

Town of High Level

Policy 231-10

Title: **PEACE OFFICER POLICY AND PROCEDURES**
Authority: **Council**
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Rescinds: **254-17**

POLICY

This document is created to provide policy and procedures for employees of the Protective Services Department who hold Peace Officer appointments and their supervising staff. The policy and procedures cover day-to-day operations, handling of rare occurrences and how to deal with complaints against Peace Officers.

This guide is used as a supplement to the Public Security Peace Officer Program Policy and Procedures Manual however; the manual will be used as reference as well. In the event that there are conflicting directions or statements between this document and the Public Security Peace Officer Program Policy and Procedures Manual, the manual shall be the correct document.

1.0 - Peace Officer Job Description

The job description of a Peace Officer as described in this Policy, but may be further amended by the Human Resources Job Description is;

- a) Enforcing municipal bylaws including bylaws dealing with animal control
- b) Enforcing provincial statutes including traffic and liquor violations
- c) Investigating complaints from the public and *town* officials
- d) Compiling investigative reports and laying charges where appropriate
- e) Complete data entry as required
- f) Preparing court files and testifying in court as required
- g) Preparing statistical reports and summarizations as requested by *town* council
- h) Providing assistance to the public in emergency situations
- i) Protecting the residents of jurisdiction and *town* property
- j) Attending training courses as required
- k) Maintain relationship with community stakeholders and police service of jurisdiction

- l) Participation in community, school and business events
- m) Operate an enforcement vehicle as required
- n) Complete any other tasks that may be assigned by the Chief Administrative Officer or the Land Use & Planning Manager.

2.0 - Code of Conduct

- i. Peace Officers must comply with the terms and conditions of the employer's authorization.
- ii. Peace Officers must comply with the terms of their appointment.
- iii. Peace Officers must not engage in disorderly or inappropriate conduct.
- iv. Peace Officers must not act in a way that would be harmful to the discipline of peace officers or that is likely to discredit the office of peace officer.
- v. Peace Officers must not withhold or suppress information, complaints or reports about any other peace officer.
- vi. Peace Officers must promptly and diligently perform their duties and responsibilities.
- vii. Peace Officers must not make or sign false, misleading or inaccurate statements
- viii. Peace Officers must not, without lawful excuse, destroy, mutilate or conceal records or property, or alter or erase an entry in a record.
- ix. Peace Officers respect confidentiality when in possession of personal data or sensitive information.
- x. Peace Officers must properly account for or return money or property that they receive in their capacity as a peace officer.
- xi. Peace Officers must not engage in activities that may or will result in a conflict of interest or an apprehension of or a lack of integrity in the office of peace officer.
- xii. Peace Officers must not use their position for their own advantage or another person's advantage.
- xiii. Peace Officers must not directly or indirectly solicit or receive a gratuity, present, pass, subscription or testimonial without the consent of the employer.
- xiv. Peace Officers must not exercise their authority as a peace officer when it is unnecessary to do so.
- xv. Peace Officers must not consume alcohol while on duty, except in the performance of their duties.

- xvi. Peace Officers must not consume controlled drugs and controlled substances under the Controlled Drugs and Substance Act (Canada).
- xvii. Peace Officers must not possess controlled drugs and controlled substances which are prohibited by law, except in the performance of the peace officer's duties.
- xviii. Peace Officers must wear the appropriate uniform while on duty.
- xix. Peace Officers shall conform to the dress and personal grooming outlined in Appendix C.
- xx. Peace Officers must not wear any part of their uniform while off duty.
- xxi. Peace Officers must keep vehicles and equipment clean and in good working order.
- xxii. Peace Officers must follow all reasonable direction of the senior peace officer or supervisor or manager responsible for the peace officer agency.
- xxiii. Peace Officers will not use rude, abusive, belittling, sexist or racist behaviour when dealing with the public or co-workers.
- xxiv. Peace Officers must not associate with any person when that association could bring the office of peace officer into disrepute.
- xxv. Peace Officers must not use force unnecessarily.
- xxvi. Peace Officers will not neglect any duty imposed upon them.

