


<p>RABUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</p>  <p>General Order Number: 6.14</p>	<p>Date of Issue</p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p>Effective Date</p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p>Revision Date</p>
<p>Subject: TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT</p>	<p>Amends:</p>	<p>Rescinds:</p>	
<p>Index as: Traffic Enforcement Uniform Patrol Division</p>	<p>State Certification Standards: 5.15</p>		
<p>Special Instructions:</p>			

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to prescribe the policies and procedures of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office regarding Traffic Enforcement.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Rabun County Sheriff' Office that all uniformed deputies share in the responsibility of enforcing traffic laws. The provisions of this General Order shall apply to all deputies engaged in traffic enforcement operations.

DISCUSSION

Deputies of the department shall take appropriate enforcement action for violations of the statutes that apply to traffic laws and enforcement. The department's traffic enforcement program uses available patrol resources, on a selective and uniform basis throughout the county, by aggressively concentrating control efforts on drivers who threaten the lives, safety, and property of others. The objective of this is to reduce fatalities, personal injuries, and property damage resulting from traffic crashes. Deputies are authorized to stop motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, if they have reasonable and articulable suspicion that a traffic violation has occurred and to take follow-up action that is appropriate to the degree of seriousness of the violation or as a result of information obtained after the stop.

Enforcement efforts shall be performed in accordance with the following:

Priority One. Priority one violations are potentially serious and life threatening violations. Absent exigent circumstances, these violations will necessitate a written citation and/or physical arrest in accordance with the procedures listed below. Such violations include, but are not limited to:

- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Excessive speeding for road/environmental conditions;
- Speeding within school zones during school hours;
- Failing to stop for a school bus while discharging/loading students;
- Aggressive driving;
- Improper or illegal passing;
- Laying drags;
- Leaving the Scene of an Accident or Failure to Stop @ an Accident; or
- Child Safety Seat Restraint.

Priority Two. Priority two violations are violations that may lead to property damage or injury. Deputies will issue written citations for priority two violations if they believe that education and a written warning will not be sufficient to correct the violation. Such violations include, but are not limited to:

- Safety Belts;
- Violating traffic control signals at intersections;
- Improper or illegal passing;
- Lane violations;
- Impeding the normal flow of traffic;
- Defective equipment that does not pose a hazard to public safety;
- Disabled or abandoned vehicles that do not pose a hazard to public safety;
- Parking in a fire lane or to otherwise impede traffic;
- Tag violations; or
- Other traffic law violations.

DEFINITIONS

ARREST — To deprive a person of his/her liberty by legal authority (Black's Law Dictionary).

CITATION — Any traffic enforcement action that involves a written notice to the accused to appear and that contemplates trial adjudication or disposition to determine the guilt or innocence of the person charged with a violation.

D.P.S. — The Department of Public Safety

G.C.I.C. — The Georgia Crime Information Center

GEORGIA P.O.S.T. COUNCIL — The Georgia Peace Deputies and Training Council.

N.C.I.C. — The National Crime Information Center

PHYSICAL ARREST — Any enforcement action than consists of taking persons into custody for the purpose of holding or detaining them to answer a charge before the court.

P.I.O. — Public Information Officer

O.C.G.A. — The Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

OTHER TRAFFIC LAW VIOLATIONS — A violation of any law, ordinance, or regulation affecting the use or protection of streets or highways but not enacted primarily to regulate safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

ROAD — The portion of a highway that includes both the roadway and the shoulder.

ROADWAY — The portion of a highway, improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel, exclusive of the shoulder.

STATIONARY OBSERVATION — Traffic observation at a selected place, usually one with an unfavorable accident experience or traffic flow problem, for traffic law enforcement purposes-especially to detect violations and deter possible violators.

TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT — Law enforcement as it applies to statutes, ordinances, and legally authorized regulations relating to the use of streets and highways and ownership and operation of motor vehicles and other road vehicles.

TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION — The part of traffic law enforcement involving arrest, citation, or warning of any person alleged to have violated a law, ordinance, or regulation pertaining to the use of the traffic ways when the person has knowledge of this action and when it is (1) prevent such violation from endangering persons or property or inconveniencing other users of the traffic way, (2) prevent continued violation, or (3) discourage recurrences.

