

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office**  
**General Order # 3.4**



<b>SUBJECT:</b> Foot Pursuits		<b>NUMBER:</b> 3.4
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 10/18/2024 <b>REVIEW DATE:</b> Annually		<b>MACP Standard Impact:</b> 3.5.7
<b>REPLACES AND RESCINDS:</b> GO 3.4 dated 1/25/2023	<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b> All Personnel	<b>NUMBER OF PAGES:</b> 5

This order replaces and rescinds all previously issued orders, procedures, rules and regulations, notices and/or practices in conflict with this General Order.

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this order is to establish policy and procedures regarding foot pursuits by Sheriff Office Deputies and to provide tactical guidelines and considerations when deputies are involved in foot pursuits.

**II. POLICY**

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office recognizes that deputies have the authority to attempt to stop any individual suspected of committing a criminal offense, a violation of law or traffic infraction. The Oakland County Sheriff's Office is committed to securing a balance between protecting the lives of both deputies and the public while upholding our duty to enforce the law and apprehend violators. This order is intended to provide overall direction and guidance when deciding if foot pursuits are warranted and how they should be conducted.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Foot Pursuit: A situation in which a deputy on foot, chases a suspect in an effort to detain or arrest that individual, whom he/she has reasonable suspicion to believe is about to commit, is committing, has committed a crime and subjects who are being taken into protective custody who are resisting apprehension by fleeing from the deputy on foot.
- B. Suspect: Includes any individual who a deputy has a reasonable suspicion to believe is about to commit, is committing an offense or pose an imminent threat to the safety of the public, other deputies or themselves.
- C. Team Concept: A tactical practice of having two or more deputies working together during a foot pursuit. The deputies work as a team utilizing direct or indirect communication methods to coordinate their efforts, remain aware of the locations of deputies and suspects, and keep abreast of the status of the pursuit.

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**IV. PROCEDURES**

**A. Decision to Pursue**

1. Although it is a deputy's decision to initiate a stop, it is the suspect or violator who decides to precipitate a foot pursuit by fleeing. A deputy's decision to pursue on foot shall be made with an awareness of and appreciation for the risks to which the deputy and others will be exposed. **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 c,d)**
2. Where necessary, a deputy may pursue persons who he or she reasonably believes have committed an act that would warrant a stop, investigative detention, or arrest. The decision to initiate or continue such a foot pursuit, however, must be continuously re-evaluated considering the circumstances presented at the time. **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 d)**
3. Following the event, the decision not to engage in a foot pursuit will be evaluated by supervisory and training staff only. An employee shall not destructively criticize another employee of the Sheriff's Office for their decision that the risk of foot pursuit exceeded what which is reasonable for the officers' safety or safety of others. The evaluation of the event shall be based on the totality of the circumstances and on the perceived risk to the deputy under the provisions of this and related Sheriff's Office general orders and training. Violations of orders or training shall be addressed under Guidelines for Personnel Conduct and Remedial Training General Orders. **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 a, b)**
4. In deciding whether or not to initiate a pursuit, a deputy shall consider the following alternatives to foot pursuit: **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 c,d,e)**
  - a. Aerial support
  - b. Containment of the area
  - c. Canine search
  - d. Thermal imaging
  - e. Saturation of the area with patrol personnel
  - f. Apprehension at another time and place when the deputy knows the identity of the subject or has other information that would likely allow for later apprehension and the need to immediately apprehend the suspect does not reasonably appear to outweigh the risk of continuing the foot pursuit.
5. In deciding whether to initiate or continue a foot pursuit, deputies shall also evaluate the circumstances and risk factors whenever deputies are: **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 e)**
  - a. acting alone.
  - b. unsure of location and direction of travel.
  - c. in an area that is hostile.
  - d. unable to obtain backup in a timely manner.
  - e. not in adequate physical condition to conduct a foot pursuit.
  - f. unable to establish and maintain contact with the communications center.

**B. Initiating Deputy's Responsibilities **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 f)****

1. Deputies initiating foot pursuits shall be in field command and shall bear operational responsibility for the foot pursuit unless circumstances dictate otherwise or until relieved by a supervisor.
2. The deputy initiating a foot pursuit shall, as soon as practical, provide the following information to the communications center:
  - a. Unit identifier

