorist to their vehicle
 - b. Having the 911 Center contact a person to come and assist the motorist.
 6. Providing assistance to a motorist with a flat tire by:
 - a. Calling a tow truck for assistance; or
 - b. Providing an area where the motorist can safely change the tire.
 7. Officers, with supervisor approval, may transport stranded motorists to a location where the motorist can seek help.
- B. Officers will not use police Department vehicles to push or pull any other vehicle for the purpose of starting or removing a vehicle. Officers should refrain from pushing a vehicle using physical strength unless it is to save life or prevent injury. Department vehicles are also not to be used for jump-starting disabled vehicles.
- II. Tow Services:
- A. When a motorist encounters mechanical trouble or other difficulty which requires the vehicle to be towed, the officer will:
 1. Request the 911 Center to contact a tow of the motorist's choice and obtain a response time for the tow.
 2. If the motorist has no preference for a tow service, the officer will follow the guidelines set forth in General Order *40.06 – Impounding or Towing Motor Vehicles*.
 3. If in the opinion of the officer the estimated response time of the motorist's preferred tow is unacceptable and the vehicle presents a hazard which necessitates an immediate tow, the officer will contact their supervisor for approval to request a different tow company.
 4. The officer will remain with the disabled vehicle until such time as the vehicle is removed and the officer's services are no longer necessary
 - B. Towing of abandoned vehicles or those being towed incident to arrest will follow the guidelines set forth in General Order *40.06 – Impounding or Towing Motor Vehicles*.
- III. Stranded Motorists:
- A. Occasionally, immediate removal of a disabled motor vehicle from the roadway is necessary to reduce traffic problems or the possibility of a collision. With the approval of a supervisor, an officer may transport the operator of the vehicle to another location to obtain assistance.
 - B. Motorists who have already made contact for assistance shall never be exposed to hazardous situations. Officers will take into consideration the following when deciding if an immediate tow is needed:

1. Weather conditions,
 2. Location of the disabled vehicle, and
 3. Traffic volume.
- C. Officers may consider placing warning devices (e.g. flares, traffic cones) to warn oncoming traffic of the hazard.
- D. If the officer is unable to wait with the motorist, the officer shall periodically check on the motorist.
- IV. Emergency Assistance To Motorists:
- A. Vehicle fires
1. Officers shall immediately notify the 911 Center of the location of the vehicle fire and a description of the vehicle involved. The 911 Center will notify the appropriate fire department.
 2. Officers will ensure the safety of persons nearby by directing them to a safe location away from vehicular traffic and the fire hazard. Officers will maintain a traffic post to ensure the safe arrival of the fire equipment and personnel.
 3. Officers may use the fire extinguisher maintained in the Department vehicle if the use is appropriate and can be accomplished in a safe manner.
- B. Medical Emergencies
1. Upon the discovery of a medical emergency, the officer will notify the 911 Center and request the assistance of medical personnel. Officers shall provide the 911 Center with the following information:
 - a. The nature of the medical emergency,
 - b. Condition of the victim(s), and
 - c. Any other pertinent information.
 2. After notifying the 911 Center the officer shall render whatever first aid is practical.
- V. Hazardous Roadway Conditions:
- A. Roadway and roadside hazards area contributing factor to many traffic accidents. Officers should remain alert for these hazards and take appropriate action when necessary. Some of the hazardous conditions that may be observed include, but are not limited to:
1. Debris on the roadway,
 2. Defects in the roadway itself (e.g. potholes, dangerous shoulders),
 3. Lack of or defects in the safety features of the roadway,
 4. Lack of or improper, damage, destroyed or visually obstructed traffic control and information signs (e.g. stop signs, yield signs),
 5. Lack of or defective roadway lighting,
 6. Vehicles parked or abandoned on or near the roadway,
 7. Lack of or improperly located or malfunctioning mechanical control devices,
 8. Natural or man-made obstructions (e.g. fallen trees, downed power lines)
- B. Upon discovery of a hazard, the officer will attempt to remove or correct the hazard in a safe manner. If this is not possible, the officer will request that the

appropriate agency or authority be notified to have the hazard corrected immediately.

VI. Effective Date:

- A. The Department policy on Assistance to Highway Users became effective on January 21, 2009.

VII. Reviews, Revisions and Cancellations:

- A. This General Order will be reviewed annually by the Traffic Unit Supervisor and, when necessary, revised or cancelled in accordance with the procedures for reviewing written directives established in General Order *10.01 – Written Directives*.
- B. Any employee with suggestions for revisions and/or improvements to this order are encouraged to submit their ideas to the Commander of the Field Services Bureau.

BY ORDER OF

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Chet Epperson
Chief of Police