


NORTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT		
Administration & Operations Manual		
Policy: Police Vehicle Escort & Relay Services		AOM:O-321
Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Referenced: [61.3.3.a], [61.3.3.b]		Issuing Authority <hr/> John D. Cartledge Chief of Police
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I. Introductory Discussion

This directive establishes departmental policy relative to emergency and non-emergency escort and relay services.

II. Special Escort Services [61.3.3, a]

- A. Legitimate requests for police escort services must have prior review and approval by the Officer-in-Charge or Division Commander before they will be honored.

As a general practice, requests for escort service will only be honored to the extent that staffing and priority assignments allow.

- B. In cases where a special escort is conducted by the department, the following procedures apply:
1. The trip route will be established in advance. Additional traffic control shall be established along the route as deemed necessary by the authorizing supervisor.
 2. The escorting officer will set the pace of the escort in accordance with posted speed limits, unless otherwise specified by the Officer-in-Charge. Also, the escorting officer shall terminate the escort when, in their opinion, conditions are such that continuation would constitute unacceptable risk to the public.
 3. Appropriate supervisory or command personnel will specify the use of police vehicle emergency equipment during the escort in advance.

III. Emergency Escorts and Relays [61.3.3,b]

A. Emergency Escorts

1. Emergency vehicles (ambulances, etc.) shall not be escorted except under extreme circumstances and when authorized by the Officer-in-Charge.
2. Police escorts of civilian vehicles in medical or other emergencies are generally prohibited, except in the following circumstances:
 - a. If, in the opinion of the officer, delay or transfer via a police vehicle would jeopardize the patient's life, the officer may, with specific authorization from a supervisor, escort the civilian vehicle to the nearest emergency medical facility; or
 - b. When otherwise authorized by the Officer-in-Charge or Patrol Supervisor.

B. Emergency Police Relays (Transports)

1. Transportation of persons in need of emergency medical care is generally prohibited, unless it is the only or best option available to the officer and it has been specifically authorized by the Officer-in-Charge or Patrol Supervisor. Refer to ***AOM O105 Handling Injuries/Illnesses***.
In these cases, the hospital shall be notified of the emergency police relay and provided as much medical information as is available.
2. Those situations, in which the Police Department has been requested to conduct an emergency relay of blood, organs or other time critical supplies, must have prior review and approval by the Officer-in-Charge before being honored.
3. See ***AOM O320 Police Assistance to Motorists and Roadway Safety*** for procedures for non-emergency transports.

C. Procedures: When authorized to conduct an emergency escort or relay, the escorting/transporting officer shall do so in accordance with the following procedures:

1. All emergency equipment shall be utilized, and the officer should not operate their vehicle at a speed that would be considered greater than reasonable under the conditions. Weather and road surface conditions may limit timely response.
2. The officer shall not proceed through traffic control devices without first stopping and ensuring that it is safe to proceed.
3. Officer shall terminate emergency escort or relay services when continuation would constitute an unacceptable risk to the public or to the officer.