

Disabled Vehicles

519.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Vehicle Code § 20018 provides that all law enforcement agencies having responsibility for traffic enforcement may develop and adopt a written policy to provide assistance to motorists in disabled vehicles within their primary jurisdiction.

519.2 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

When an on-duty officer observes a disabled vehicle on the roadway, the officer should make a reasonable effort to provide assistance. If that officer is assigned to a call of higher priority, the dispatcher should be advised of the location of the disabled vehicle and the need for assistance. The dispatcher should then assign another available officer to respond for assistance as soon as practical.

519.3 EXTENT OF ASSISTANCE

In most cases, a disabled motorist will require assistance. After arrangements for assistance are made, continued involvement by department personnel will be contingent on the time of day, the location, the availability of departmental resources, and the vulnerability of the disabled motorist.

519.3.1 MECHANICAL REPAIRS

Department personnel shall not make mechanical repairs to a disabled vehicle. The use of push bumpers to relocate vehicles to a position of safety is not considered a mechanical repair.

519.3.2 RELOCATION OF DISABLED VEHICLES

The relocation of disabled vehicles by members of this department by pushing or pulling a vehicle should only occur when the conditions reasonably indicate that immediate movement is necessary to reduce a hazard presented by the disabled vehicle.

519.3.3 RELOCATION OF DISABLED MOTORIST

The relocation of a disabled motorist should only occur with the person's consent and should be suggested when conditions reasonably indicate that immediate movement is necessary to mitigate a potential hazard. The department member may stay with the disabled motorist or transport him/her to a safe area to await pickup.

519.4 PUBLIC ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This written policy is available upon request.

519.4.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to set forth Newark Police Department policy and procedures regarding the use of police vehicles for pushing other vehicles.

Newark Police Department

Newark PD Policy Manual

Disabled Vehicles

519.4.2 PROCEDURE

- (a) Prior to vehicle-to-vehicle contact, the officer shall verify that the push bumper aligns with and will contact only the bumper of the vehicle to be pushed. The officer shall exit the patrol vehicle and inspect the alignment to ensure a solid connection is being made. The only exception to this rule occurs when another officer is present to make the observation.
- (b) Vehicles may be pushed from a hazardous position only to the nearest practical place of safety.
- (c) No vehicle shall be pushed without concurrence of the owner or other person legally in charge of the vehicle, unless that person is unable to consent or has left the scene.
- (d) No vehicle shall be pushed unless occupied by an operator capable of controlling the vehicle while in motion.
- (e) Emergency warning lights shall be activated whenever a police vehicle is being used for the purpose of pushing another vehicle.
- (f) Pushing should be done "straight-line" and on level surfaces whenever possible. If a cornering movement is required, the pushed vehicle should be allowed to coast through the turn, then pushing begun again in a straight ahead direction.
- (g) Police vehicles shall NOT be used to push other vehicles for the purpose of getting their engines to start.
- (h) NO attempt shall be made to push a vehicle already damaged by collision or other cause, if said damage would interfere with unobstructed movement, or if further damage could occur as result of pushing.
- (i) If the vehicle to be pushed is inoperable due to an accident or other incident documented by a police report, use of the police vehicle for removal shall be mentioned in said report.
- (j) When pushing vehicles with power steering or brakes, officers should be cautious and aware that these devices are inoperable without engine power.
- (k) Police vehicles without push bumpers, SHALL NOT be used for pushing other vehicles.

519.5 PUBLIC ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This written policy is available upon request.