3.0 - Peace Officer Agency Record System

Personnel records

- a) Each employee should have a separate individual file in which records are stored.
- b) If original documents are stored in a Human Resources office or other area where they may not be readily accessible, copies of relevant documents should be kept in a secondary file accessible to the supervisor and peace officer.
- c) Files of past employees should be kept a minimum of three (3) years or longer if required by the Town of High Level's policy. Appointments of past employees shall be returned to Public Security Division.
- d) Personnel files shall contain at minimum:
 - 1) The Peace Officer's appointment.
 - 2) The oath of office.
 - 3) Certificates from required courses to become a Peace Officer.

- 4) Copies of complaints against Peace Officers in addition to documentation showing Public Security Division has been notified of the complaint when required. Complaints must be kept on file a minimum of five (5) years.
- 5) Recertification documents on applicable courses (i.e. Baton, OC Spray, Officer Safety, etc.).
- 6) Criminal records checks for Peace Officers must be retained for a minimum of two (2) years.

4.0 - Operational Records

4.1 Records Management Systems

- a) Any memorandum of understanding between the Town and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or any other government agency.
- b) Shift schedules.
- c) Occurrence logs that track activities and investigations by sequentially assigned file number. (i.e. 2008-001, 2008-002 etc.)
- d) Occurrence reports with file numbers, investigations and dispositions.
 - 1) The preferred method is to store individual occurrence reports with their attachments in individual folders marked with a file number.
 - 2) Occurrence reports should be stored in a secure location in alphabetical order.
 - 3) Occurrence reports must be signed off by a supervisor. Supervising peace officers who report to a non-peace officer supervisor/manager will be deemed compliant if at least 30% of occurrence reports are approved.
 - 4) Initial occurrence reports should be completed by only one peace officer. Additional peace officers assisting with the file should complete follow up reports to be attached to the initial report.
 - 5) If an investigation is commenced by another agency or reception staff, that documentation should become an attachment to the peace officer's occurrence report.
- e) Logs tracking the issuance and disposition of provincial violation tickets by ticket number.
- f) Records of property seized, stored and disposed of including:
 - 1) An exhibit report that can be attached to an occurrence report.

- 2) A tag or sticker that can be attached to seized items and contains a file number and basic seizure information.
- 3) A log book for recording the seizure and disposition of items that are deposited into a secure facility for any period of time. This log should have space for tracking the movements of exhibits to and from court. This can be as simple as a number of columns showing file number, date seized, date placed into storage, and investigating peace officer.

4.2 Notebook Policy

- a) Peace Officers and Bylaw Enforcement Officers, whom have been formally appointed as a Peace Officer under the Alberta Peace Officer Act or a Bylaw Enforcement Officer under the Alberta Municipal Government Act, who require evidence notebooks may be issued one by the Town of High Level.
- b) All officers issued a notebook will receive training on appropriate notebook procedures before commencing their first operational shift.
- c) All notebooks will be serialized both numerically and dated.
- d) In the event of a damaged or lost notebook, the issued Officer will report the details to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as practicable and complete a formal statement.
- e) All in use notebooks shall be stored in the locked equipment locker and all completed notebooks shall be stored in the evidence locker until all files within the notebook are completed in entirety, at which point shall be destroyed.
- f) All Peace Officers acknowledge the notebooks are for professional use and may be subject to inspections by any direct supervisor at any time to ensure proper conduct and policy compliance.
- g) All Peace Officers will ensure their notebook conduct is professional, and contains only operational related notes while adhering to the training standard at all times.
- h) All information contained within the notebooks is protected and only accessible by the issued Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, the Land Use & Planning Manager, and by request only, select items that are required for prosecution to the RCMP and Crown prosecutors.
- i) All notebooks are the property of the Town of High Level.

5.0 – Exhibit Handling Policy

- a) When any type of exhibit comes into the possession of an officer, care must be taken to preserve the exhibit in its original form. Further, it is the Community Peace Officer's responsibility to make sure that the exhibit is safeguarded. The Community Peace Officer making the seizure will cause the exhibit to be properly tagged or marked for future identification - that is to say, the date, occurrence file number, exhibit number, Community Peace Officer's regimental number and

his/her initials are on the exhibit itself or on the identification tag affixed to the exhibit.

