

## Foot Pursuits

### 455.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Foot pursuits are inherently dangerous and require common sense, sound tactics and heightened officer safety awareness. This policy sets forth guidelines to assist officers in making the decision to initiate or continue the pursuit of subjects on foot.

#### 455.1.1 POLICY

It is the policy of the Yolo County Probation Department when deciding to initiate or continue a foot pursuit, officers must balance throughout the pursuit the objective of apprehending the subject against the risk and potential for injury to Department personnel, the public or the subject.

Officers are expected to act reasonably, based on the totality of the circumstances. Absent exigent circumstances, the safety of Department personnel and the public should be the primary consideration when determining whether a foot pursuit should be initiated or continued. Officers must be mindful that immediate apprehension of a subject is rarely more important than the safety of the public and Department personnel.

### 455.2 DECISION TO PURSUE

Officers may be justified in initiating a foot pursuit of any individual the officer reasonably believes is about to engage in, is engaging in or has engaged in criminal activity. The decision to initiate or continue such a foot pursuit; however, must be continuously re-evaluated in light of the circumstances presented at the time.

Mere flight by a person who is not suspected of criminal activity shall not serve as the sole justification for engaging in an extended foot pursuit without the development of reasonable suspicion regarding the individual's involvement in criminal activity.

Deciding to initiate or continue a foot pursuit is a decision that an officer must make quickly and under unpredictable and dynamic circumstances. It is recognized that foot pursuits potentially place Department personnel and the public at significant risk. Therefore, no officer or Supervisor shall be disciplined for deciding not to engage in a foot pursuit because of the perceived risk involved.

If circumstances permit, surveillance and containment are generally the safest tactics for apprehending fleeing persons. In deciding whether to initiate or continue a foot pursuit, an officer should continuously consider reasonable alternatives to pursuit based upon the circumstances and resources available, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) Containment of the area.
- (b) Saturation of the area with other law enforcement assisting.
- (c) Apprehension at another time when the identity and location of the subject is known or there is information available that would likely allow for later apprehension, and the need to immediately apprehend the subject does not reasonably appear to outweigh the risk of continuing the pursuit.

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### **455.3 GUIDELINES FOR FOOT PURSUIT**

Unless the officer reasonably believes exigent circumstances exist (e.g. a serious threat to the safety of Department personnel or the public), officers should consider alternatives to engaging in or continuing a foot pursuit under the following conditions:

- (a) The officer is ordered by a Supervisor to terminate the foot pursuit.
- (b) The officer is acting alone.
- (c) Two or more officers become separated, lose visual contact with one another, or obstacles separate them to the degree they cannot immediately assist each other should a confrontation take place. In such circumstances, it is generally recommended that a single officer keep the subject in sight from a safe distance and coordinate the containment effort.
- (d) The officer is unsure of his or her location and direction of travel.
- (e) There are multiple subjects and the pursuing officers do not reasonably believe they would be able to control the subject(s) should a confrontation occur.
- (f) The physical condition of the officers renders them incapable of controlling the subject if apprehended.
- (g) The officer loses radio contact with Dispatch or with backup officers.
- (h) The subject enters a building, structure, confined space or a wooded or otherwise isolated area and there are insufficient officers to provide backup and containment. The primary officer should consider discontinuing the pursuit and coordinating containment pending the arrival of sufficient officers.
- (i) The officer becomes aware of unanticipated or unforeseen circumstances that unreasonably increase the risk to officers or the public.
- (j) The officer reasonably believes the danger to the pursuing officers or public outweighs the objective of immediate apprehension.
- (k) The officer loses possession of his or her firearm or other essential equipment.
- (l) The officer or a third party is injured during the pursuit, requiring immediate assistance, and there are no other emergency personnel available to render assistance.
- (m) The subject's location is no longer definitely known.
- (n) The identity of the subject is established or other information exists that will allow for the subject's apprehension at a later time, and it reasonably appears that there is no immediate threat to Department personnel or the public if the subject is not immediately apprehended.
- (o) The officer's ability to safely continue the pursuit is impaired by inclement weather, darkness or other conditions.

### **455.4 RESPONSIBILITIES IN FOOT PURSUITS**

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### **455.4.1 INITIATING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Unless relieved by another officer or a Supervisor, the initiating officer shall be responsible for coordinating the progress of the pursuit. When acting alone and when practicable, the initiating officer should not attempt to overtake and confront the subject but should attempt to keep the subject in sight until sufficient officers are present to safely apprehend the subject.

Early communication of available information from the involved officers is essential so that adequate resources can be coordinated and deployed to bring a foot pursuit to a safe conclusion. Officers initiating a foot pursuit should broadcast the following information as soon as it becomes practicable and available:

- (a) Probation Officer or Detention Officer identifier.
- (b) Location and direction of travel.
- (c) Reason for the foot pursuit.
- (d) Number of subjects and description.
- (e) Whether the subject is known or believed to be armed or dangerous.

Officers should be mindful that radio transmissions made while running may be difficult to understand and may need to be repeated.

Absent extenuating circumstances, any officer unable to promptly and effectively broadcast this information should terminate the pursuit. If the foot pursuit is discontinued for any reason, immediate efforts for containment should be established and alternatives considered based upon the circumstances and available resources.

When a foot pursuit terminates, the officer will notify Dispatch of his or her location and the status of the pursuit termination (e.g., suspect in custody, lost sight of suspect), and will direct further actions as reasonably appear necessary.

### **455.4.2 ASSISTING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Whenever any officer announces he or she is engaged in a foot pursuit, all other officers should minimize non-essential radio traffic to permit the involved officers maximum access to the radio frequency.

Any officer who is in a position to intercept a fleeing subject or who can assist the primary officer with the apprehension of the subject, shall act reasonably and in accordance with Department policy, based upon available information and his or her own observations.

### **455.5 REPORTING**

The initiating officer shall complete the appropriate incident reports documenting, at minimum, the following:

- (a) The reason for initiating the foot pursuit.
- (b) The identity of involved personnel.

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- (c) The course and approximate distance of the pursuit.
- (d) The means and methods used to apprehend the subject.
- (e) Any injuries or property damage.

Any use of force shall be reported and documented in compliance with the Department Use of Force Policy. Assisting officers taking an active role in the apprehension of the subject shall complete supplemental reports as necessary or as directed.

A Supervisor may determine a formal report is not needed.