TRAFFIC LAW VIOLATIONS — A violation of any statute, ordinance, or legally authorized regulation relating to the use of streets and highways or the operation and ownership of motor vehicles and other road vehicles.

TRAFFIC SURVEY — An examination of traffic characteristics, such as volume, speed, delays, accidents, origins, destinations, etc.

TRAFFICWAY — The entire width between property lines or other boundary lines of every way or place of which any part is open to the public for the purposes of vehicular traffic as a matter of right or custom. All highways are trafficways, but trafficways also include some areas on private property, such as shopping centers.

U.S.C. — The United States Code.

I. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Supervisors shall concentrate traffic enforcement efforts during times and at locations where Priority One offenses are most likely to occur. Such information may be developed from the past observations of enforcement personnel, complaints from residents, or from the analysis of traffic accidents reports or traffic surveys.
- B. The enforcement of Priority Two violations should be based upon the availability of patrol resources in order to respond to other calls for service. When resources are available, supervisors should concentrate patrols in residential or business areas in response to complaints.
- C. In addition, supervisors will:
 - 1. Review all reports;

2. If needed, review all Uniform Traffic Citations issued to insure correctness and completeness and will address discrepancies with the issuing officer; and
3. Insure citations are turned in appropriately.

II. STOPPING TRAFFIC VIOLATORS

- A. Traffic stops will only be initiated with articulable reasonable suspicion.
- B. Emergency lights, headlights, and/or siren shall be used to make adequate notice of an officer's intent to stop a traffic violator.
- C. If available, deputies shall activate the video camera.
- D. A safe environment must be provided for the offender, officer, and general public when stopping a traffic violator.
- E. Deputies shall select an area that provides reasonable safety, avoiding hills, intersections, curves, heavily trafficked and poorly lit areas, and roads without shoulders.
- F. Whenever possible, deputies shall avoid the use of private drives, business locations, or areas where spectators are likely to gather.
- G. On multi-lane roadways, deputies should insure the safety of the violator during lane changes by gradually changing from lane-to-lane with the violator until the vehicle can come to a safe stop on the shoulder of the roadway. Traffic stops should not be performed along the left shoulder of the traffic lane unless circumstances prohibit the normal traffic stop location.
- H. Should the violator stop abruptly in the traffic lane, in the wrong lane or in another undesirable location, deputies shall use the vehicle's public address system to instruct the violator to move to a safer location.
- I. Once the violator is properly stopped, deputies will position the patrol unit about one-half to one car length behind, and slightly to the left of, the violator's vehicle, to create cover from an assault with a firearm.
- J. Emergency lights will remain on until the completion of the law enforcement business and the violator has been allowed to depart and safely re-enter the roadway.
- K. Before conducting the traffic stop, deputies will inform the Rabun County Central Communications Center of the exact location of the stop, vehicle tag, a description of the vehicle with the number of occupants, and will request a Registration and Warrants/Wants check (10-28 & 10-29). The proper format for the traffic stop will be used whenever possible.
- L. One of the most dangerous actions initiated by an officer is to approach a motor vehicle pursuant to a traffic stop. The following are general steps are intended to provide maximum safety for the officer, the violator, and the general public. Following contact with the Rabun Central Communications Center, deputies will:

1. Be continuously alert for any suspicious movement or actions by the violator or other vehicle occupants;
 2. Approach the vehicle from the rear of the violator's car, insuring that the trunk is securely closed and checking the interior area;
 3. Never stand between the vehicles, in the event that the patrol vehicle is struck from behind by another motorist or the violator attempts to back into the officer;
 4. Direct all occupants to remain in the vehicle;
 5. Stop to the rear of the trailing edge door post of the left front door so it cannot be used as a weapon against the officer;
 6. Maintain observation of the vehicle when moving to and from the patrol vehicle; and
 7. If a second officer is available, the second officer is to position him or her self to act as an observer and provide cover for the other officer by remaining on the opposite side of the vehicle at a point where the interior and all occupants can be observed.
- M. Whenever a vehicle stop is initiated, the following actions shall be taken:
1. Greet the violator in a courteous manner;
 2. Request the driver's side window be rolled down;
 3. Ask for the driver's license, proof of insurance and advise the driver of the reason for being stopped;
 4. Conduct a brief investigation to determine the exact situation, with a certainty of observation of alleged violations and check for signs of impairment;
 5. Direct the violator and passengers to remain in the vehicle until all law enforcement activity has been completed; and
 6. If occupants are to be interviewed, instruct them to exit the vehicle one at a time for questioning.
- N. In the event an officer needs to stop a large, oversize vehicle where the driver's compartment is above the officer's eye-level, deputies will:
1. Approach the cab from the rear, using the driver's outside mirror to observe the driver and activity in the cab (Note: many motor homes and busses have egress on only the right side of vehicle);
 2. Never climb onto the vehicle to make contact with the operator;
 3. Maintain a position to the rear of the driver's door; and
 4. Request the driver to exit the vehicle with license and proof of insurance.
- O. Non-uniformed deputies or uniformed deputies in unmarked vehicles should not normally initiate a vehicle traffic stop. Exceptions to this are as follows:

1. In situations where failure to act may create a potential risk to the public, non-uniformed personnel shall continue to follow the violator and contact the Rabun County Central Communications Center to request that a marked patrol unit make the stop; or
2. Should the violator pose an extreme and immediate threat to public safety, non-uniformed deputies or uniformed deputies in unmarked vehicles may initiate the traffic stop if their vehicle is equipped with emergency warning devices. The Rabun County Central Communications Center shall be notified of the situation and a marked patrol unit shall be dispatched immediately to the incident scene.

III. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Deputies are authorized to use individual discretion based on professional judgment as to which form of follow-up action will be taken. Action will be appropriate for each violation of the law. This will be accomplished in a fair, impartial, courteous, and professional manner.

- A. The physical arrest of a driver is the most serious action that may be initiated for a traffic offense. This action may only be taken:
 1. When continued operation of the vehicle would result in an immediate danger to the public;
 2. If the driver's license has been suspended or revoked by the Georgia Department of Public Safety or the Department of Public Safety of another State. Citations should be issued instead of an arrest in cases where the actual status of a motorists driving privilege cannot be determined after reasonable efforts. When issued, the motorist will not be allowed to drive;
 3. For violations designated as where the violator's driver's license may be suspended; or
 4. When an officer has reason to believe an offender will not show up for his/her scheduled court date.
- B. Written traffic citations shall be issued to violators who jeopardize the safe and efficient flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, endanger property, or who threaten the life or safety of others, and the violation does not dictate a physical arrest:
 1. When issuing a citation, the officer will not retain an offender's driver's license in lieu of bail unless the law on certain suspendable offenses, such as DUI and DUI refusal, allows it. However, offenders may be required to display their license in lieu of bail on all other violations;
 2. The violator may request the posting of bond rather than surrendering his/her license in lieu of bail. If so, the violator shall be transported to the Rabun County Jail for processing; and
 3. Citations will be issued only for traffic offenses or violations of county ordinances. For other non-traffic criminal offenses, offenders will be transported to the Rabun County Jail. Deputies will then obtain the appropriate arrest warrants or complete the Statement of Criminal Charges.
- C. In all cases when a written citation is not issued, a written warning shall be issued for minor or non life threatening traffic violations, when, in the discretion of the officer, the enforcement objective has been achieved and the violation does not dictate a citation or physical arrest. Deputies wishing to issue a warning to an offender will use the department warning citations. Unless the violator provides

extenuating circumstances for the violation committed, thus justifying the deputies need to quickly issue a verbal warning; a written warning will always be issued. The written warning citation will then be turned in.