- b) Whenever a seizure is made, the Community Peace Officer making the seizure will, without delay, compile an Exhibit Report form listing the item or items with a full description of the item(s) to be contained in the body of the report.
- c) All items, whether seized by a Community Peace Officer or handed in to the office will be shown on an exhibit report.
- d) Exhibits that have been properly tagged/labeled and recorded on an exhibit seizure form will be secured in a locked cabinet with restricted access. One copy (or original) of the seizure form will accompany the exhibit while another copy will be attached with the occurrence report.
- e) All exhibits placed into the exhibit locker or removed from the exhibit locket will have the movement recorded in the exhibit locker ledger that is kept in the area of the locker.
- f) All licenses and license plates seized in relation to any offence (e.g. theft, misuse, etc.) are to be properly marked for identification and exhibit report completed. These items are to be returned to Alberta Registries and the exhibit report receipted.
- g) Lost or stolen bicycles found by a Community Peace Officer or member of the RCMP will be stored at a facility deemed appropriate by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- h) If a Peace Officer comes into contact with drugs during the normal course of duties the Peace Officer will advise the RCMP and turn of the exhibit to a sworn member of the RCMP. Community Peace Officers employed by the Town shall not store a controlled substance found in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* as exhibits.
- i) *LIQUOR EXHIBITS*
 - 1) In consultation with the local Crown Prosecutor and with their approval, liquor exhibits may be disposed of on site.
 - 2) If possible, have offender witness the disposal.
 - 3) Record in notebook or Police Copy of Violation Ticket the details and what was destroyed.
 - 4) If possible, utilize the In-Car Video System to record the seizure/destruction.
 - 5) If necessary, the empty bottle will be kept as an exhibit and stored as such.
- j) All exhibits will be stored in a locked cabinet upon completion of exhibit report. Community Peace Officers shall mark all articles seized or found to ensure future identification for evidence purposes.

- k) When found property is turned in by a citizen, their name, address, telephone number and other information shall be placed on the Property Control Form, with tag, and an occurrence report submitted.
- l) Exhibits related to criminal offences must be turned over to the RCMP.
- m) Upon court disposition and pending an appeal period, exhibits will be auctioned, destroyed or returned to the owner as per town policy. The method of disposition and name of recipient will be clearly documented on the exhibit seizure reports and the follow up information will be added to the occurrence report.

6.0 - Public Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

- a) Public complaints that allege Criminal Code violations (i.e. allegation of excessive force must be turned over to the police service of jurisdiction. Agency investigations should be delayed so as to avoid contamination of the criminal investigation.
- b) Public complaints against a peace officer must be in writing unless a complainant is unable to make the complaint in writing due to a language barrier or disability. In this case the agency will record the complaint and treat it as if it was received in writing.
- c) Complaints against peace officers may be categorized as 'Complaint of Service' or 'Complaint of Conduct'.
- d) Complaints of service are normally considered less serious and may include:
 - 1) Failing to respond to a complaint.
 - 2) Failing to complete an investigation.
 - 3) Improper application or interpretation of the law.
 - 4) Failing to update complainants and witnesses when required.
 - 5) Failing to exercise appropriate discretion when conducting enforcement.
- e) Complaints of conduct may be considered more serious and may include:
 - 1) Breaches of the Code of Conduct.
 - 2) Breaches of the Peace Officer Appointment.
 - 3) Breaches of municipal, provincial or federal laws.
- f) If a member of the public presents himself in person to make a verbal complaint about a peace officer but refuses to commit the complaint to writing, a report will be compiled outlining the circumstances and the employer will take what, if any, steps they deem necessary. These complaints are not captured under the provisions in Section 14 of the *Peace Officer Act*.

