

**Lower Providence Township Police Department  
Eagleville, Pennsylvania**

General Order ☒  
Special Order ☐  
Personnel Order ☐

**ORDER NUMBER**

**505**

**Subject**

**Use of Emergency and Vehicular Warning Devices**

**Date of Issue**

**February 3, 2020**

**Effective Date**

**February 3, 2020**

**Expiration Date**

**Until Amended or  
Rescinded**

**Issued by:**

**Michael Jackson, Chief of Police**

**Amends**

**Rescinds**

**All Previous Orders**

**Standard Number:**

**2.1.1 / 4.1.2**

**Distribution**

- 1. General Order Manuals**
- 2. Records Manual**
- 3. Reading Verification to all Personnel**

## **I PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to provide for the safe operation of Department vehicles as emergency vehicles and to establish guidelines for the use of emergency vehicular warning devices.

## **II POLICY**

To carry out the mission of protecting life it may become necessary for an officer to operate a police vehicle as an emergency vehicle. It is the policy of this department to respond safely to emergency situations. All members of the Lower Providence Township Police Department will adhere to statutory restrictions on the use of emergency warning devices and that such devices are employed only in prescribed conditions and circumstances and in ways that will minimize the risk of accidents or injuries to employees or the public.

## **III DEFINITIONS**

- A. Emergency Vehicle: An authorized law enforcement vehicle equipped with emergency lights (red/blue/white), siren, and other emergency warning devices required by law and used for emergency response situations.
- B. Emergency Warning Devices: Devices placed in/on each departmental emergency vehicle that emit audible and/or visual signals in order to warn others that law enforcement services are in the process of being delivered.

## **IV REGULATION**

- A. Use of Emergency Warning Devices While in Emergency Response Mode. Officers shall conform to the provisions of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75), Section 3105 'Drivers of Emergency Vehicle', as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Rules and Regulations. The following may be considered some examples of emergency situations necessitating the operation of a police vehicle as an emergency vehicle.
- a. Officer needs assistance.
  - b. Report of a forcible felony in progress.
  - c. A person calling for help in such a manner as to indicate immediate danger.
  - d. Report of an explosion.
  - e. Report of a shooting or stabbing.
  - f. Report of an auto accident with injury or other extenuating circumstances.
  - g. Pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law.
  - h. Responding to an alarm.
  - i. A 9-1-1 hang up call.
  - j. An industrial accident.
  - k. Responding to a crime in progress in which there is a threat of physical danger to the parties involved
1. During an emergency response, emergency lights and siren and other emergency signal devices shall be activated as required by law.
  2. During an emergency response, four-way flashers shall **not** be used when the emergency vehicle is in motion because they may interfere with the brake lights and turn signals.
  3. The spotlight is primarily utilized to facilitate building and stationary vehicle checks and shall at no time be directed at the windshield or vision of oncoming traffic.
  4. When responding in an emergency response mode, emergency signal devices may be deactivated at a distance from the scene (to be determined by the vehicle operator) so as to not alert subjects to law enforcement proximity.
  5. When emergency signal devices are deactivated, the operator of the emergency vehicle shall comply with posted speed limits, obey all traffic control devices and signals, and proceed in a manner consistent with normal traffic flow.
  6. In instances where an officer wishes to initiate the emergency vehicular response mode in response to a sudden occurrence unbeknown to communications personnel or the supervisor, the officer shall inform communications personnel as soon as possible.
- B. Use of Emergency Warning Devices While Conducting Vehicle Stops
1. Audible and/or visible warning devices shall be used to give adequate notice of the intent to stop a motor vehicle and to provide a safe environment to the vehicle operator, officer, and public.
- C. Discretionary use of Emergency Warning Devices
1. Officers may activate emergency signal devices when required to assist in handling any perceived emergency situation. The officer shall advise communications personnel of the nature of the emergency
  2. In other than emergency situations, when expediency is required to effectively eliminate a potential hazard to the public or fellow officers, officers may activate emergency warning devices to allow orderly and safe transit through heavily congested roadways. Examples of permissible uses of emergency warning devices during non-emergency response situations include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Using emergency lights as "beacons" to protect disabled motorists; or
    - b. Using emergency lights when it is necessary to use department vehicles as protective barriers.
- D. Initiation of Vehicle Stops by Unmarked Police Vehicles
1. Except when absolutely necessary, officers in plainclothes driving unmarked police vehicles shall not make vehicle stops.
    - a. Any officer driving an unmarked police vehicle and initiating a vehicle stop must call for a marked police vehicle to back him/her up.

*Michael Jackson*

Michael Jackson  
Chief of Police