IV. REFERRAL OF DRIVERS FOR RE-EXAMINATION

- A. Should an officer have reason to believe that a motorist is not physically or mentally qualified to be a Georgia licensed driver, she/he should provide appropriate documentation to substantiate such reasoning to the Driver's License Advisory Board of the Georgia Department of Driver Services. (O.C.G.A. 40-5-34C)
- B. The request for re-examination will be made on the official form provided on the Department of Drivers Services website. The form may be accompanied with a written statement from the officer that should include:
 - 1. The name, address, and date of birth of the motorist; and
 - 2. Detailed description of the physical, mental, or other impairments that might prevent the person from exercising reasonable and ordinary care over a motor vehicle, along with copies or related reports that reflect the facts and circumstances of the incident in question, must be provided in specific detail.

V. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO VIOLATORS

- A. At the time a motorist is charged with a violation, the officer shall inform the violator of:
 - B. Time and date of court appearance;
 - C. The location of the court appearance;
 - D. How to obtain additional information relative to court procedures;
 - E. Whether court appearance is optional or mandatory; and
 - F. Whether the violator is allowed to enter a plea and/or pay the fine by mail or at a specific location.

VI. SPECIAL PROCESSING SITUATIONS

- A. Non-Residents Of The State Of Georgia
 - 1. If a violator's state of residence is a member of the Non-Resident Violator Compact, she/he may be released on a copy of the citation and will be advised that if the citation is not paid or she/he fails to appear in court as required, then the Georgia Department of Public Safety will notify the Department of Public Safety in the violator's home state and that the driver's license will be suspended until the fine is paid.
 - 2. If the violator's state of residence is not a member of the Non- Residents Violator Compact, the violator will be required to post bond for the offense. The individual shall be transported to the Rabun County Jail and the citation marked "Posted Bond" in the remarks section after the bond is paid.
- B. Juvenile Offenders

1. If the driver is 17 years old or older, and involved in traffic offenses, with or without a valid license, the matter shall be handled in accordance with the same procedures involving adult violators. Traffic offenses are not considered an act of delinquency except for those violations for which driving privileges may be suspended or revoked for an adult. (O.C.G.A. 40-5-54)
2. Before releasing a juvenile, deputies will first determine if there is an outstanding Detention Order by contacting the Rabun County Central Communication Center.
3. When a citation is written, no court date should be given either verbally or in writing, as the Juvenile Court will make such notification. The remarks section of the citation should be clearly marked "Juvenile."
4. A juvenile complaint report shall be initiated for any citation that is issued to a juvenile.

C. Legislators

1. During legislative sessions or committee meetings and while in travel to or from such places, all state legislators and members of congress shall be free from arrest except for treason, felony, or breach of the peace. (Georgia Constitution Article 3, Section 4, Paragraph IX)
2. Citations or physical arrest shall not be initiated without prior approval of the Field Supervisor.

D. Foreign Diplomats / Consular Officials

1. Any individual claiming immunity is required to produce satisfactory evidence that she/he is entitled to immunity. The US Department of State issues identification to diplomatic agents and Consular officials accredited to the United States. The Georgia Secretary of State issues identification cards to honorary consuls and members of the families of career Consular officials if stationed in Georgia.
2. In all situations where an individual is claiming diplomatic or consular immunity, the officer needs to verify entitlement to such immunity and may detain the individual until verification is obtained. Deputies may verify immunity by contacting the appropriate number as indicated:
 - a. During normal business hours the Office of Protocol, US Department of State for diplomats at (202) 647-1664; for international organization employees at (202) 647-1402; for Consular Officers at (202) 647-1404; and for United Nations employees at (202) 415-4131; and
 - b. After normal business hours all calls should be made to (202) 647-7277 or for United Nations employees at (202) 415-4444.
3. The terms "Diplomatic Immunity" or "Diplomatic Agent" refers to the head of a mission or an ambassador of a foreign government and members of the diplomatic, administrative, and technical staff of a mission and members of the family of a diplomatic agent. Such individuals shall not be subject or detention. (23 U.S.C. 2454 a et seq)
4. Consular officials are not entitled to diplomatic immunity.
5. Traffic citations may be issued when appropriate to both diplomatic and consular officials.

6. When a consular or diplomatic official is considered a danger to himself or others, (for example suspected of Driving under the Influence) the officer shall take one of the following actions: bring the official to Law Enforcement Center where she/he may recover sufficiently to drive; obtain a taxi or other transportation; or transport the official to a safe location.