- g) Verbal complaints made by phone may be subject of an occurrence report at the discretion of the employer.
- h) The employer must investigate written complaints against Peace Officers, except after a thorough review, they may discontinue the investigation if the complaint is found to be frivolous, vexatious or made in bad faith. The complainant must be notified in writing stating the reasons for not investigating or for discontinuing the investigation.
- i) The employer must investigate, when it receives information other than from public complaints, when a Peace Officer has failed to comply with the terms of his appointment and the reporting requirements are the same as if the complaint had been a public complaint.

7.0 - Employer Reporting Requirements

7.1 - Immediate Reporting

- a) Use of a firearm discharged at a person or not as part of Peace Officer's duties.
- b) Peace Officer involved in serious injury or death of a person.
- c) Complaint of excessive force (public or internal).
- d) Peace Officer involved where weapon was used by another person.
- e) Peace Officer involved in serious or sensitive matter.
- f) Charge or arrest of a peace officer under the Criminal Code, Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or any other enactment of Canada.
- g) Charge or arrest of a Peace Officer under an enactment of Alberta (except minor traffic).
- h) Peace Officer found to have violated the employer's code of conduct.
- i) Suspension, termination or resignation of a Peace Officer.

7.2 - Report within two (2) business days

- a) Use of baton
- b) Use of OC spray
- c) Use of Conducted Energy Weapon or tear gas
- d) Use of other weapon as detailed in policy

7.3 - Report within one (1) month

- a) Lesser public complaint about a Peace Officer (not captured above)
- b) Authorized employer-initiated investigation (not captured above)
- c) Other type of report (not captured above)
- d) Disposition of current or previous investigation or incident
- e) (Optional) monthly update to advise that there were no incidents to report

7.4 - Report within 45 days

- a) Update to the status of ongoing investigation until disposition

7.5 - Director, Designate or Police to Investigate

- a) Use of a firearm discharged at a person or not as part of Peace Officer's duties
- b) Peace Officer involved in serious injury or death of a person
- c) Complaint of excessive force (public or internal)
- d) Peace Officer involved where weapon was used by another person
- e) Peace Officer involved in serious or sensitive matter

7.5 - Annual Report by Employer

- a) Current name and position of the program contact person
- b) Updated list of peace officers employed and their positions within the agency
- c) A short summary describing the general nature of services provided by the peace officers, the operational practices of Peace Officers employed, and listing showing enforcement and enforcement-related activities that took place
- d) The report due date will be January 31 each year unless the employer advises the Director of Law Enforcement of alternate annual report date.

(Incident reporting shall be done in a format required by the Public Security Peace Officer Program as found on their website)

8.0 - Peace Officer Reporting Requirements

8.1 - Report within 24 hours

- a) Any event in which the Peace Officer has been charged or arrested for an offence under the Criminal Code, Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or any other enactment of Canada.

- b) Any event in which the Peace Officer has been charged or arrested for an offence under a provincial statute of Alberta.
- c) Loss of a Peace Officer ID card.

8.2 - Notifying Peace Officers about Complaints

- a) A Peace Officer will normally be advised of a public complaint of which he is the subject and provided with a copy of the written complaint.
- b) There are circumstances where the employer may choose to not disclose the complaint to the Peace Officer as it may have a negative impact on the investigation or it may cause the complainant excess discomfort or to fear for her safety. The following are some examples:
 - i) The complainant may be placed in physical danger;
 - ii) The complainant may face non-violent retaliation by the Peace Officer;
 - iii) There may be potential destruction of evidence during the investigation;
 - iv) If there is any likelihood of a criminal investigation being initiated; and
 - v) Other situations determined by the employer.

8.3 - Discipline for misconduct

- a) In the event a complaint is found to have merit in whole or in part, the employer must state what disciplinary action has been taken. Discipline practices in use by the Town must be filed with the Director of Law Enforcement.

9.0 - Traffic Safety Plan

- a) The High Level Peace Officer Program must submit a Traffic Safety Plan annually to the Peace Officer Program. The intent behind a traffic safety plan is to bring awareness to the town of the major contributors to motor vehicle deaths and serious injuries and to focus traffic enforcement efforts towards a reduction of such collisions. It is anticipated that targeted use of peace officer resources focused on statistical areas of concern will enhance peace officer ability to have a positive effect in traffic safety in the community. The creation and revision of the traffic safety plan every two years will reduce public criticism that Peace Officer enforcement is perceived as revenue driven, without regard for having a constructive impact on the community.

