

FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL

POLICY MANUAL

	SUBJECT PATROL PROCEDURES	POLICY NUMBER 17.01
		ISSUE DATE 02/01/96
	APPLICABLE CALEA STANDARDS 61.1	REVISION DATE 04/01/09
		TOTAL PAGES 6

17.01.01 PURPOSE

To establish basic guidelines for patrol procedures for members of the Florida Highway Patrol.

17.01.02 POLICY

It is the policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to effectively patrol the highways of the State of Florida, to execute its traffic related responsibilities and services through preventive patrol and active enforcement of traffic and criminal laws, to perform a variety of diverse, traffic related services including general assistance, emergency assistance, providing public information and directions, identifying and reporting roadway and roadside hazards, checking abandoned vehicles, locating and recovering stolen vehicles, and seizing illegal drugs and contraband transported over the roadways of the State of Florida.

17.01.03 OBJECTIVES

To safeguard and serve the public by facilitating the safe, expeditious, and orderly flow of vehicular traffic on public highways, enforcing traffic and criminal laws, and providing general law enforcement services.

17.01.04 PROCEDURES

- A. During routine patrol duty assignments, members should combine roving patrol and parked observation patrol within their assigned zone. When cruising, members should drive at a reasonable speed based on existing traffic/weather conditions, comply with all traffic control regulations and educate motorists by example. When parked to observe traffic movement, members will place their patrol unit in a clearly visible position alongside or adjacent to the roadway in a position from which they can clearly observe traffic in both directions and indicate to the motoring public that they are readily accessible for service or enforcement of traffic laws.
- B. Members, while on routine patrol assignments, shall perform the following duties:
 - 1. Enforce all laws regulating the operation of vehicles.
 - 2. Enforce all laws governing the licensing of drivers.

3. Enforce all tag registration laws.
4. Enforce all state motor vehicle equipment laws.
5. Enforce all laws governing pedestrians.
6. Enforce all highway usage laws concerning farm vehicles, bicycles, off-road/all terrain vehicles, and all other traffic.
7. Remove all objects from the highways that in any way create a hazard. Report to the proper maintenance authorities via the duty officer any defects in the roadway itself; lack of, or defects in, highway safety features, i.e.; impact attenuation devices, reflectors; lack of, improper, visually obstructed, or down or damaged mechanical control devices and/or traffic control and information signs; lack of or defective roadway lighting systems; and other roadside hazards.
8. Investigate every parked vehicle observed on the highway or shoulder for possible theft, injury or illness of occupants, or violation of law. A "red tag" shall be affixed conspicuously to each vehicle checked or assisted. The member will notify the appropriate Regional Communications Center of the location and vehicle registration number for the parked vehicle.
9. Offer assistance to disabled or stranded motorists:
 - a. Division vehicles shall not be used to tow or push disabled vehicles to service stations, garages, telephones or other extended distances.
 - b. Division vehicles equipped with push bumpers may be used to remove disabled vehicles from traffic to an immediate place of safety onto the shoulder or other areas off the pavement.
 - c. Extreme caution shall be used if the tow or push method is used to avoid damage to either vehicle.
10. Assistance rendered to disabled vehicles, drivers, or passengers will be provided as efficiently and professionally as possible with the foremost consideration for the personal safety of those being assisted.
 - a. Drivers and/or passengers are not to be driven to an exit and simply let out to seek further assistance for themselves. Members will provide transportation for motorists or passengers to nearby businesses to seek assistance.
 - b. Members are to make every effort to assist disabled motorists, obtain necessary mechanical assistance, wreckers, service vehicles, or relay messages as a method to seek assistance.
 - c. Members confronted with a medical emergency shall not escort civilian vehicles to a medical facility or transport such persons in their patrol vehicle. An ambulance or rescue vehicle shall be called for assistance.

11. Motorists and/or passengers shall not be left alone and unassisted in areas that clearly do not offer opportunity for the motorists or passengers to obtain assistance for themselves.
 - a. Members shall remain with motorists or passengers temporarily until arrangements have been made for further assistance.
 - b. Motorists or passengers who request to be left at a particular business or area will be permitted to remain there. In the event the area appears unsafe to the member, the member should discuss the situation and present alternatives.
 12. Whenever a member observes an apparent disabled vehicle, but is unable to stop and offer assistance:
 - a. The member shall notify the communications center of the location of the disabled vehicle and the reason why he/she cannot stop and offer assistance.
 - b. Duty officers shall make an appropriate notation in the CAD, and then proceed to obtain alternative assistance for the disabled vehicle.
 13. In any situation involving assistance to disabled vehicles, motorists or passengers where there is a question as to the procedures to be followed, the member shall contact a supervisor immediately.
 14. Direct traffic where congestion or road hazards develop.
 15. Visually ensure the security of loads on trucks hauling objects that could present a hazard to traffic.
 16. Observe the manner in which vehicles enter or cross traffic.
 17. Observe the manner in which traffic responds to regulatory traffic signs and advise a supervisor where warning signs appear to be poorly or incorrectly placed.
 18. Conduct "driver license checkpoints," checking not only driver licenses but also required safety equipment, registrations, security of loads and all related matters, in accordance with FHP Policy 17.07.
 19. Educate motorists by example. Always give proper turn signals and never violate any law except where absolutely necessary in the performance of duty.
 20. Render information and directional assistance.
- C. Enforce criminal laws. Upon detecting criminal activity or receiving information that a crime has occurred, members should take or cause to be taken, appropriate action to investigate and apprehend the person(s) responsible.
1. Enforce laws relating to illegal drugs and drug trafficking.
 2. Seize contraband transported on Florida highways.