E. Military Personnel

1. Members of the military forces (whether active, Reserve, or National Guard) are privileged from arrest during their attendance at active duty, drills, parades, meetings, and encampments or while traveling to or from such official functions EXCEPT for treason, felony, or breach of the peace. (O.C.G.A. 17-4-2)
2. Traffic citations shall be issued when appropriate and the violator released. If the offense is for a felony violation, the person shall be placed under arrest and processed in accordance with normal departmental procedures.

- F. Individuals who travel into or pass through Georgia pursuant to a summons issued under the "Uniform Act to Secure the Attendance of Witnesses" are immune from arrest or for the service of civil or criminal process in connection with matters which arose prior to the witness' coming into the state by virtue of the summons. (O.C.G.A. 24-10-96)

VII. UNIFORM ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES

- A. Appropriate enforcement action is important if motorists are to enjoy safe driving and the agency is to be successful in achieving its objective to reduce fatalities, personal injuries, and property damages resulting from traffic crashes. Good judgment by all enforcement personnel in consideration of the circumstances and conditions at the time of the violation should result in the initiation of appropriate follow-up action and will eventually lead to public voluntary compliance of traffic laws and regulations. There are a variety of traffic law violations that deputies need to address as indicated below:
- B. Motor Vehicle operation following revocation or suspension of driver's license or driver's privileges. Following the detection of a traffic violation or other contact with a motorist, deputies frequently find a driver who is unable to produce a valid driver's license. This could be the result of driver error or because of action taken by the court or the Department of Public Safety:
1. Deputies shall first request the Rabun County Central Communications Center determine the current status of driving privileges;
 2. If the violator has a valid license, the officer's actions should be directed by the initial violation or contact;
 3. If the violator does not have a valid license, she/he will not be allowed to drive from the location of the traffic stop. In addition, the following actions shall be taken:
 - a. If it can be determined through G.C.I.C./N.C.I.C. that no license was ever issued in either this state or by another state, the violator shall be arrested; or
 - b. If it can be determined the violator's privileges are currently under revocation or suspension, the driver shall be arrested; and

- c. Appropriate arrangements taken to ensure the motor vehicle is properly cared of, such as another properly licensed driver can take the vehicle for safety, the vehicle may be towed for impoundment, or the vehicle may be left if it is legally and safely parked.
- C. Speeding violations all too frequently lead to auto accidents, property damage, and injuries:
 1. Special attention shall be given to excessive speeding for road or environmental conditions, to violations occurring in school zones, and for violations in areas where there is a high injury and accident rate or in those locations where citizen complaints have indicated repeated violations occur; and
 2. Speed violations shall be enforced by written warning for relatively minor situations, or citation to violators who jeopardize the safety of others, or physical arrest for reckless driving for those who display clear and gross negligence by threatening the immediate lives and safety of others.
- D. Other hazardous moving violations:
 1. Such offenses are defined as those that violate a law or regulation and directly jeopardize the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians; and
 2. It will be the normal practice to issue a citation for hazardous moving violations or for operating an unsafe motor vehicle.
- E. When investigating the use of vehicles on private property, attempts will be made to contact the property owner to determine if permission has been granted:
 1. If the owner's permission is not granted, the operator is in violation of state law and warning or citation shall be issued as appropriate. (O.C.G.A. 40-7-4); and
 2. If the motorist violates other applicable laws, such as DUI, reckless driving, hit and run, or criminal damage to property, additional action shall be taken as prescribed by the policies and procedures in the Traffic Crash Investigations General Order.
- F. Off-Road Vehicle Violations
 1. An off-road vehicle is not licensed for normal roadway use; it is designed for or capable of cross-country travel on natural terrain; and is not intended for use predominantly on public roads. (O.C.G.A. 40-7-3).
 2. Normally, a written warning or citation shall be issued.
- G. Equipment Violations
 1. When motor vehicles are not properly equipped or the equipment fails to operate properly, and the vehicle is not in an unsafe or dangerous condition, a written warning should be issued.
 2. If the problem impairs the safe operation of the vehicle and is a repeated offense or if there are multiple equipment violations, a citation will normally be more appropriate.
- H. Public Carriers/ Commercial vehicle violations will be governed by applicable state laws and will be enforced, as the situation requires.

