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TALBOT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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January 21, 2016

GENERAL ORDER NO. 16-001

TO: All Talbot County Sheriff's Office Personnel

SUBJECT: Off-Duty Use of Sheriff's Office Vehicles

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for operating Sheriff's Office vehicles in an off-duty capacity.

II. POLICY

The following policy will be observed while operating Sheriff's Office Vehicles while off-duty:

- a. Vehicles will be allocated according to availability on an equitable basis by the Sheriff. Off-duty vehicle usage will not conflict with the number of vehicles necessary to maintain patrol responsibilities.
- b. Off-duty travel will be permitted for members of the employee's immediate family and office personnel. In addition, other passengers may be permitted subject to the approval of the Sheriff.
- c. Employees who operate Sheriff's Office vehicles are prohibited from making emergency runs while vehicle is occupied by non-official passengers. Passengers must first be deposited at a convenient location before emergency runs are initiated. This procedure shall not apply when other police officers or injured or ill persons are riding as passengers in a Sheriff's Office vehicle while the operator is making an emergency run in the interest of protecting life and property.
- d. Personnel operating a Sheriff's Office vehicle off-duty will monitor the primary operating frequencies of the county area. This procedure will enable such units to be aware of, and report to, those incidents which occur in the county that may require an emergency response. An off-duty unit shall maintain radio contact to report "10-8 OD" or "10-7 OD". It is not necessary to report out of service each instance when operating off-duty, unless the vehicle is to be unattended for an extended period of time (30 minutes or longer).

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- e. In serious cases, if immediate action is necessary, the off-duty deputy will take necessary action and notify communications. Follow-through may entail being placed in an "on-duty" status for obvious reasons. In routine cases encountered while off-duty, the deputy may call for the regular police vehicle to handle the situation; he will stand by and assist until that unit arrives.
- f. When the police employee is off-duty and is the operator or passenger in the Sheriff's Office vehicle, he/she shall carry an office-issued or office-approved firearm, body armor, and will have the office-issued identification card.
- g. Deputies, while off-duty and operating a Sheriff's Office vehicle, should be appropriately attired to effectively perform a police function while at the same time presenting a favorable image. The only exception to this would be when a deputy is undertaking a special assignment or covert investigation. Deputies will also be responsible for the proper appearance and conduct of all passengers. A minimum standard of acceptable dress would consist of a neat, clean, sport shirt and slacks.
- h. At no time will deputies operate a police vehicle off-duty while consuming alcoholic beverages, or permit anyone in the vehicle to consume alcoholic beverages. The only exception to this would be a covert operation or special assignment, which must be approved in advance by the Sheriff or Chief Deputy in writing.
- i. The use of off-duty vehicles by members of this office is limited to use in Talbot County or by members of the office who live out of county and are enroute to Talbot County to conduct business. Command staff are exempt due to the nature of their appointed positions and being on-call 24/7.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

This General Order is effective January 21, 2016; and supersedes or cancels General Order #20, dated November 21, 1995, and any previous order or memoranda in conflict therewith.

**Joseph J. Gamble
Sheriff of Talbot County**

JJG:RSM:tj