

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURE**

**DATE:** APRIL 4, 2017

**NUMBER:** 1.16 – ADMINISTRATION

**SUBJECT:** OFF-DUTY USE OF DEPARTMENT TAKE-HOME VEHICLES

**RELATED POLICY:** [1.16](#)

**ORIGINATING DIVISION:** OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

**NEW PROCEDURE:**

**PROCEDURAL CHANGE:**

**SUPERSEDES:** DP 1.16 – 5/21/2014

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**I. PURPOSE**

This Department procedure provides direction regarding the off-duty use of Department take-home vehicles. Procedures regarding on-duty use are outlined in Department Procedure 1.12, Operations of Police Department Vehicles, and Department Procedure 1.13, Emergency Vehicle Operations.

**II. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

**III. BACKGROUND**

The use of take-home vehicles is an essential component of the Department's call-back program. The Department authorizes call-back programs to ensure police resources are available in the event of an emergency or critical investigation. To facilitate faster response to call-backs, Department personnel may be allowed to take Department vehicles home. These vehicles provide the means to respond directly to an incident without first diverting to a police station to retrieve a vehicle and/or needed equipment.

#### **IV. DEFINITION**

Take-Home Vehicle - Department vehicle authorized for commuting between work and home and/or off-duty use by a Department member. Department vehicles secured at a location other than a member's assigned work location for the purpose of shortening a Department member's commute are also considered take-home vehicles.

#### **V. CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNED VEHICLES**

- A. The Department authorizes four types of take-home vehicle use. They are categorized as:
1. Administrative Call-back - a Department member's assignment requires inspection responsibilities, callback, and/or attendance at police-related activities outside normal work hours;
  2. Emergency Call-back - a Department member's assignment requires immediate response during off-duty hours to handle an emergency police action;
  3. Investigative Call-back - a Department member's assignment requires timely response during off-duty hours to handle a police investigation; and,
  4. Maintenance Use - a Department member's assignment does not require off-duty response, but does necessitate transporting and/or housing a Department resource.
- B. Use of Department take-home vehicles that fall within one of the preceding categories must:
1. Meet a specific Department need that is outlined within a written take-home vehicle and/or call-back program;
  2. Be recommended, in writing, by the requesting unit's commanding officer and receive approval from the Chief of Police; and,
  3. Receive annual renewal, from date of approval.

#### **VI. PROCEDURES**

- A. The intent of the Department's take-home vehicle procedure is to provide guidelines on the use of take-home vehicles. Commanding officers of units utilizing take-home vehicles shall establish a written take-home vehicle policy

that clearly outlines the vehicle's purpose and acceptable off-duty uses and use restrictions. In addition to this Department Procedure, specific unit guidelines will determine the manner of vehicle use, vehicle security requirements, and may restrict transportation of non-law enforcement personnel. Department members must comply with the unit take-home vehicle policy and/or procedures.

- B. Department members who are authorized a take-home vehicle shall generally respond to and be on-scene within one (1) hour of receiving a call-back notification.
- C. Department members authorized to take home vehicles must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - 1. Department members may use the vehicle to:
    - a. Commute between their residence and workplace;
    - b. Conduct legitimate Department-related business that occurs outside normal working hours, including, but not limited to, attendance at special meetings and call-backs to duty; and,
    - c. Conduct personal business while on call and off duty. However, Department members must be prepared to respond directly to an incident when requested.
  - 2. Department members may not use take-home vehicles for travel outside San Diego County unless specifically authorized within their unit's take-home vehicle policy and/or procedures. Unforeseen circumstances requiring travel outside of the County require written approval from the command. Automotive Maintenance Division shall also be notified prior to departure.
  - 3. Sworn Department members authorized to use take-home vehicles are to monitor the police radio whenever they are operating the vehicle. They are to take appropriate action on:
    - a. Any police-related matter that may come to their attention via the police radio; and,
    - b. Any police-related matter that may come to their attention through personal observation.
  - 4. Department members should refrain from operating a Department vehicle after having consumed alcoholic beverages. Department members are prohibited from driving Department vehicles any time their driving ability

has been impaired through the ingestion of prescription or non-prescription drugs or alcoholic beverages.

5. Department members shall not relinquish control of, nor allow any person to operate Department vehicles, if that person is not an employee of the City of San Diego. This directive specifically prohibits releasing Department vehicles to valets, garage attendants, and/or carwash employees.
- D. All traffic collisions involving Police Department employees while operating City vehicles will be investigated by Traffic Division personnel. This includes collisions that occur within other cities or jurisdictions within or outside the county. In such cases, these reports will be used for administrative review purposes only. The investigative report prepared by the agency having jurisdiction will suffice as the “official” report for DMV purposes.
  - E. If the member is suspected of having driven while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, chemical testing shall be conducted incidental to an arrest. If the involved member is suspected of having consumed alcohol, the member shall submit to a Preliminary Alcohol Screening (PAS) Test and any other blood and/or breath testing procedures deemed necessary. Whenever possible, a Department member, who is at least one rank above the involved member, should be present during the testing procedures.
  - F. Department take-home vehicles are to be left at a police facility during vacations or other periods of leave in excess of seven calendar days.
  - G. The Fleet Administrator is responsible for maintaining Department vehicle records, including those of assigned take-home vehicles. These records can be accessed utilizing the “Fleet Anywhere” management information system currently available to each division/unit Point of Contact (POC) on the LAN system. A Monthly Vehicle Inspection Report will be prepared by the Fleet Administrator on the first working day of each month, reviewed for format and exceptions, provided to division/unit POCs for review/corrections/completions, and submitted, to the Assistant Chief of Special Operations and Operational Support Division Commanding Officer, no later than the fifteenth day of each month. The Operational Support Division and Safety Light Fleet Manager will retain each report for a period of two years.
  - H. Units utilizing take-home vehicles for call-back purposes will periodically examine their call-back program to ensure the use of take-home vehicles is appropriate and necessary. Commanding officers shall be responsible for ensuring proper administration of their vehicle inspection program.

- I. Changes to a unit's take-home vehicle policy may only be made by the submission of a request to the unit's commanding officer and subsequent approval by the Chief of Police.
- J. All requests for vehicle re-assignments and/or vehicle "swaps" shall be directed in writing through the appropriate chain of command to the commanding officer. Requests will then be forwarded to the Fleet Administrator for evaluation, coordination, approval, and re-assignment.