10.0 - Appendix A – Public Complaints

10.1 - Complaint Process

Established pursuant to section 15 of the Peace Officer Act.

- a) A complaint must be in writing and received by the employer.

- b) The employer must, within 30 days and in writing, acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant.
- c) Notify the Peace Officer involved of the complaint if appropriate. (see section 21.6 of the Program Manual for details).
- d) The employer must submit details of complaints made to the Director of Law Enforcement in accordance with the Public Security Peace Officer Program Policy and Procedure Manual.
- e) The employer will investigate the allegations of the complaint by interviewing the complainant, any witnesses, the Peace Officer(s) involved if they so consent, and any other person who may have knowledge relevant to the occurrence.
- f) The employer will review any relevant documents in existence pertaining to the occurrence including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Occurrence reports
 - 2. Dispatch logs
 - 3. Peace Officer notebook(s)
 - 4. Court reports
 - 5. Legal documents
- g) The employer will notify the complainant, the Peace Officer involved if appropriate, and Director of Law Enforcement as to the status of the investigation at least once every 45 days.
- h) Upon conclusion of the investigation the employer must notify the complainant, the Peace Officer involved, and the Director of Law Enforcement of the disposition of the complaint using wording found in Section 22 of the Peace Officer (Ministerial) Regulation, which reads as follows:
 - i. The complaint is unfounded: This means that on the basis of a thorough investigation no reasonable belief exists that the complaint has merit or basis.
 - ii. The complaint is unsubstantiated: This means that on the basis of a thorough investigation there is insufficient evidence to determine the facts of the complaint and that it may or may not have occurred.
 - iii. The complaint is found to have merit in whole or in part. This means that on the basis of a thorough investigation that:
 - 1. 'in whole' a reasonable belief exists that the Peace Officer has engaged in misconduct in regards to the entirety of the complaint; or

2. 'in part' a reasonable belief exists that the Peace Officer has engaged in misconduct in regards to a portion(s) of the complaint, but not in its entirety.
- iv. the complaint is frivolous, vexatious or made in bad faith'. This disposition will be used when an authorized employer chooses not to investigate a complaint as per section 15(2) of the Act which allows no investigation to occur when the complaint is deemed to be frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith.
- l) The conclusion letter issued to the complaint must contain the following closing paragraph which communicates to the complainant that appeals of the decision reached by the authorized employer must be addressed to the Director of Law Enforcement as required in Section 15 of the Act.

PLEASE BE ADVISED YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL THESE FINDINGS TO THE DIRECTOR OF LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA PURSUANT TO SECTION 15(4) OF THE PEACE OFFICER ACT. AN APPEAL MUST BE IN WRITING AND INITIATED WITHIN 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS DECISION, AND ANY DECISION REACHED BY THE DIRECTOR OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ON APPEAL IS FINAL.

Correspondence to the Director must be sent to:

Director of Law Enforcement
10th Floor, 10365 - 97 Street
Edmonton AB
T5J 3W7

10.2 - Appendix B – Informal Resolution of Complaints

Informal Complaints Process

- a) Section 15(2)(b) of the Peace Officer Act allows the Town to refuse to investigate or may discontinue the investigation of a complaint if, in the Town's opinion and having regard to all of the circumstances, no investigation is necessary.

The Employer has the authority to informally resolve the public complaint. This shall be accomplished by meeting with the complainant to discuss their concerns, circumstances, facts and any information pertaining to the complaint. If a mutually agreeable solution can be reached by all parties involved the complaint shall be deemed to be resolved and no investigation is necessary.

All complaints resolved in this manner, pursuant to the *Peace Officer Act*, will be reported to the Director of Law Enforcement on a monthly basis.