3. Investigate incidents of highway criminal violence.
 4. Apprehend felons and wanted persons.
 5. Provide assistance to other law enforcement agencies and other governmental agencies as appropriate.
- D. Members shall attempt to cover their zone in its entirety during each shift. When assigned to a limited access road, it should be covered at least twice during the tour of duty.
1. Members assigned exclusively to the Florida Turnpike shall cover their zone more than twice during their tour of duty.
 2. Rest areas on limited access roads should be checked on a regular basis throughout the tour of duty. The member should notify the communications center upon each check.
 3. All other areas should be checked routinely where criminal offenses against the motoring public have taken place.
- E. In the interest of trooper and public safety, members may not routinely park a Division vehicle upon a roadway simply to protect a disabled vehicle or other property. However, a member may park upon a roadway behind a disabled vehicle for the purpose of placing flares or other warning devices, or to assist drivers or passengers to exit the vehicle. Members may also park on a roadway to protect victims or warn other motorists of roadway obstructions or hazards. Anytime a patrol vehicle is parked on a roadway, the emergency lights shall be activated. In any event, the patrol vehicle shall be removed from the roadway as soon as practical.
- F. Use of radar speed measuring devices (RSMD) or laser speed measuring devices (LSMD) and VASCAR-Plus will be in accordance with the Florida Highway Patrol Certification Training Manual, VASCAR-Plus Enforcement Program Operations Training Manual, Rule 15B-2, Florida Administrative Code, Sections 316.1905 and 316.1906, Florida Statutes, and Section 17.01.04(G) of this Manual.
1. Members should be aware of tracking history, vehicle identification and driver identification as required by Florida Statutes and case law when issuing citations for speed offenses when RSMD or LSMD is used. These requirements become more complicated when attempting to stop multiple vehicles.
 2. Members should not attempt to stop more than two vehicles at one time.
 3. Members should be concerned with the driver's safety as well as their own, when stopping more than one vehicle at a time.
- G. No clocking of speed by RSMD or LSMD will be made from a concealed position unless authorized by a supervisor.
1. Authorization for concealed use of RSMD or LSMD will be given only in unusual or special situations.

2. The clocking of speed by VASCAR-Plus may be from a moving or stationary position.
3. Concealed position operation of VASCAR-Plus must be authorized by a supervisor.
4. Members working RSMD, LSMD or VASCAR-Plus in a stationary position will notify the station of the location and not remain at the location for a period to exceed 30 minutes. They shall advise the station when clear.
5. When a member is requested by the station to provide another service, the member will clear the RSMD, LSMD or VASCAR-Plus operation by radio and respond to the request.
6. Members may be assigned to a stationary RSMD, LSMD or VASCAR-Plus operation when authorized by a supervisor.
7. RSMD or LSMD and VASCAR are not to be operated by a member at the same time.

H. NON-EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO CALLS

Members responding to calls for service not requiring an emergency response shall obey ALL traffic laws including applicable speed limits. Emergency lights and siren will not be utilized during the response. However, if the incident to which the member is responding has created traffic congestion, the member may drive on the shoulder or between traffic lanes using due care and at no more than 15 MPH. Emergency lights and/or siren will be utilized during such movement through traffic congestion.

- I. Section 316.217(4), Florida Statutes, provides for the operation of law enforcement vehicles without lights otherwise required by law.
 1. Accordingly, members are authorized to operate a patrol vehicle without headlights or taillights when it is necessary to the performance of their law enforcement duties and;
 - a. The member is engaged in investigative surveillance or
 - b. The member is in the proximity to a known or suspected felony in-progress.
 2. Members may not operate patrol vehicles without lights:
 - a. On a limited access highway.
 - b. At speeds greater than what is reasonable and prudent under existing weather, road, and traffic conditions.
 - c. At speeds greater than the posted speed limit.
 - d. While engaged in a pursuit.
 - e. While overtaking or intercepting a violator.

This authorization does not relieve a member from his or her duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons nor shall a member be protected from the consequences of his or her reckless disregard for the safety of others.