

# 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. This is essential because police vehicles are an indispensable piece of equipment necessary for an officer to perform his/her 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 and or equipment is missing, a member is responsible to report it and take steps to rectify the problem.

## III. PROCEDURE

### A. The police vehicle:

1. Each district will be assigned a vehicle. If the vehicle normally assigned to the district is unavailable, a supervisor will arrange for a temporary replacement.
2. Each vehicle will be assigned a space, when applicable. Members must park in the assigned space to ensure easy location of the vehicle.
3. Safety restraints in those vehicles equipped with such shall be in good working order.
4. At the beginning of each watch, a member must fully inspect his/her vehicle, unless responding to an emergency call or because of some other exigent circumstance. If the inspection has to be postponed, it will still be conducted as soon as practicable. Vehicles must be inspected before a member goes off duty or it is placed on another assignment. Police vehicles will be inspected for the following:
  - a. **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;**

- b. The exterior of the vehicle will be inspected for any damage and for cleanliness;
- c. The tires will be inspected for proper tread and inflation;
- d. Make sure that all vehicle lights, including emergency lights and equipment, are functional;
- e. The fuel tank is to be at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  full before end-of-watch; each member shall fill the tank if it is not  $\frac{3}{4}$  full, unless extenuating circumstances exist and supervisor notification is made;
- f. The interior of the vehicle should be free of trash, debris and other items that do not belong in the vehicle; and
- g. 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. Vehicle equipment:**

1. Check the shotgun- Check to see that nothing is obstructing the barrel, that no rounds are chambered, and that the safety is on. Ensure that the allotted number and types of shotgun rounds are available.
2. The department approved long rifle- Ensure it is in its case/rack with no magazine in the weapon and no rounds chambered. Ensure the allotted number and types of rifle ammunition are available.
3. Other assigned equipment - Ensure that the following miscellaneous equipment is in the assigned vehicle. If not report the lack to a supervisor.

**MISC. EQUIPMENT LIST:**

- a. **One (1) basic fingerprint kit;**
- b. **One (1) Rescue Knife seatbelt cutter;**
- c. **Six (6) flares; and**
- d. **One (1) ballistic plate and carrier.**

**C. Reporting Procedures:**

1. If a member discovers damage to a vehicle during the inspection, he/she will immediately report the fact to a supervisor. The officer must also complete the appropriate **Vehicle Maintenance/Repair** report and attach a brief information report, explaining the circumstances surrounding the discovery, the time, and the date. The supervisor the member reports the damage to should add the date and time the vehicle was last used, and the name of the member who last used it. If the damage makes the vehicle unsafe to operate, this should be documented and the vehicle placed out of service.
2. If a member discovers a weapon or equipment is missing or damaged, he/she must immediately notify a supervisor and complete an information report, detailing the pertinent facts of the matter known to him/her. The supervisor who was notified will complete a separate report, and conduct an investigation to determine either the location of the missing weapon or how the damage was incurred. If ammunition is missing, the same procedure should be followed.
3. Whenever a member uses any of the equipment in the equipment container, he/she 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 container to be missing, he/she should report the fact to a supervisor and obtain a replacement.

4. Members who discover large amounts of trash or unauthorized articles in his/her vehicle, ("wired-in" electronic equipment such as CB radios, etc.), should report the fact to a supervisor, and the appropriate records made.

**D. Supervisors:**

1. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that patrol vehicles comply with this order. They are encouraged to closely monitor vehicle condition through good supervisory practices and random vehicle inspections. Copies of all reports generated as the result of vehicle inspections are to be placed in the **Vehicle Damage Log** maintained in the Roll Call Room.

**E. 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 his/her 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 his/her duties, or otherwise.

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Chris Connally, Chief of Police

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Date