11.0 - Appendix C – Peace Office Dress and Deportment

Purpose

Peace Officers are held to a high standard of expected professionalism by both their employers

and the citizens that they serve. As such the Town has set out a guide of how Officers will appear while on duty. Any of directions set out in this section of the policy may be reviewed and changed temporarily or permanently by the Land Use & Planning Manager or the Chief Administrative Officer, if deemed necessary for the Peace Officer to effectively perform his or her duties.

Dress and Department of all Officers

All Level 1 Peace Officers shall wear the complete uniform provided to them that complies with the Peace Officer Policy. Extra items, such as sweaters and jackets may be worn at the officer's comfort and discretion. Level 2 Peace Officers uniforms shall be unique to their responsibilities.

The Level 1 Peace Officer Uniform will consist of:

- a) Blue/black pants with a grey stripe on either leg. Pants may be either plain or cargo style.
- b) Grey shirt either short sleeved or long sleeved with approved patches sewn to either sleeve.
- c) Optional blue/black duty sweater that may be worn either over or under the ballistic vest.
- d) Ballistic vest in either external or internal style, external vest shall be blue/black and internal may be any colour, however, shall be worn under the uniform shirt.
- e) Hat shall be either forge cap style with grey band and badge securely affixed or the Montana trooper style hat with black band and badge securely affixed, or a black ball-hat style cap with Peace Officer etched into the hat. During cold weather or inclement weather Officers may wear a black toque either plain, or displaying the Town of High Level logo. During extreme or inclement conditions, another alternative as necessary is acceptable. The use of a hat is not mandatory.
- f) Jacket shall be either blue/black with crests sewn on either arm or fluorescent yellow with reflective markings and crests sewn on either arm and patch on back of jacket that reads "PEACE OFFICER".
- g) Duty belts shall be worn while on duty. The style, design and accessories carried on the belt are at the discretion of the respective officer as to suit background, need, preference, or medical conditions.
- h) Ties may be worn in court when the officer is wearing a long sleeved shirt or combination of shirt and sweater. The officer is not required to wear a tie during the normal course of their duties.
- i) Dress uniform is only to be worn during special functions or when attending Queens Bench Court. The dress uniform shall adhere to the Alberta Association of Community Peace Officers policy. Dress uniforms are a large monetary investment by the Town and as such, the utmost care must be taken of the uniform.

11.1 - Female Officers shall:

- a) Keep hair clean and combed.
- b) When hair is longer than shoulder length, wear held up in a bun, ponytail or other similar fashion.
- c) When hair is shorter than shoulder length hair may be worn down, however it is recommended for safety reasons for the officer to have hair pinned or otherwise held back.
- d) Hair may be dyed, however must be of a natural colour or close to a natural colour i.e. blonde, brown, black etc. Colours that are not natural are not permitted i.e. purple, green etc.
- e) Not wear facial piercings.
- f) If earrings are worn, wear only one pair of earrings of stud style.
- g) If rings are worn, wear only one ring per hand unless the officer is married and as such may wear her two rings on one hand and be permitted to wear one more ring on the other hand.
- h) If necklace is worn, wear necklace under uniform shirt.
- i) Wear watch appropriate to the duties that they are performing. Officers should keep in mind that they might be involved in physical altercations and as such choose a style and value of watch that they feel appropriate.
- j) Bracelets are not to be worn unless for medical reason or with their Supervisor's approval for support of a cause (i.e. Breast Cancer, supporting Canadian Military Troops, etc.).
- k) Tattoos should be kept covered when able to do so.

11.2 - Male Officers shall:

- a) Keep hair short and clean cut, and may not be long enough to cover the ear.
- b) Keep hair clean and combed.
- c) Hair may be dyed, however must be of a natural colour or close to a natural colour (i.e. blonde, brown, black etc.) Colours that are not natural are not permitted (i.e., purple, green etc.)
- d) When desired to style hair, the officer shall do so in a manner that appropriate to their position. Spikes, mohawk hairstyles or shapes, letters, or pictures shaven into the hair are not permitted.
- e) Facial hair is acceptable provided it is maintained in a reasonable manner. Facial hair may be ordered to be removed at any time upon request of a supervisor.

