



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY SHERIFF
Montgomery County, Maryland
Maxwell C. Uy, Sheriff



GENERAL OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

<u>Subject:</u> Towing of Vehicles	<u>Number:</u> 3.55	<u>Effective Date:</u> 08/14/24
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Purpose To provide guidance to deputies who have a lawful purpose in towing a motor vehicle from either public or private property.

Contents:

- I. General Provisions
- II. Handling Abandoned Vehicles
- III. Procedures for Removal of Vehicles
- IV. Records Maintenance

I. General Provisions

- A. Deputies may only tow a motor vehicle if the vehicle is:
 - (1) In violation of the law.
 - (2) Presenting a hazard to public safety.
 - (3) Interfering with the flow of traffic.
 - (4) Being towed pursuant to a court order.
 - (5) Evidence of a crime or the deputy can articulate that the vehicle may contain evidence of a crime.
 - (6) If the vehicle is abandoned.
- B. Deputies will not automatically tow a vehicle as a result of an arrest if the vehicle is legally parked.
- C. All towed vehicles, with the exception of vehicles towed at the request of a stranded motorist, must be documented on a *Vehicle Tow Record (MCSO165)*.

II. Handling of Abandoned Vehicles

- A. Abandoned vehicles on Circuit Court property.
 - (1) Deputies will make every effort to determine ownership of any abandoned vehicle prior to requesting that the vehicle is towed.
 - (2) If the vehicle owner is an employee of the Circuit Court, deputies must attempt to contact the owner prior to towing the vehicle. Deputies must allow the owner a reasonable amount of time to move the vehicle prior to contacting the towing company.

- B. Abandoned vehicles not on Circuit Court property.
 - (1) Generally, deputies should notify the law enforcement agency which has jurisdiction regarding any abandoned vehicles.
 - (2) Deputies may tow a vehicle from a location where they are conducting Sheriff's Office functions, if a lawful reason exists to conduct the tow.

III. Procedures for Removal of Vehicles

- A. Deputies must request a tow by contacting the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) via the radio or by phone.
- B. Deputies must remain on scene until the vehicle has been removed from the property, unless they are relieved by another deputy or law enforcement agency that is assuming command of the scene.

IV. Records Maintenance

- A. Information regarding towed vehicles must be noted in an *Vehicle Tow Record* (MCS165), unless the tow was conducted at the request of a stranded motorist. The *form* must detail the following information for the tow:
 - (1) Time, date, and location where the vehicle was located.
 - (2) Involved personnel.
 - (3) Reason for removal.
 - (4) Vehicle license plate information and VIN.
 - (5) Make, model, color, and year of the vehicle.
 - (6) Charges pending, if any.
 - (7) Towing service utilized.
 - (8) Storage location of the vehicle, and
 - (9) Notification or attempted notification of the registered owner.
- B. Deputies must notify the Traffic Coordinator via email that they have towed a vehicle.
- C. The Traffic Coordinator must maintain a record of the above listed information for all vehicles towed by deputy sheriffs.

AUTHORITY:



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