

# BERKELEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

DATE ISSUED: August 31, 1990

GENERAL ORDER T-18

SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE TO DISABLED MOTORISTS

## PURPOSE

- 1 - The purpose of this Order is to establish a written policy for officers in providing information and directions to motorists, and requiring officers to provide assistance to drivers of disabled motor vehicles as required by California Vehicle Code Section 20018.

## POLICY

- 2 - The policy of the Berkeley Police Department is for uniformed personnel to stop and render appropriate assistance to motorists.

## PROCEDURES

- 3 - When a uniformed officer observes or becomes aware of a disabled or stranded motorist, the employee shall stop and render assistance to minimize the possibility of harm or injury.
- 4 - Emergency assistance shall include:
  - (a) Providing immediate fire or medical assistance;
  - (b) Summoning emergency road service;
  - (c) Protecting vehicles stranded in hazardous locations by means of warning devices, emergency lights or flares, and
  - (d) Waiting with the stranded motorist until help arrives or transporting the person to a place of safety.
- 5 - Officers shall not:
  - (a) Push cars either with police vehicles or by hand;
  - (b) Use police vehicles to jump start stalled vehicles;
  - (c) Change tires or make minor repairs/adjustments, and
  - (d) Open locked vehicles except in emergencies.
- 6 - Uniformed personnel enroute to an emergency call, who observe or become aware of a stranded motorist, shall notify the Communications Center of the location of the motorist and request that a patrol unit be assigned to provide assistance.
  - (a) If possible, the officer should advise the stranded motorist that another officer will be sent to assist.

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- (b) Communications Center personnel shall promptly assign another officer to provide assistance.
- 7 - The policy of the Berkeley Police Department is not to provide escorts unless prior approval has been received from the Watch Commander. **Section 21057 CVC states that officers are expressly prohibited from using siren or driving at an illegal speed when serving as an escort. Exceptions to this rule are during war time, state of emergency, or local emergency as defined in Government Code Section 8558.**
  - (a) **Local emergencies include conditions of disaster or extreme peril to the safety of life and property. Examples are fire, storm, epidemic, riot, air pollution, hazardous materials, sudden and severe energy shortage, earthquake, or Governor's warning of earthquake prediction.**
  - (b) **Watch Commanders should not authorize escorts except when emergency conditions exist.**
- 8 - Requests for traffic safety publications or other materials may be referred to the Traffic Bureau, California State Automobile Association office, or Department of Motor Vehicles office.

Department of Motor Vehicle SR-1 forms (State of California Report of Traffic Accident) are maintained at the Front Counter.

References: CALEA Standards  
California Vehicle Code Sections 20018, 21057 and 21705  
General Order T-3