- I. Non-hazardous violations or minor traffic infractions should be resolved by a written warning.
- J. Multiple Violations
 - 1. When multiple violations are observed which can be classified separately as having distinctly different elements, they shall be dealt with independently.
 - 2. For example, a motorist stopped for following too closely and subsequently found to be operating without a driver's license should be issued two separate citations.
 - 3. In other cases, a written warning may be issued for a non- hazardous violation in conjunction with a formal citation for a more serious hazardous moving violation.
- K. When two or more violations are similar to the extent that the elements of one law are included in the other law, only the most serious violation should be charged.
- L. When a motorist violates a newly enacted traffic law, written warnings shall normally be issued for at least the first 30 days following its effective date unless the violation is of a serious, life threatening nature. If the offense threatens public safety, the officer shall take the action that is appropriate under the circumstances, based upon the guidelines provided in this General Order.
- M. If the violation is considered to be the contributing cause of the traffic accident, a citation or arrest should be initiated as appropriate. Other violations, not contributing to the cause of the crash, shall be addressed independently.
- N. Enforcement actions shall also be concentrated in those areas where pedestrian accidents have occurred in the past. Of special concern should be potentially hazardous situations involving children.
- O. The following are guidelines to discretion when dealing with bicycle related violations:
 - 1. In those areas where congestion and the frequency of traffic accident experience involving bicycles have been predominant, law pertaining to the proper operation of bicycles shall be strictly enforced;
 - 2. In those areas where traffic flow is minimal, visibility is unobstructed, and traffic accident experience low, deputies shall exercise discretion in the application of laws pertaining to bicycles;
 - 3. However, deputies should be less tolerant with older, more experienced offenders who should be aware of the potential hazards inherent in the unsafe operation of bicycles. On the other hand, deputies should be more instructive to younger offenders, who may not be fully aware of their responsibilities to operate a bicycle safely; and
 - 4. Those individuals under 16 years of age observed not wearing a helmet may be issued a written warning. (O.C.G.A . 40-6-296)

VIII. TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT METHODS

- A. The following methods shall be used to conduct traffic enforcement operations:

- B. The use of **visible traffic patrol** is the primary method to be used by departmental personnel when performing traffic enforcement operations. This includes:
 - 1. Area-moving or stationary observation in a specific location that consists of a number of streets, sections of a highway, subdivision, or other identifiable geographical area;
 - 2. Line-moving or stationary observation on a specific street or portion of highway between two points; or
 - 3. Directed-either area or line patrol that is specifically directed by a supervisor and is based upon unfavorable traffic accident/enforcement data or upon citizen complaints.
- C. When traffic enforcement vehicles are stopped and positioned in a STATIONARY MODE, they will be situated in such a manner that they can be clearly observed by motorists using ordinary powers of observation:
 - 1. If emergency warning devices are not used, traffic enforcement vehicles shall be parked in such a manner as not to cause a traffic hazard or to otherwise require a driver to take evasive action to avoid an accident; and
 - 2. While operating speed detection devices, traffic enforcement vehicles will not be concealed from plain view and must be visible for 500 feet in accordance with state statute.
- D. Unmarked or unconventional vehicles will not be used in traffic enforcement operations, however they may be used to gather traffic data.

IX. PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Parking enforcement activities will normally be limited to situations that present a threat to public safety. Examples of conditions that may constitute such a threat are when a motor vehicle is:

- A. Situated in such a manner to either block other moving traffic or is causing a traffic hazard or
- B. Parked in a fire lane or other location that would seriously impede emergency vehicles.
- C. The following actions will be initiated if a parked or standing vehicle poses a threat to public safety:
 - 1. If present, the driver will be directed to move the vehicle to an authorized location; (O.C.G.A. 40-6-206)
 - 2. A non moving traffic citation will be issued; and/or
 - 3. If left unattended, the vehicle will be impounded as prescribed by the department's General Orders. (O.C.G.A. 40-11-3).
- D. The enforcement of handicapped parking shall normally be performed in response to public complaints. Violators will be:
 - 1. Instructed to move their vehicle to an authorized parking location or

