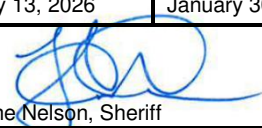




DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Policy Title: Motor Vehicle Stops	Effective Date: June 28, 2016	Policy Number: 5.12
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 L. Shane Nelson, Sheriff		

I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to establish guidelines for stopping and approaching motorists in a manner that promotes the safety of the deputy and the motorist.

II. POLICY

Although stopping motorists on the highway for traffic violations or other purposes is often considered a routine function of patrol deputies, it is one that has been demonstrated to be potentially dangerous for both deputies and motorists even during apparently routine situations.

Therefore, it is the policy of this agency that motor vehicle stops shall be performed professionally and courteously, and with a view towards educating the public about proper driving procedures while consistently recognizing and taking the necessary steps to minimize the dangers involved in this activity for the deputy, the motorist, and other users of the roadway.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Stopping and Approaching Traffic Violators

The following procedures are to be followed whenever possible. It is recognized that varying conditions, such as roadway construction, volume of traffic, and the urgency of making vehicle stops, may require deputies to adjust these procedures to particular conditions.

1. Deputies shall perform vehicle stops only when they have an articulable reason to do so.
2. Once an initial decision has been made to stop a motorist, the deputy shall select an area that provides reasonable safety. Whenever possible, the deputy shall also avoid the use of private drives, business locations, and areas where a large volume of spectators are likely to gather. Deputies should attempt to choose a spot where both vehicles can stop off the roadway.
3. When a location has been selected for the stop, the deputy shall notify 9-1-1 Dispatch of the nature, the unit location, license plate number, or description of vehicle. At the deputy's discretion or dispatcher's request, additional information may be exchanged.
4. While exiting the patrol vehicle, the deputy should be particularly alert to suspicious movements or actions of the vehicle operator or passengers.
5. When approaching the vehicle, the deputy should take into consideration traffic flow and number of occupants.

6. Attempt to keep vehicle occupants inside their vehicle. If it is necessary for them to exit their vehicle, they are to be kept out of the roadway. Both the deputy and vehicle occupants should avoid standing or crossing between the vehicles.
7. If the deputy feels that the circumstances of any vehicle stop are suspicious, they are to request an additional unit.
8. For safety reasons, deputies should limit the time spent in the patrol car during vehicle stops.
9. Non-uniformed deputies operating unmarked patrol vehicles with concealed emergency lights and siren shall not normally make vehicle stops for traffic violations. In situations where failure to act would create unreasonable risks of injury, death, or significant property damage, such personnel shall contact 9-1-1 Dispatch to request a marked patrol unit to make the stop and may, depending upon the urgency of the situation, activate emergency lights and siren to make a vehicle stop.
10. Non-uniformed deputies operating vehicles not equipped with emergency lights or siren shall not make vehicle stops unless there is imminent danger of loss of life should they fail to act. In other less urgent cases that demand attention, deputies shall contact 9-1-1 Dispatch, request that a marked patrol vehicle perform the stop, and assist in directing the marked unit to the subject vehicle's location.

B. Issuing Citations

1. When issuing citations, conducting roadside sobriety tests, or conversing with the violator, the deputy and other parties shall be positioned to the side of the road, clear of the motor vehicles. The deputy or others should avoid standing in front of, between, or behind the stopped vehicles.
2. During the stop, unsecured violators should not be permitted to sit in patrol vehicles while citations are being prepared or other law enforcement business is being conducted.

C. Making High-Risk Vehicle Stops

The following procedures may be employed when a deputy initiating a vehicle stop has reason to believe that the occupants may be armed and dangerous:

1. When planning to stop the suspect vehicle, the deputy shall notify 9-1-1 Dispatch, describe the nature or reason for the stop, provide information on the vehicle, license number and number of occupants, and request appropriate assistance to make the stop.
2. A deputy should not individually initiate high-risk vehicle stops unless back-up units will not be available in an appropriate amount of time or the urgency of the situation demands immediate action.
3. After selecting an appropriate location and with adequate back-up units in position, the deputy should signal the suspect to stop and proceed using standard high risk car stop tactics.

D. Stopping Oversize and Overweight Vehicles

Maintain a position to the rear of the driver's door and ask the driver to exit the vehicle, if necessary. Never climb onto the vehicle to make contact with the operator.