



City of
**MOUNT
VERNON**

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TITLE:	Pursuit Policy Change			
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***POLICE DEPARTMENT
INTERNAL COMMUNICATION***

June 9, 2023

INTRODUCTION

During the 2023 Washington State Legislative session, police vehicle pursuit authority was expanded. The new law took effect May 3, 2023 with revisions having been made to Chapter 9 Emergency Driving/Vehicular Pursuit.

PURPOSE

To provide Department personnel with additional guidance regarding questions about the Chapter 9 policy revisions. This bulletin is intended to complement the revised policy, not replace it.

WHAT CHANGED IN THE STATE LAW AFFECTING EMERGENCY DRIVING/VEHICULAR PURSUIT POLICY?

Here are the highlights:

1. *Reasonable suspicion* of having committed statutorily approved crimes replaces probable cause.
2. *Vehicular Assault* and *Domestic Violence Assault* were added to Violent Offenses, Sex Offense, Escape and Driving Under the Influence as the only approved crimes to justify a vehicular pursuit.
3. *Serious risk of harm* replaced imminent threat as the level of risk the person poses to the safety of others.
4. *Notifying a supervisor immediately* upon initiating a vehicular pursuit replaces requiring review and approval prior to initiating the pursuit.
5. The pursuing officer and supervisor are required to continually review the pursuit risks and consider alternatives to it.
6. The ability for pursuing officers to directly communicate with each other, supervisors, and dispatch and on a common channel remains a requirement.
7. The pursuing officer and/or supervisor must develop plans to end the pursuit through use of available, department approved intervention options as soon as practicable after initiating a pursuit.

8. Ramming (9.02.01) – This term was modified to reflect current deadly force policy language: *The pursuing officer notifies a supervisor or command level officer immediately upon initiating the vehicular pursuit and there is supervisory oversight of the pursuit.*
9. Officers must complete training at least every two years that includes a department approved Emergency Vehicle Operator Course, vehicle pursuit intervention techniques and risk assessment factors.

WHAT DOES “MUST BE CERTIFIED IN AT LEAST ONE PURSUIT INTERVENTION OPTION” MEAN FOR US?

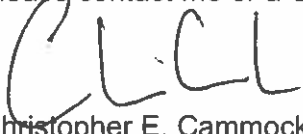
The State Legislature did not define or expand on what “certified” meant when they passed the legislation. Typically, certification provisions would be directed to the Washington Criminal Justice Training Commission or other appropriate organization. According to CJTC Deputy Director Jerrell Wills, they have not been tasked with developing a certification process and aren't planning to. In these circumstances, the agency determines “certified” by creating policy for approved tactics.

With that understanding, terminating a pursuit is always an intervention option. We are researching additional options and when they are identified we will follow any state recognized certification process. If there are none, we will incorporate recognized industry standards and manufacture recommendations into our policy that serves as recognized authority to use the tool or method.

WHAT IS THE NEW TRAINING REQUIREMENT?

1. Commissioned personnel must complete EVOC training at least every two years if they are going to be a primary officer engaged in a vehicle pursuit. Those who do not complete the training may provide support such as Following or Channeling that is outlined in policy.
2. For EVOC Instructors there are new requirements for curriculum content that must be incorporated.

Please contact me or a Command Officer if you have questions or need policy clarification.



Christopher E. Cammock
Police Chief