2. Issued a non-moving traffic citation.

X. TRAFFIC ESCORTS

A. Escorts Of Non-Departmental Emergency Vehicles

1. Departmental vehicles will not be used to escort any authorized emergency vehicle that has its own operating emergency equipment unless:
 - a. The emergency equipment on the other vehicle is inoperative or malfunctioning; or
 - b. The driver of the other vehicle is not familiar with the location of the emergency or quickest route to a hospital.
2. The Field Supervisor will approve all requests to escort another emergency vehicle.

B. Funeral Escorts

1. Requests to escort a funeral procession shall be made directly to the Rabun County Central Communications Center and shall be handled as a normal "request for service" by using on-duty patrol personnel unless a higher priority call preempts the escort.
2. The Rabun County Communications Center will contact the district unit in which the funeral escort is to originate to arrange for an officer to lead the procession.
3. Normally escorts will only be provided from and to locations within Rabun County. If the route of the funeral procession is outside Rabun County, it is the responsibility of the requesting official to make necessary coordination with the appropriate neighboring agency to assume escort responsibility.
4. The designated escort vehicle will be placed at the head of the funeral procession and the emergency lights and headlights activated. At regulated intersections extreme caution will be used before proceeding. The siren may only be used when necessary to insure all pedestrians and motorists are clear of the intersection before allowing the procession to proceed. (O.C.G.A. 40-6-76)
5. In the event of a high profile escort such as for an active or retired officer or other individual, more units may be used to either control the intersections or to otherwise assist in leading the procession.

C. Dignitaries

1. Only individuals who qualify for executive protection shall be provided with a vehicle escort.
2. Such escorts shall be under the direction of the Chief Deputy or Division Commander and shall be provided as required in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Executive Protection General Order.

D. Hazardous Or Unusual Cargo Escorts

1. Except for those situations required by Federal or State law, escorts of potentially dangerous vehicles or cargos shall be provided on a case-by-case basis.
2. Such escort requests shall be submitted in writing and will be considered in terms of the facts and circumstances of the situation, to include the size and weight of the cargo, potential threat to public safety, the route of travel, the time/date of the move, and the availability or appropriateness of private escort service personnel.

E. Oversize And Building Mover Escorts

1. Front and rear escort vehicles are required when a house or oversize load is moved on a public roadway. The lead escort vehicle shall be a marked patrol vehicle, equipped with emergency warning devices. (D.O.T. Regulation 672-2-.06)
2. Unless an emergency situation arises, house-moving escorts will be provided by on-duty personnel.
3. Requests by house-moving companies for a patrol vehicle escort shall be made with the Uniform Patrol Division.
4. Such requests shall be made at least 72 hours prior to the time and date of the escort.
5. House moving applicants must comply with the following:
 - a. Obtain a valid permit for excess weight and dimensions from the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT), Attn: Office of Permits and Enforcement, 276 Memorial Drive, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303 (404) 656-5435; (O.C.G.A. 32-2-28)
 - b. Comply with all required procedures for escort vehicle(s) and marking of oversize loads as stipulated by GA DOT Reg. 672-2-.06 & .07.
 - c. Not during periods of inclement weather.
6. Before a house-move begins, deputies who perform escort duties shall:
 - a. Verify that the DOT permit is valid and in order;
 - b. Insure that other required escort and support vehicles are provided;
 - c. Insure all other vehicles and the oversized load involved in the move are properly equipped and marked as required by current DOT regulations;
 - d. Notify the Rabun County Central Communications Center of the route to be taken, the anticipated time-period, and of any unusual circumstances that occur during the escort;
 - e. Make necessary coordination with other jurisdictions, when appropriate; and
 - f. Cancel any escort if all statutory requirements are not met by the mover or in the event of any potentially unsafe or hazardous condition that may jeopardize public safety.

