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| Policy # **Emergency Assistance** | 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: | | |
| KACP Accreditation Standard: 25.1, 25.2 | | |
| Date Implemented: | | Revision Date: May 1, 2025 |

1. **POLICY**

The general public relies upon the police for assistance and advice when faced with the many routine and emergency traffic situations, which can and do develop. The Police Department expects officers to perform such services diligently and responsibly, mindful of the expectations of the community. In addition to providing service to stranded motorists, general assistance, and emergency assistance officers should identify and report such hazards for corrective action. Officers may take action to correct minor hazards such as debris in roadways.

1. **PROCEDURE**
2. General Assistance to Motorists
3. Because of the overall danger to the stranded motorist, and also to the motorist on the roadway potentially affected by the stranded motorist, the department will offer reasonable assistance at all times to the motorist who appears to be in need of aid. This will apply at all hours of the day, but particularly during the nighttime hours when the hazards are higher.
4. Officers should be constantly alert for roadway users who appear to need assistance. Officers should freely provide information and directions upon request. In an effort to better serve the citizens, officers should not only become familiar with the streets, but also the various services and facilities available in the area.
5. Stranded Motorists
6. Many occasions present themselves that call for the immediate removal of a disabled vehicle from a traveled highway so further traffic problems and/or the possibility of a serious collision may be diminished. At the discretion of the officer, a wrecker may be summoned to move the vehicle.
7. Officers may, at their discretion, transport stranded motorists to the nearest convenient location where assistance may be obtained; however, officers should be certain that assistance is available. When transporting stranded motorists of a sex opposite that of the officer, officers should give the dispatcher their starting and ending mileage.
8. Stranded motorists should not be abandoned when exposed to a hazardous situation. Consideration should be given to traffic hazards, location, time of day, weather conditions, and priority of calls for service. This does not preclude placing devices to warn oncoming traffic and clearing the scene if conditions are such that this can be done safely. Officers should periodically check to ensure the condition does not deteriorate.
9. Officers who assist stranded motorists should remain alert to the following possibilities: the vehicle in the possession of the motorist has not been authorized for their use; the vehicle is in unsafe operating condition; the motorist is unlicensed to drive; the motorist is incapable of safely operating the vehicle; and/or the vehicle's occupants have engaged in criminal activity.
10. Officers may provide assistance to motorists in obtaining tow services, if needed, by calling for a specified wrecker of the motorist's choice or by calling for the wrecker service the department uses.
11. Emergency Assistance
12. Officers will render all practical assistance to users of the roadway who are involved in emergency situations.
13. Vehicle Fires - Officers will advise the dispatcher upon discovery of a vehicle fire. The location, type of vehicle, location of fire, and cargo (if applicable) will be given to the dispatcher. The dispatcher will notify the fire department of these facts so an appropriate fire department response can be made.
14. Medical Emergencies
15. Notification - Upon discovery of a medical emergency, the officer will request an ambulance.
16. Assistance - After notifying the dispatcher of the nature of the emergency, officers will render as much first aid assistance as possible.
17. Hazardous Roadway Conditions
18. Hazardous highway and/or environmental conditions are defined as:
19. Defects in the roadway itself (holes, ruts, or dangerous shoulders).
20. Lack of, or defects in, highway safety features (e.g., center and roadside striping and reflectors) or improper, damaged, destroyed or visually obstructed traffic control and information signs.
21. Lack of traffic control and information signs (curve and hill warnings, stop and yield signs, and speed limit signs, street and highway identification), or improper, damaged, destroyed, or visually obstructed control or information signs.
22. Lack of mechanical traffic control devices or improperly located or malfunctioning traffic control devices.
23. Lack of roadway lighting systems or defective lighting systems.
24. Natural or man caused obstructions (fallen trees and rocks, litter, debris, parts of vehicles, broken water mains and electrical wires).
25. Ice or heavy snow accumulations on roadway surfaces.
26. Fire and its attendant smoke in areas adjacent to the highway.
27. Vehicles parked or abandoned on or near the highway.
28. The term "roadside hazard" will refer to all physical features of the roadside environment which are such that a vehicle leaving the road surface for any reason, even momentarily, can impact with them, resulting in unnecessary injury to people or damaged property. Roadside hazards included in the definition are:
29. Rigid non-yielding supports for traffic control devices and lights or the non-performance of safety installations (i.e., break away sign supports that fail to function properly).
30. Improperly engineered guardrails.
31. Unshielded bridge railings that may not be able to retain an impacting vehicle and redirect it parallel to the roadway, thereby minimizing damage to the vehicle and danger to traffic below the bridge.
32. Bridge abutments and other hazardous fixed objects built off the roadway, and into which the vehicle might crash with high injury probability.
33. Utility poles, trees, ditches, inappropriately steep banks, culverts, rock formations, and other fixed objects and features of the roadside environment into which a vehicle might crash instead of being able to come to a stop in a clear distance.
34. The following procedure will be followed in identifying, reporting and correcting hazardous roadway, roadside, or environmental conditions.
35. When a hazard is identified and in the officer's opinion such hazard requires immediate correction (such as a fallen tree or electrical wire across or on any part of the traveled portion of this situation), they will inform dispatch of this situation and identify the assistance or special equipment required. The officer will protect the scene and bystanders, and direct traffic or take any other action deemed necessary to correct the situation.
36. When a hazard is detected that represents a potential accident situation but the threat of such is not imminent, as in the case of a discarded muffler, the officer will pass this information on to dispatch to Dispatch notify the proper authority to have the situation corrected. If the officer can correct the situation (such as a discarded muffler), they will take appropriate action.