- f) Side burns may not extend past the Tragus of the ear unless it is part of an approved beard.
- g) Not wear facial or ear piercings.
- h) If rings are worn, wear only one ring per hand.
- i) If necklace is worn, wear under duty shirt.
- j) Wear watch appropriate to duties that officer is performing. Officers should keep in mind that they may be involved in physical altercations and as such choose a style and value of watch that they feel appropriate.
- k) Bracelets are not to be worn unless for medical reason or with their Supervisor's approval for support of a cause (i.e. Breast Cancer, supporting Canadian Military Troops, etc.).
- l) Tattoos should be kept covered when able to do so.

12.0 - Appendix D – Emergency Response/Pursuit Policy

The Town of High Level Peace Officer program is authorized in the use of Emergency Response to calls for service utilizing emergency lights and / or siren by Level 1 Peace Officers only. Responding to calls for service in an Emergency Response capacity will only be conducted following the guidelines of this policy. All Town of High Level Peace Officers are prohibited from the use of motor vehicle pursuits as set out in this policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the Town of High Level policy on the use of Emergency Response to certain calls for service, establishing guidelines and proper procedures for responding to emergencies, proper reporting procedures and training guidelines for all officers within the department.

The purpose of the Town of High Level Pursuit Policy is to set out strict guidelines based on the current requirements of the Solicitor General's office.

Authorization

Authority for peace officers to respond to calls for service utilizing emergency equipment will be granted once all requirements of this policy have been met. The Town of High Level as an Authorized Employer of Community Peace Officers shall have the authority for Emergency Response added to their Employer Authorization before peace officers may apply for this authority. Individual Peace Officers will ensure all requirements have been met and authority has been added to their Peace Officer Appointment before they respond to any calls for service in an Emergency Response capacity.

Training Requirements

All Community Peace Officers wishing to have emergency response authority added to their Peace Officer Appointments must successfully complete a forty (40) hour Emergency Vehicle

Operations Course that is based on a police curriculum. Prior training from another police service or emergency response agency may be acceptable if approved by the Peace Officer Program.

Note: The pursuit driving elements of the EVOC training are for skill development only. In no manner does this training suggest that Peace Officers will engage in motor Vehicle pursuits. All Peace Officers employed by the Town of High Level Protective Services Department will undergo recertification in the EVOC training if directed by the employer.

12.1 – Emergency Response

Level 1 Peace Officers may respond to calls for service utilizing emergency equipment under the following circumstances;

- a) Injury Collisions,
- b) Providing backup to Police or Peace Officers where there is a reasonable belief that the Officer is in serious danger and the Peace Officer is or may be the closest assistance available,
- c) Attending a fire or medical emergency at the specific request of the Fire or EMS department. (It will not be standard practice to provide a co-response to all fire or medical situations),
- d) Any emergency situation if requested by the Police Service to attend in an emergency response capacity.

12.2 - Emergency Response will not be conducted for:

- a) Non-Injury Motor Vehicle collisions,
- b) Providing backup to Police or Peace Officers where there is a Police Officer closer and already responding to the situation, unless requested by the Police Service to attend,
- c) Any other non-urgent situation.

* All situations where there is a possibility of an Emergency Response will be evaluated by the Peace Officer to continually assess the risk between providing services on-scene, and the increased risk to the Peace Officer and the Public while responding in an Emergency capacity. Public safety and the safety of the Peace Officer will remain the primary concern in all Emergency Response situations. Emergency Response may be utilized on one and two digit highways.

12.3 - Any Peace Officer choosing to respond to a situation in an Emergency Capacity shall notify the partnering agency by radio of their response to that particular situation if safe, practical, possible and reasonable in the circumstance. Alternatively, the Peace Officer may notify their respective control centre to request back up officers or notify a partnering emergency service of they are unaware of an event in progress.

12.4 - All Peace Officers will use the following guideline and response codes for Emergency Response situations:

Code 1 Response

Non-Emergency Response, No Lights / No Siren activated, all rules of the road will be followed.

Code 2 Response

Emergency Response, Lights activated / No Siren activated, rules of the road may be violated using proper techniques and safety precautions.

