

St. Joseph, Missouri Police Department



DIRECTIVE TYPE: GENERAL ORDER		INDEX NUMBER: GO0013
SUBJECT: Department Vehicle and Equipment Inspection		
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to ensure that all department vehicles are presently neat, clean and in good working order with all necessary equipment. This is essential because police vehicles are an indispensable piece of equipment necessary for an officer to perform their duties efficiently and safely. The appearance of department vehicles directly reflects upon the professionalism of the entire Police department. This General Order will also pertain to the department equipment assigned to each vehicle.

II. POLICY

Each member assigned to a vehicle must ensure that it is free of defects and possesses assigned equipment. Whenever a defect is detected or equipment is missing, a member is responsible for reporting it to a supervisor, and take steps to rectify the problem.

III. PROCEDURE

A. The police marked patrol vehicle:

1. Patrol vehicles will be in a pool for use. Eligible officers will be assigned a take-home vehicle. This take-home vehicle should be utilized for patrol work. Safety restraints in any vehicle equipped with such shall be in good working order.
2. Pool vehicles should be parked on the back lot in patrol vehicle spaces.
3. At the beginning of each watch, a member must fully inspect their vehicle, unless responding to an emergency call or because of some other exigent circumstance. If the inspection has to be postponed, it will be conducted as soon as practicable. Vehicles should be inspected before a member goes off duty or is placed on another assignment. Each officer will request an administrative call for service for this inspection. The officer will enter in the call notes if the vehicle passed the inspection and if all the equipment was present and operational. If there are any issues the officer will note the issues and the supervisor who was notified of the issues.

4. Marked police vehicles will be inspected prior to each shift for the following:
 - a. The exterior of the vehicle will be inspected for any damage and for cleanliness
 - b. The tires will be inspected for proper tread and inflation.
 - c. Make sure that all vehicle lights, including emergency lights and equipment, are functional
 - d. Computer equipment- Check and verify everything is functioning
 - e. Laptop computer, dock & wiring
 - f. ID Scanner (if applicable)
 - g. Ticket printer & wiring
 - h. Radar (If equipped)– check the functionality of the system with tuning forks
 - i. Check the shotgun- Check to see that nothing is obstructing the barrel, that no rounds are chambered, and that the safety is on.
 - j. The department approved long rifle- Ensure it is in its case/rack with no magazine in the weapon and no rounds chambered.
 - k. Other assigned equipment - Ensure miscellaneous equipment is in the assigned vehicle. If not, report to a supervisor. See Sgts Manual for a current list of misc. equipment for marked patrol cars.
 - l. Check the rear seat of the police vehicle for weapons and contraband when going into service and after transporting any prisoners. This includes checking between the seat and the seatback. If possible, pull the seat out to conduct this inspection

5. The interior of the vehicle should be free of trash, debris and other items that do not belong in the vehicle; and when possible, necessary and practical, officers should have the vehicles washed. The car wash currently under contract with the department will be used. All personnel should make sure that vehicles are vacuumed as often as needed.

B. Reporting Procedures:

1. If a member discovers damage to a vehicle during the inspection, they will immediately report the fact to a supervisor. The officer must also complete the appropriate Vehicle Maintenance/Repair forms. The supervisor, the member reports the issue to should determine the proper steps to follow and if an investigation is necessary. If the damage makes the vehicle unsafe to operate, this should be documented and the vehicle placed out of service. Damage shall be logged in the vehicle damage database.
2. If a member discovers a weapon or equipment is missing or damaged, they must immediately notify a supervisor and if necessary complete an information report detailing the pertinent facts of the matter known to them. The supervisor who was notified will complete a separate report and investigate to determine either the location of the missing weapon or how the damage was incurred.

3. Whenever a member uses any of the equipment in the equipment bag, they must replace used items and report any damage sustained to permanent equipment so that it can be replaced or repaired. If a member coming "on watch" discovers something in the bag to be missing, they should report the fact to a supervisor and obtain a replacement.

C. Supervisors:

1. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all vehicles comply with this order. They are encouraged to closely monitor vehicle conditions through good supervisory practices. Patrol supervisors will conduct a bi-weekly vehicle inspection of each marked patrol vehicle. If the vehicle needs mechanical repairs the supervisor will notify the garage supervisor by marking the appropriate box on the inspection. If the vehicle is missing minor equipment the supervisor will restock the equipment from the supply room.
2. Unmarked or specialty vehicles will be inspected by a supervisor on the following basis
 - a. Monthly – Police Motorcycles, SRT Van & Bearcat, other Misc Vehicles
 - b. Semi-Annually- all other unmarked vehicles owned by the department

D. Responsibility/Accountability:

1. Direct responsibility for the care and maintenance of the fleet and the equipment in the units belongs to the members who use them daily. If possible, members are encouraged to "work out" any problems concerning cleanliness with the person who last used the piece of equipment or the vehicle. If this person cannot be identified or refuses to acknowledge their responsibility, a member has no alternative other than to contact a supervisor. The ownership of vehicle damage and the misuse, abuse, and/or loss of equipment belongs to a member who has failed to report and take responsibility for it, whether sustained by legitimate means in the normal course of carrying out their duties, or otherwise.

Paul Luster, Chief of Police

Date