- g. If any property is damaged during the escort, an Incident Report will be initiated by an on duty officer so the escort officer can ensure the roadway is not blocked for an extended period.
- F. Deputies will not attempt to escort private vehicles on an emergency medical run. If an ambulance is not immediately available, an officer may transport the injured/sick individual in the patrol vehicle to the nearest medical facility.
- G. During emergency situations, it may become necessary to transport blood and/or organs upon the request of medical personnel. Such requests shall be handled as a Code 1 or Code 2 response.

XI. EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- A. Deputies shall render first aid assistance in accordance with their training and the universal precautions equipment available to them, to anyone who is involved in an emergency situation, such as a vehicle accident, fire or medical problem.
- B. The Rabun County Central Communications Center shall be immediately advised of the nature of the situation, its location, and the type assistance that is required to resolve the matter. Deputies will advise dispatch of the condition of the injured person to enable EMS to decide what code response to respond. At no time will deputies "back-down" EMS's code response. If dispatcher asks the officer to provide EMS's code response, the officer will reiterate the patient's condition. At no time will the officer set the respond code for the EMS.

XII. ROAD HAZARDS

A. Hazardous roadway and/or environmental conditions are defined as:

1. Defects in the roadway itself, such as holes, ruts, or dangerous shoulders;
2. Damaged, destroyed, or visually obstructed traffic control or information signs;
3. Malfunctioning or damaged traffic control devices;
4. Inoperative lighting systems;
5. Natural or man-caused obstructions, such as fallen trees, rocks, litter, debris, parts of vehicles, broken water mains, and fallen utility poles or electrical/telephone wires, or stray animals wandering in the roadway;
6. Ice or snow accumulations on road surfaces;
7. Visual obstructions such as fog or smoke from large fires; or
8. Dead animals.

B. Correcting Hazards

1. When a potential hazard to motorist/pedestrians is encountered which requires immediate correction, the Rabun County Central Communications Center Officer shall be informed and provided with the type of assistance needed to correct the matter.
2. Deputies shall remain on the scene and activate emergency warning lights to warn others of the potential danger until appropriate corrective measures have been taken or until the arrival of other emergency vehicles equipped to provide necessary warnings to motorists.
3. When traffic control devices are malfunctioning or inoperable, deputies may have to provide traffic control and direction in order to facilitate the movement of traffic, especially during periods of high traffic volume, reduced visibility, or inclement weather.

XIII. RADIOACTIVE / HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- A. The transportation of hazardous materials on public roads presents a potentially catastrophic hazard to the public health, safety, and welfare. (O.C.G.A. 46-11-2)
- B. Hazardous materials are normally highly flammable, corrosive, explosive, toxic, or radioactive and require special handling, labeling, storing, processing, and packaging and include radioactive materials, liquefied natural gas, and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB). (O.C.G.A. 46-11-3)
- C. In the event of any property damage caused by the discharge of hazardous materials, costs incurred in the reparation of the damage and those associated with the prevention, abatement, or removal may be

recovered from the shipper or carrier when processed through the county's Emergency Management Director. (O.C.G.A. 46-11-4)

- D. Upon encountering a suspected hazardous material situation, the officer's primary responsibility is to:
1. Notify the Rabun County Central Communications Center, provide all available information about the incident, to include the identity of the hazardous material if available, and request the immediate dispatch of fire personnel to the scene;
 2. Secure the immediate scene or building to limit entry to only Fire, HAZMAT, and Emergency Management personnel;
 3. Initiate evacuation of non-essential personnel or civilians from the area;
 4. After the immediate scene is secured, deputies shall:
 - a. Establish an exclusion area of 1500 feet or more around the incident scene;
 - b. Remove the injured from the area with as little contact as possible;
 - c. Remain upwind of the incident scene, especially when smoke, escaping gases, fumes, or dust are present; and
 - d. Identify and interview any witnesses to assist in determining the specific nature of the hazardous material and circumstances surrounding the accident.
- E. Under no circumstances is the department equipped to perform rescue or to provide emergency first aid when hazardous materials are involved.



By Order of the Sheriff: **Chad K. Nichols**
Sheriff, Rabun County