

	Policy & Procedures				No. 4.13	
	Subject: Passengers in Patrol Vehicles					
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CALEA STANDARDS: 41.3.3

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Marked police cruisers are available to the police department personnel to bring quick and efficient service to the public. Under normal circumstances only sworn police officers will occupy a police cruiser; however there are a variety of reasons when citizens and/or non-sworn department employees may become passengers. Officers may be required to transport non-injured victims of motor vehicle accidents, stranded citizens, and many other circumstances where citizens are required to be transported for a legitimate police purpose. There are also situations when non-employees such as members of the media, government officials, or students wish to ride with an officer in order to report or better understand the police service or a particular problem facing the community. Officers should be aware that the operation of a police vehicle and the subsequent response to police calls must change when a civilian is in a cruiser.

PROCEDURES

- I. Victims of crimes and/or non-injured persons involved in traffic accidents should be dealt with as much compassion and understanding as possible. When the situation dictates, officers should either drive citizens to a suitable place or arrange for transportation of any person stranded as a result of a crime or accident.

- II. This service can be accomplished by:
 - A. Driving the citizen to the police station,
 - B. Driving the citizen to a workable telephone,
 - C. Driving the citizen home (if within a reasonable distance) or to a neighboring community for a shuttle home.
 - D. Offering to let the citizen remain in the cruiser while a friend or family member comes to the location and arranges transportation.

NOTE: Officers must take into consideration the age and physical ability of the civilian and whether current staffing allows a lengthy transport. The ultimate decision may come from the Shift Supervisor.

- III. When transporting a citizen, all traffic laws should be observed.
- IV. The officer will notify dispatch of the transport and in effect will be put “out of service” as officers will not respond to any call that may put the citizen in any danger.
- V. Citizens of the opposite sex as the officer will require a CAD entry and documentation of the beginning and ending mileage on the vehicle odometer as well as the citizen’s name and the location starting from and ending.
- VI. Members of the media, government officials and other concerned citizens often ask to accompany officers to observe and report on situations that are of interest to the community. These citizens may ride along with an officer provided the following guidelines are followed:
 - A. No member of the media or any other citizen shall enter a police cruiser or accompany an officer on any patrol for the purposes of observing police action without the expressed permission of the Chief of Police. A request, in writing should be forwarded to the Chief outlining the objectives and the time frame for the ride along.
 - B. The citizen will be made aware of the inherent danger of riding in a marked police car and will read and sign a waiver of liability which will be witnessed by the Shift Supervisor or a Ranking Officer.
 - C. The Shift Supervisor or Officer in Charge of the shift will be made aware of the request and the objectives and will make arrangement to comply with it. A supervisor or an officer hired specifically for the ride along will accompany the civilian. A sector car will not be assigned to this detail. The expense of hiring an extra officer may be passed on to the person or organization requesting this service.
 - D. The dispatch will be notified of the ride along and the officer, although logged on duty, will not be dispatched to any calls. The officer will not respond or go near any situation that may endanger the civilian.
 - E. The officer who has a citizen with him/her will comply with Massachusetts General Laws regarding the operation of a motor vehicle.
 - F. It is the policy of the Canton Police Department that all civilians riding in a patrol vehicle will be seat belted. Any refusal to comply with this policy will result in the termination of the ride along. **41.3.3 (5)**

- G. If a situation develops where the officer is needed at a scene that may endanger the citizen, he/she may be told to exit the patrol vehicle. If possible, the transfer will be done at the police station, however, it should be noted that in emergency situations, the citizen might have to leave the patrol car in other locations.
- H. If a member of the media or any other citizen, while accompanying an officer on any patrol, violates the civil rights of any citizen, the patrol will be terminated. The citizen and/or organization will incur all liabilities regarding any violation. The citizen will be advised of this prior to commencing any activities and may be warned by the officer.