14.2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

An emergency is any situation reasonably perceived to require immediate police attention due to a present danger to public safety, a need for the immediate apprehension of a violator, or a serious crime in progress.

Examples of an emergency include, but are not limited to: personal injury accidents, Signal 0, felonious assaults, and robbery alarms.

Emergency operation of a police vehicle is anytime the vehicle is being operated in excess of the normal speed limit or in disregard of other traffic laws in the performance of police duties.

When a police vehicle is involved in emergency operations, the blue light and siren will be used. Exception: The use of blue lights and siren may be excluded when overtaking or following a vehicle for the purpose of establishing the elements of violations of the law, observing vehicles operated and/or occupied by suspected dangerous person(s) or when such use presents an imminent danger to the officer(s) or would aid in the escape of wanted person(s). Extreme caution must be exercised when operating within this exception and full emergency equipment engaged at the first practical opportunity.

When a police vehicle is involved in emergency operations, the operator shall advise Guilford Metro 911 that they are running emergency traffic. Exception: The announcement of emergency operation to Guilford Metro 911 is optional when an officer is running emergency traffic merely to overtake and stop a vehicle where the elements of a violation have already been established.

Once attempts to elude the officer are made by the operator of the suspect vehicle, the policy governing emergency operation of police vehicles during pursuits shall be followed.

14.2.2 USE OF BLUE LIGHTS AND SIREN

Emergency Calls: Police vehicles engaged in emergency operation, en route to an emergency call, are required to use both the blue light and siren. Once either the blue light or the siren is discontinued, emergency operation will be terminated and all speed and traffic laws shall apply.

Escort: Emergency escort of a private vehicle is prohibited. Alternatives may include, but are not limited to:

- In an extreme life-threatening emergency, officers may transport the injured party to the nearest medical facility in the police vehicle.
- Render first aid until the arrival of medical personnel.
- Provide escort while obeying all traffic laws.
- Suggest the motorist proceed to the nearest medical facility, obeying all traffic laws.
Discretion: Officers have the discretion to classify any situation an emergency, as prescribed by this directive, and will be held accountable for such action.

Supervisors will monitor and control the number of units involved in emergency operations of police vehicles.

14.2.3 POLICE VEHICLE PURSUIT POLICY

Police Vehicle Pursuit: A police vehicle pursuit is an active attempt by an officer to apprehend any driver or operator of a motor vehicle who refuses to stop their vehicle or flees from the officer after being directed to stop, with both blue light and siren.

Police vehicle pursuits are emergency police actions. When engaged in vehicle pursuits, officers will activate both blue light and siren.

Officers are authorized to pursue criminal suspects and traffic law violators who attempt to flee from police authority.

Any officer in a police vehicle may initiate a vehicle pursuit when the officer, after weighing the below listed factors, determines that the need for apprehension of the suspect or violator is greater than the danger of the pursuit to the public, the officer, and the suspect or violator and that such a pursuit can be accomplished with due regard for the safety of others.

Pursuit Consideration and Evaluation Factors: The primary consideration of the Department is the protection of life and property; therefore, consideration must be given to the extent to which a motor vehicle pursuit exposes any officer or member of the general public to excessive risk of injury. The following list of factors (while not all-inclusive) must be considered by the initiating officer and monitoring supervisor in determining whether or not the risks involved in initiating or continuing a vehicle pursuit outweigh the public benefit derived by apprehending the suspect:

- The seriousness of the offense for which the stop was originally being attempted
- The safety of the public in the area of the pursuit, and of the pursuing officer(s)
- Pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns and volume
- The location of the pursuit
- The speeds involved in the pursuit
- The time of day
- Weather conditions and visibility
- Road conditions
- Restricted visibility due to buildings, curves or hills
- The capabilities and limitations of the police vehicle(s) and the driver officer(s)
- The pursuing and supervising officers' familiarity with the area of the pursuit
- The quality of radio communications with the pursuing officer(s)
- Whether or not the identity of the driver is known or whether he can be identified by the prima facie rule of GS 20-141.5
- Whether the pursuit will likely be successful in apprehending the suspect
- Risk of harm from not apprehending the suspect, considering his manner of driving and the degree of risk created by the crime the suspect is believed to have committed.
Police Vehicles Defined:
- Marked enforcement vehicles – a line enforcement equipped vehicle, black in color, with uniform Greensboro Police Department exterior markings, equipped with siren, wig-wag headlights, emergency flashers, and roof-mounted bar lights that provide 360° illumination.
- Unmarked enforcement vehicles – a line enforcement equipped vehicle, any color, with or without uniform Greensboro Police Department exterior markings, equipped with siren, wig-wag headlights, emergency flashers, and interior mounted blue lights that provide less than 360° illumination.
- Unmarked administrative vehicles – a detective or staff vehicle, any color, without exterior Greensboro Police Department markings, equipped with siren, with or without wig-wag headlights, emergency flashers, and interior mounted blue lights that provide less than 360° illumination.
- Police Motorcycle – a line enforcement equipped motorcycle with uniform Greensboro Police Department exterior markings, equipped with siren, and front, rear and side-mounted blue lights that provide 360° illumination.

Initiating and Secondary Unit’s Responsibilities: The primary pursuing police vehicle may be a marked police package line vehicle, an unmarked police package vehicle, an unmarked non-police package vehicle, or a police motorcycle. The officer initiating a pursuit will immediately notify Guilford Metro 911. They will give them the location, direction of travel, vehicle description, number of occupants, and the reason for the pursuit. The initiating officer will also advise Guilford Metro 911 if they are operating any vehicle other than a marked police package line vehicle. The pursuing officer will give the location and the direction of travel throughout the pursuit, until a second vehicle is involved, at which time the driver of the primary vehicle may direct the driver of the second vehicle to provide that information to Guilford Metro 911.

If the primary vehicle initiating the pursuit is any vehicle other than a marked police package line vehicle, Guilford Metro 911 shall make attempts to involve three (3) marked police package line vehicles. When the first marked vehicle is involved, it shall assume the primary pursuit position directly behind the suspect or violator. The initiating vehicle will then assume the secondary position, and will remain there until conditions dictate discontinuing the pursuit or until relieved by a marked vehicle.

The initiating, second and third vehicles will be the only police vehicles operating as emergency vehicles, unless otherwise authorized by a field supervisor. All other police units responding to assist are prohibited from operating as emergency vehicles and shall obey all traffic laws. If any vehicle other than a marked police package line vehicle is involved in the pursuit, a marked vehicle may operate in an emergency capacity to become involved in the pursuit for the purpose of replacing the unmarked or other vehicle. There should not be more than three (3) vehicles actively involved in the pursuit, unless authorized by a field supervisor.

A supervisor may authorize additional emergency units to respond, but will be held accountable for their judgment. Supervisors will evaluate the nature of the pursuit in light of its danger and make a judgment whenever necessary to terminate the pursuit.
The initiating and assist units shall be responsible for operating their vehicles in a manner that is in due regard for the safety of self or others, and may terminate the pursuit at anytime. Personnel not assigned to the pursuit will refrain from non-emergency radio transmissions on the pursuit frequency.

**Emergency Communications Specialist (ECS) Responsibilities:** The ECS will immediately broadcast on all primary radio frequencies that a police pursuit is in progress, assign two units to assist the initiating police unit, and advise all units to hold non emergency traffic.

The ECS will notify a field supervisor of the pursuit as soon as possible. Guilford Metro 911 will notify agencies in appropriate jurisdictions when the pursuit leaves the city limits.

### 14.2.4 Forcible Stopping of Suspect or Violator Vehicle

**Forcible Stopping:** In certain cases where normal pursuit efforts to stop the fleeing vehicle have failed, immediate action may be required to stop the vehicle. Attempts to forcibly stop the suspect or violator must be made at a site that allows for the due regard for the safety of the suspect or violator, the members executing the stop and the general public. Sufficient precautions must be provided to allow uninvolved motorists to stop safely, and to avoid involvement in the police action.

Forcible stopping may occur by one (1) of four (4) methods:
- Deployment of Tire Deflation Devices (Stop Sticks)
- Mobile Roadblock
- Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT)
- Stationary Roadblock

**Deployment of Stop Sticks:** Stop Sticks may be deployed when practical to deflate the tires of pursued vehicles in a controlled manner. These devices should not be deployed without the authorization of the field supervisor responsible for monitoring and directing the activities associated with the pursuit.

Only members who have completed training on the use of the device shall deploy Stop Sticks.

Stop Sticks shall not be deployed to stop any vehicle with fewer than four (4) wheels or all-terrain vehicles designed for off road use only.

When possible, officers deploying Stop Sticks will advise Guilford Metro 911 verbally of the location of the deployment and any other information pursuing officers need to know for safety purposes. Deployment shall not occur on curves, bridges, or locations where reasonable judgment under the circumstances would dictate avoidance for safety reasons.

Officers deploying Stop Sticks will position police vehicles off of the roadway with blue lights activated, so as to not create or give the perception to motorists of an impassable thoroughfare. Officers should use fixed objects as protection during the deployment of Stop Sticks. If a fixed object is not available, the use of the police vehicle is acceptable.
The use or the attempted use of the Stop Stick device during vehicular pursuits shall be documented in the administrative reporting of such police pursuits.

Used Stop Sticks will be returned as soon as practical to Police Logistics for replacement.

**Mobile Roadblocks:** When deemed practical or necessary, the pursuing officer may determine that a mobile roadblock is appropriate. The pursuing officer or secondary unit in the immediate proximity with the vehicle may, based upon their judgment of the circumstances request from a supervisor, permission to conduct a mobile roadblock. With the concurrence of a supervisor or the Watch Commander or any command level officer units may position police vehicles in front, to the side(s) and to the rear of the violator in an attempt to slow and bring the vehicle to a stop. This action will require a minimum of three (3) police vehicles for maximum effectiveness; however resource availability may dictate an alternate configuration.

The mobile roadblock should be executed so that the suspect or violator vehicle is given the opportunity to bring their vehicle to a controlled, safe stop.

A mobile roadblock may only be performed by an officer who has received and successfully completed the mobile roadblock training provided by the Greensboro Police Department.

**Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT):**

**Definition:** The Precision Immobilization Technique, (hereafter referred to as PIT), is a maneuver, that performed properly, allows a controlled striking of the violator vehicle in such a way, that the violator vehicle comes to a safe stop within the roadway (or area) of the initiated action, while the police vehicle remains under the control of the operator and available for further enforcement action.

When tire deflation devices are not available, and conditions or resources prohibit a mobile roadblock, the PIT may be considered to safeguard life and preserve public safety. If conditions allow, the PIT may be performed by any officer who has received and successfully completed training provided by the Greensboro Police Department. The decision to initiate the PIT may be made by the pursuing officer, but may also be made by the field supervisor or the Watch Commander or any command level officer. Once the pursuing officer has made the decision to initiate the PIT, they should notify Guilford Metro 911 of their intention. Their decision to initiate the PIT may be denied by a field supervisor or the Watch Commander or any command level officer. If the decision to initiate the PIT is made by the field supervisor or the Watch Commander or any command level officer, the pursuing officer may use their discretion and choose not to initiate the PIT. They should then notify Guilford Metro 911 of their intention. They may later be asked to articulate their decision.

The PIT is considered a less lethal use of force when performed as described by the training guidelines of the Greensboro Police Department. If exigent circumstances warrant the striking of a violator vehicle outside the established training guidelines, this action may be considered as a use of deadly force.

Whether the PIT maneuver is successful or not, an Administrative Investigation must be completed to document the event along with a DMV 349 where applicable.
Stationary Roadblock: The use of a stationary roadblock shall only be permitted in extreme cases when the violator poses an imminent risk of death or serious injury. The Watch Commander or any command level officer or their designee must authorize the use of a stationary roadblock. The site for the execution of the stationary roadblock must be chosen based on the site's ability to provide the suspect or violator sufficient time and warning to see that the thoroughfare is impassable and time to bring their vehicle to a safe stop considering the speed of the pursuit at the time of the execution.

All practical measures must be taken to eliminate the involvement of other motorists or pedestrians in the police action.

Officers assisting outside agencies in pursuits will terminate their involvement when the pursuit leaves the Greensboro Police Department’s jurisdiction unless further assistance is requested by the outside agency and authorized by a field supervisor.

When to Terminate the Pursuit: Pursuits will be terminated when further pursuit would create excessive danger to the public or the officer after considering: the location, the volume of pedestrians and/or vehicular traffic, the road conditions, the distance between the violator and the police vehicle, and the factors listed in 14.2.3, “Pursuit Consideration and Evaluation Factors”.

Inter- and Intra-Jurisdictional Pursuits: In the event an outside agency engaged in an active vehicle pursuit enters the city limits and requests our assistance, a field supervisor may authorize assist units to respond as emergency vehicles. Officer safety and the nature of the pursuit will be taken into consideration. The supervisor will be held accountable for their judgment.

Officers assisting outside agencies in pursuit will terminate their involvement when the pursuit leaves the Greensboro Police Department’s jurisdiction unless further assistance is requested by the outside agency and/or authorized by a field supervisor.

Officers assisting outside agencies in police vehicle pursuits will adhere to all Departmental Directives and other guidelines governing police vehicle pursuits.

14.2.5 TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION IN POLICE VEHICLE PURSUITS

For the purpose of this directive, jurisdiction is defined as the incorporated city limits and one mile beyond.

With the approval of a supervisor or the Watch Commander or any command level officer, officers may continue the pursuit beyond their jurisdictional limits in accordance with N.C. State Law, provided radio contact can be maintained between at least two police vehicles.

The decision to continue the pursuit beyond jurisdiction should be based on the “Pursuit Consideration and Evaluation Factors” listed in 14.2.3.
14.2.6 CAUTION REQUIRED

It will be the responsibility of the officer involved in any emergency operation or pursuit to exercise due caution in regard for the safety of others. Deadly force actions involving a motor vehicle require the same elements for justification as deadly force actions involving a firearm or other weapon.

It will be the responsibility of the officer, upon approaching an intersection controlled by a traffic control device, to establish that opposing traffic is yielding to the emergency vehicle prior to entering the intersection.

Officers shall comply with North Carolina Law governing emergency motor vehicle operation while involved in vehicle pursuits.

14.2.7 REPORTS REQUIRED

The supervisor in charge of the pursuit will complete the necessary administrative reports relative to each pursuit. The pursuit report will be forwarded through the employee’s chain of command. Each member responsible for reviewing the report will review the report to ensure the investigation is complete and any findings are consistent with Departmental procedure and applicable State Statutes. Any member charged with reviewing a Pursuit Report may remit the report back to the originating supervisor for further action as deemed necessary.

A documented annual analysis of the Department’s vehicle pursuits will be conducted on a calendar year basis by the Professional Standards Division. This report will analyze the previous year’s pursuits for trends, training issues, equipment needs or policy revisions.