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| Policy #**Escorts** | Related Policies: |
| *This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third-party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis for internal discipline and/or criminal charges.* |
| Applicable State Statutes: K.R.S. 189.378 |
| KACP Accreditation Standard: 24.2 |
| Date Implemented: | Revision Date: May 1, 2025 |

1. **Purpose**: To establish directives relative to utilizing agency vehicles and agency personnel for the purposes of escorting other motor vehicles**.**
2. **Policy:** It is the policy of this agency to provide service to the community in a safe and balanced manner. This service may include limited law enforcement escorts for providing safe passage to the escorted party while also providing for the safety of all other motorists and in compliance with applicable law.
3. **Definitions:**
	1. **Funeral procession:** Two or more vehicles accompanying the body of a deceased person when each vehicle has its headlights on or is displaying a pennant attached in such a manner as to be clearly visible to approaching traffic.
	2. **Oversized vehicle escorts:** A request of law enforcement to assist in the movement of an oversized vehicle or oversized item being transported through a confined area for the protection of other motorists.
	3. **Civic event escorts:** A request by a group to escort two or more vehicles that will be expressing spirit or gathering the public’s attention during a specified route of travel. This includes but is not limited to: parades, athletic celebrations, celebrity/dignitary escorts.
	4. **Motorcade:** A procession of cars or other vehicles, including funeral processions and civic event escorts.
4. **Procedure:**
	1. All escorts shall be approved by the chief of police or designee.
	2. Escorts may only be conducted with marked vehicles equipped with emergency lighting equipment and sirens.
	3. Officers shall use due regard to the safety of the public at all times during an escort.
	4. Officer Responsibility During Escorts:
		1. Officers have the authority to refuse to start any escort where the officer/deputy determines that the motorcade will pose a hazard to the officer, the participants in the motorcade, or the public.
		2. In such cases, the officer shall notify a supervisor of the decision and inform the sponsor that the motorcade cannot go forward until the supervisor reviews the circumstances of the motorcade.
		3. An officer may withdraw from an escort in cases where they are needed for an emergency call involving a threat to human life, or when authorized by a supervisor. In such cases:
			1. The officer should notify the person responsible for the motorcade of the need to withdraw.
			2. The officer should make it clear to the lead vehicle of his intent to withdraw and inform the operator not to attempt to follow.
			3. The officer should consider the safety of the motorcade participants as a factor in determining whether to withdraw, a safe location to withdraw, and should withdraw using due regard to the safety of others.
	5. **Civic events:** Kentucky Revised Statutes do not provide exemptions for escorts of a civic nature (parades, athletic celebrations, celebrity/dignitary escorts). The agency will only escort in these situations when the requesting party has provided advance notice and obtained a valid parade permit or other exemption as authorized by local ordinance. Said permit/exemption shall be in writing and will specify the following:
		1. Date and approximate times of the anticipated escort
		2. The approximate number of participants (vehicles, floats, pedestrians, etc.)
		3. Staging area where the escort is to begin
		4. Designated route of the escort
		5. List of all intersections along the route and the responsible parties to staff each intersection
		6. The ending location

**NOTE: All Intersections along the route must be closed/blocked off to all cross traffic during the escort. All intersections must be staffed by appropriate personnel.**

* 1. **Escorting Emergency Vehicles:** Agency vehicles should not escort an emergency vehicle which has its own emergency operating equipment unless the escort is necessary for protection of life and authorized by the supervisor under the following circumstances:
		1. An operator of an ambulance or other necessary emergency vehicle is unfamiliar with the route to the destination
		2. The emergency equipment of the ambulance or other necessary emergency vehicle is inoperative

**NOTE:** Officers may take a stationary position at intersections and control traffic to expedite the movement of an emergency vehicle.

* 1. **Escorting private vehicles in an emergency:** Private vehicles should not be escorted in an emergency circumstance such as a private individual attempting to get another to the hospital.
		1. The officer should notify emergency medical services to respond to the scene when medical assistance appears necessary and render aid to the degree of their training until the arrival of EMS.
		2. If the subject can be safely moved to a police vehicle, and it would be dangerous to the life of the person to wait for EMS, the individual may be transported in the agency vehicle.
	2. **Funeral procession:** Kentucky Revised Statute 189.(378) creates a specific exemption for funeral processions with respect to obedience to traffic control devices, but requires all participants to act with due caution with regard to all crossing traffic. The exemptions granted for funeral processions do not apply to any other escort conducted by law enforcement.
		1. Escort of a funeral procession must be authorized by the chief or designee.
		2. The funeral director should be informed of applicable law regarding funeral processions.
			1. Funeral processions utilizing interstates/parkways/limited access highways do not enjoy a right-of-way, and traffic should not be stopped on these roadways. Notification to procession participants shall be the responsibility of the funeral director.
			2. Officers will not escort funeral processions beyond their jurisdictional authority. If there are jurisdictional issues, they become the responsibility of the funeral director.
		3. Escorts will generally not be authorized in cases where the funeral director has not given the agency prior notice (amount of notice determined by chief).
		4. Prior to the start of the procession, the officer should:
			1. Meet with the funeral director to determine: the approximate number of vehicles in the procession; the most appropriate route taking into account the law enforcement resources available; the weather; traffic conditions; time of day; and existing road hazards.
			2. Request the funeral director to direct all participants of the procession to illuminate their headlights or display a pennant pursuant to KRS 189.378 (1).
			3. Escort officers should request other officer assistance in handling critical intersections when a large number of vehicles are involved.
			4. An officer may refuse the escort where the route or some other condition posed by the procession will pose a danger to the public. In such a case the officer will notify a supervisor as soon as practical.
		5. During the procession:
			1. An officer escorting a funeral procession shall activate emergency lighting and turn on headlights.
			2. An officer may utilize a siren intermittently where necessary to warn motorists of the procession.
			3. An officer escorting a funeral shall come to a complete stop at all red lights or stop signs and ensure that the intersection is clear before proceeding.
			4. The officer shall not assume the right of way granted to funeral processions without exercising due caution with regard to crossing traffic.
	3. **Oversized vehicle escorts:** All requests for an escort of an oversized vehicle within this jurisdiction shall be approved by the chief or designee.
		1. Officers assigned to conduct an escort of an oversized vehicle shall adhere to all traffic regulations during the movement of the oversized vehicle.
		2. Prior to the escort, officers shall determine if the escort will meet any special conditions impacting traffic. (i.e., movement of overhead wires.)
		3. If necessary, the department may provide additional officers to control traffic at intersections, etc., in order to keep the oversized vehicle moving during the escort.