Code 3 Response

Emergency Response, Lights and Siren activated, rules of the road may be violated using proper techniques and safety precautions.

12. 5 – Emergency Response Reporting

Any Peace Officer who has responded to a call for service in the form of a sustained Code 3 Response will document all pertinent information about the Emergency Response in the case report. Intermittent use of a horn or siren does not constitute a Code 3 Response. This report will include the following:

- a) ID of unit responding;
- b) Unit's departing location;
- c) Time of Departure;
- d) Nature of call for service Unit is responding to;
- e) Unit's destination;
- f) Time of Arrival; and
- g) Any other information that is pertinent to the situation.

** Any collisions resulting from an Emergency Response by a Peace Officer will be reported to the Director of Law Enforcement as a sensitive / serious occurrence on the approved form.*

12.6 – Pursuit Guidelines

All Peace Officer employed by the Town of High Level will adhere to the current policy set forth by the Solicitor General's Office as defined in the Peace Officer Manual as follows:

Peace Officer Manual Requirements

s. 24.7 Pursuits

Pursuit definition: A motor vehicle pursuit occurs when a peace officer follows a vehicle with the intent to stop or identify the vehicle or driver, and the driver, being aware of the peace officer's actions, fails to stop, and the driver initiates evasive action or ignores directions to stop/avoid apprehension.

A motor vehicle pursuit presents an extreme risk to public safety and shall not be conducted by any peace officer appointed under the *Peace Officer Act* Peace officers, other than those with full policing authority, are prohibited from engaging in pursuits by the Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security Motor Vehicle Pursuit Guidelines (2005) and this policy manual.

Upon encountering an individual who has chosen not to stop their vehicle when directed to do so, a peace officer will immediately cease all efforts to stop the vehicle. This will include turning off all emergency equipment and reducing speed. Contact, on an urgent basis, should be made with the police service of jurisdiction to advise them of the circumstances, providing a description of the vehicle and direction of travel.

A pursuit may involve high or low speeds and vehicles other than automobiles.

24.8 Closing the Distance

“Closing the distance” or “catch up situations”

In some cases, an emergency response vehicle will attempt to close the distance on a suspected violator to further a law enforcement effort. These situations are not considered pursuits unless some overt action by the suspected offender suggests an attempt to avoid apprehension. This practice is commonly referred to as “closing the distance” or “catch up.” In these situations, an emergency response vehicle is being operated in a manner that is different from normal traffic patterns.

The *Traffic Safety Act* states: “a siren on an emergency vehicle shall be operated only when the vehicle is being used in response to an emergency.”

Closing the distance is not normally considered an emergency. A peace officer involved in such a situation must continually evaluate all factors that involve public and officer safety. If the risk assessment indicates a risk to public safety, the procedure shall be terminated.

iv. “Closing the distance” or “catch up”

Maneuvers may only be performed when there is a reasonable likelihood for apprehension of the suspected offender.

The paramount purpose behind those policy decisions is public safety. Failure to abide by these policies could expose the public to an unacceptable risk or the peace officer to legal action. Solicitor General and Public Security views the issue of motor vehicle pursuits involving peace officers very seriously and will actively follow up on any pursuits involving peace officers with a view to ensuring that enforcement activities are conducted within legislated constraints and that corrective action is taken where necessary.

24.9 Spike Belts/Roadblocks

No peace officer will participate or assist in the deployment of a spike belt or other similar device.

No peace officer will participate or assist in the implementation of a roadblock technique.

Peace Officers, who encounter a vehicle that has initiated evasive action or has fled, shall not continue to follow the offender vehicle regardless of distance. Should an offender choose to flee before identification has been made of the vehicle, driver or license plate, all Peace Officers shall cease any effort to identify the offender vehicle and contact the Police Service of jurisdiction on an urgent basis and advise them of last known direction of travel.

25. Repeals

This Policy effectively repeals Town of High Level Policies:

- 254-17
- 224-08 (Sections 15 to 19 only)

	RESOLUTION	DATE
Adopted	# 446-10	November 8, 2010
Amended	# 117-20	April 27, 2020
Amended	# 072-22	February 28, 2022