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- b. Reason for the foot pursuit
  - c. Deputy location and direction of pursuit
  - d. Number of suspects and description
  - e. Whether or not the suspect(s) is believed to be armed
  - f. Coordinate with other deputies to establish a perimeter for containment
3. Deputies should always immobilize their vehicle or adequately secure their vehicle to avoid having the violator return to the scene and flee in the police vehicle. Police vehicles should be locked, when possible, to avoid the theft of items/equipment stored in the unattended vehicle.
- C. **Foot Pursuit Coordination (MACP Standard 3.5.7 g)**
1. The primary (initiating) deputy shall immediately coordinate—directly or indirectly through the communications center—with secondary deputies to establish a perimeter in the area to contain the suspect(s).
  2. Assisting deputies shall immediately attempt to contain the pursued suspect. Such deputies shall not respond to the primary deputy's location unless the suspect has been stopped and/or the primary deputy requests assistance to take the suspect into custody.
  3. When two or more deputies are in pursuit, they shall consider using the following tactics:
    - a. not separate unless they remain in sight of each other and maintain communication,
    - b. allow the lead deputy to concentrate on the suspect's actions while the secondary deputy provides backup and maintains communications with dispatch and other assisting deputies.
- D. **Communications Responsibility (MACP Standard 3.5.7 i)**
1. Communications is the responsibility of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operation Center. All pursuit related radio traffic shall go through them to coordinate deputy needs.
- E. **Restrictions (MACP Standard 3.5.7 h)**
1. If the suspect's identity is established or other information exists that allows for the suspect's probable apprehension at a later time or through some other method, and there is no immediate threat to the public or deputies, deputies should consider not engaging or continuing a foot pursuit.
- F. **Termination of Foot Pursuit (MACP Standard 3.5.7 k)**
1. Foot pursuit shall be terminated:
    - a. If ordered by a supervisor.
    - b. When the danger to pursuing deputies or the public appears to unreasonably outweigh the objective of immediate apprehension of the suspect.
    - c. When a deputy or supervisor becomes aware of unanticipated or unforeseen circumstances that unreasonably increase the risk to deputies or the public.
    - d. If a deputy loses possession of his/her firearm or other essential equipment.
    - e. If a deputy or a third party is injured during the foot pursuit, requiring immediate assistance, and there are no other emergency personnel available to render assistance.

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2. Deputies shall be aware that once a foot pursuit is terminated, a suspect may not realize that the pursuit has been terminated and may still pose a threat to the deputies or others. Deputies shall remain alert and exercise caution while leaving the scene. Even if the foot pursuit concludes with an arrest, deputies shall be aware that there may be partners or friends of the suspect that the deputies are unaware of who may pose a threat to the deputies or others.
  3. When a foot pursuit terminates, the deputy will notify the Communication Center of his/her location and the status of the foot pursuit termination (e.g., suspect in custody, lost sight of suspect) and will direct further actions as reasonably appear necessary, to include requesting medical aid as needed for deputies, suspects or members of the public.
  4. A pursuit may be terminated by any of the following members:
    - a. The units engaged in the pursuit.
    - b. A supervisor.
- G. Supervisor's Responsibilities (MACP Standard 3.5.7 j)
1. Upon becoming aware of a foot pursuit, the supervisor shall make every reasonable effort to ascertain sufficient information to direct responding resources and to take command, control, and coordination of the foot pursuit.
  2. The supervisor should respond to the area whenever possible however the supervisor does not need to be physically present to exercise control over the foot pursuit.
  3. The supervisor shall continuously assess the situation to ensure the foot pursuit is conducted within established Sheriff's Office orders.
  4. If conditions change, supervisors may allow foot pursuits to be reinitiated. **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 l)**
- H. Reporting (MACP Standard 3.5.7 m)
1. Any deputy initiating a foot pursuit shall take a Call for Service number and complete a case report. This report shall include but is not limited to the following:
    - a. Reason for the foot pursuit and severity of the offense.
    - b. Course and approximate distance of the foot pursuit.
    - c. Involved vehicles and deputies.
    - d. Deputy's action at apprehension/termination of pursuit or transition to other tactics,
    - e. Any use of force.
    - f. Injuries and/or medical treatment.
  2. Assisting deputies taking an active role shall complete supplemental reports.
- I. Incident Review (MACP Standard 3.5.7 n)
1. The Incident Report and all supporting documents shall be completed and submitted to the shift supervisor for review prior to the end of the shift. During the review, the shift supervisor shall consider the following:
    - a. Reason for the foot pursuit and severity of the offense.
    - b. Reasonable suspicion the subject was armed.
    - c. Deputy's knowledge of the person pursued.
    - d. The risk posed to other deputies and the public by the suspect.

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- e. Time of day and weather conditions.
  - f. Available backup and support resources.
  - g. The deputy's familiarity with the foot pursuit area.
  - h. Deputy's action at apprehension/termination of pursuit or transition to other tactic.
  - i. Reasonableness of use of force by the deputy(s).
  - j. Compliance with orders and training.
2. Once reviewed and approved, the supervisor shall immediately submit a copy of the Incident Report and video (if applicable) of the incident to the Division Captain for review and approval. A copy of the Incident Report and video shall then be sent to the Training Unit for review and training purposes.
  3. The Oakland County Sheriff's Office Training Unit will conduct an analysis and meaningful review of foot pursuit incidents annually, and a report shall be generated for the Office of the Sheriff. **(MACP Standard 3.5.7 o)**



**ISSUED BY:** Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard