GREENVILLE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

GO - 201

GENERAL ORDERS

SHERIFF'S OFFICE VEHICLES

PURPOSE: Sheriff's Office vehicles are used for purposes as described.

VEHICLE USE: Anyone driving a Sheriff's Office vehicle during off-duty hours is expected to be in service and ready to respond to any call. Deputies may use their issued vehicles outside of normal duties after they have submitted a request form to their Division Commander and received approval.

If a deputy is absent from duty for any reason for a period of more than three consecutive days, their vehicle is to be made available for operational use by other Sheriff's Office personnel. Division Commanders determine temporary use and assignment of vehicles.

VEHICLE OPERATION AND UPKEEP: **No item that could be used as a weapon will be left loose or unsecured in a Sheriff's Office vehicle**. Traffic laws and speed limits are to be observed at all times, except when responding to emergency calls; see General Order 202 Emergency Vehicle Operations. Drivers and passengers are to wear seatbelts.

All employees are expected to drive with care and to avoid abusive driving habits. Employees are prohibited from text messaging on any electronic communication device while operating a County-owned vehicle. Drivers are expected to use good judgment if talking on an electronic communication device while operating a County owned vehicle. Smoking in vehicles is prohibited.

As a safety precaution, Sheriff's Office vehicles operate with headlights activated at all times. The only exceptions will be vehicles operated in an undercover capacity or situations where the use of lights is impractical, as in a covert approach to a possible crime-in-progress.

All deputies are to take pride in the upkeep of their respective vehicles. Accordingly, vehicles will be kept clean and properly maintained at all times

MOBILE DATA TERMINAL (MDT) OPERATION/TEXTING WHILE DRIVING: Personnel driving Sheriff's Office vehicles are prohibited from operating MDTs or texting when vehicles are in motion. The only

exception is the operation of voice to text devices if it is equipped on the county vehicle.

OUT OF TOWN VEHICLE FUEL PURCHASE:

For official business, out-of-county vehicle use, the Sheriff's Office has several fuel credit cards available for check-out through the Administrative Services Division. County vehicles are to be filled with regular unleaded gas only. Any vehicle requiring a higher octane gasoline will require supervisory review and authorization for a higher octane fuel purchase.

Credit card receipts for out of town fuel purchases are to be submitted with the respective credit card to the Administrative Services Division. Each receipt is to include the county vehicle control number.

BICYCLES:

Patrol bicycles will be used for special purpose patrols on the Swamp Rabbit Trail and other areas as approved. Personnel assigned a patrol bicycle will be required to wear special purpose uniform and all issued safety equipment anytime they are operating the bicycle. Deputies selected for special purpose patrols will be required to complete an approved training course on the operation of a patrol bicycle. The deputy who is issued a patrol bicycle will be responsible for any care and maintenance needs of the patrol bicycle and will take the bicycle only to an approved shop for service.
The following equipment will be assigned to and required to be carried on the patrol bicycle:

- Water Bottle
- First Aid Kit
- Crime Scene Tape
- Reflective Traffic Vest

The patrol bicycle will not be used for personal or off-duty use or for use during secondary employment.

MOTORCYCLES:

Sheriff's Office motorcycles will be used to patrol the Swamp Rabbit Trail and other uses as approved. Personnel assigned to a motorcycle will be required to wear the issued special purpose uniform and all issued safety equipment anytime they are operating the motorcycle. Deputies selected for motorcycle patrols will be required to have a current motorcycle license and complete an approved training course on the operation of a motorcycle.

The deputy issued the motorcycle will be responsible for any care or maintenance needs of the motorcycle and will take the motorcycle to an approved service center for service.
The motorcycle will not be used for personal or off duty use. Use of the motorcycle for secondary employment must be approved by a supervisor.
The following equipment will be assigned to and required to be carried on the motorcycle:

- Blue lights and siren.
- First aid kit with emergency blanket.
- PPE Kit with Hand Sanitizer.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Crime scene tape.
- Reflective Traffic Vest.

No employee while operating a motorcycle may engage or participate in a vehicle pursuit. Any employee operating a motorcycle will not respond signal one except in exigent circumstances and must have prior supervisor approval when possible. Deputies operating motorcycles are charged with understanding that there is increased liability and a greater potential for severe injury or death if a motorcycle is involved in a collision. Deputies operating motorcycles must use more caution when responding in traffic than when operating other types of patrol vehicles.

VEHICLE QUALIFICATIONS:

All Sheriff's Office employees who operate county vehicles will qualify semi-annually at the Center for Advanced Training (CAT). Sworn personnel will qualify during in-service and night qualifications. Non-sworn personnel will qualify once during the day and once at night at a time to be determined by the training center staff.

PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO QUALIFY WITH VEHICLE:

All disciplinary actions for failing to qualify or demonstrate proficiency with a vehicle will originate at CAT.

FAIL / PASS - If an employee has a fail/pass score, their supervisor (lieutenant and above) will be notified in written form from the Center for Advanced Training (CAT). This notification will be in the form of a Verbal Warning Report completed by training center personnel.

FAIL / FAIL - If an employee has a fail/fail score, their vehicle will be secured and the employee's supervisor (lieutenant and above) will be notified in written form and verbally from the Center for Advanced

Training (CAT). The written notification will be in the form of a written reprimand completed by training center personnel. This will allow supervisors to escort the employee home as well as address fail/fail situations.

The written notification from the training center will serve as a written reprimand and the employee will be placed on administrative duty. Arrangements will be made for remedial training with training center personnel.

Remedial training will consist of instruction deemed appropriate by the staff of the training center.

All remedial training will be conducted at the Center for Advanced Training under the supervision of a Sheriff's Office driving instructor.

THIRD QUALIFICATION ATTEMPT - After remedial training, an employee will be given a third chance to qualify. If he or she passes, no further action will be required. If the employee fails, he or she will be suspended without pay for 8 hours, encouraged to practice their driving skills, and placed on administrative duty.

FOURTH ATTEMPT AT QUALIFICATION - If an employee passes on the fourth attempt, no further action will be required. If he or she fails, the employee will be suspended from duty without pay for 40 hours, encouraged to practice their driving skills, and will return to work on administrative duty. The employee will be required to make arrangements to re-qualify within 10 days after return from suspension; failure to comply will result in termination.

FIFTH ATTEMPT AT QUALIFICATION - If an employee passes on the fifth attempt, no further action will be required. If he or she fails, the employee will be subject to more severe disciplinary action or termination at the Sheriff's discretion.

Additional Qualification Stipulations:

1. **Two fail/pass** incidents within a 12 month period: an employee will be subject to a written reprimand.
2. **Three fail/pass incidents** within a 24 month period: an employee will be subject to 8 hours suspension.
3. **Four consecutive fail/pass** incidents, an employee will be subject to suspension or termination at the Sheriff's discretion.
4. **Two fail/fail** incidents within a 12 month period: an employee will be subject to 8 hours suspension.

5. **Three fail/fail** incidents within a 24 month period: the employee will be subject to suspension or termination at the Sheriff's discretion.

FAILURE TO ATTEND QUALIFICATION - If a deputy/civilian fails to attend mandatory driving training, the Center for Advanced Training will notify their supervisor in writing. The deputy's/civilian supervisor will schedule a time with CAT personnel for the deputy/civilian to complete the missed qualification.

Any Deputy/civilian failing to attend qualification without proper authorization by their supervisor will result in disciplinary action as defined in General Order 120.

COLLISION REVIEW BOARD:

A Collision Review Board will be held for the following collisions:

- Collision that results in serious bodily injury or death.
- Collision that may result in the suspension or termination of the employee.
- An employee's 3rd or above collision within a three year period of time.
- Any other collision that the employee's division commander request a board to review.

The board consists of three sworn deputies excluding the affected employee's commander or any relative of the employee. Makeup of the board is:

1. Director of Personnel and Recruitment.
2. Member of the Training Committee.
3. Member of the Traffic Collision Investigation Team.

The Collision Review Board will follow the procedure as outlined in General Order 110:

1. Notify employees subject to review, in writing, at least three working days in advance of the board's meeting. Written notification is to include the date, time and place of the hearing, and the names of the board members.
2. When deemed necessary, call witnesses and review investigative reports, documents, and other evidence.
3. At the conclusion of review, conduct an oral vote in reverse order of seniority indicating each member's position concerning the issues before the board.

4. Sheriff's Office General Counsel will be present during board proceedings only to observe, and may subsequently incorporate the board's findings into a legal memorandum to the Sheriff containing the General Counsel's legal opinion and any recommendations.

Employee in question responsibilities –The presence of the employee in question is mandatory during the board proceedings unless otherwise approved by the Administrative Services Captain. The board can elect to meet without the presence of the employee. If the employee does not appear and fails to issue a written refusal, the board will meet and review the issue without the participation of the employee. An employee can remain in the hearing during its entire proceeding unless otherwise prohibited by the board itself.

Statutorily, the Sheriff possesses the power to dismiss a deputy based on the Sheriff's pleasure. This power is granted to the Sheriff due to the special legal relationship created when a Sheriff delegates his powers on a deputy. The deputy acts in the Sheriff's stead and, legally speaking, the deputy's acts are the Sheriff's acts. Because of this close legal association, South Carolina statutes grant a Sheriff the sweeping power to dismiss deputies who he feels no longer serve his purpose. In light of this statutory power, the Sheriff will review recommendations from a Conduct and Procedures Review Board and make disposition of the issue in accordance with his statutory powers and with respect to Sheriff's Office General Orders.

The Sheriff can order an additional review of the issues involved in the original board or determine that no disciplinary action is warranted despite the board's recommendations. The Sheriff's judgment is final. The deputy (including other employees) who is the subject of the board's review will receive notification of the Sheriff's determination in writing, with copies delivered to the Office of Professional Standards and/or the deputy's (employee's) personnel file.

PENALTIES FOR AT FAULT COLLISIONS:

In cases where a Collision Review Board is not required, the employee's supervisor will review the collision within 5 business days to determine whether the employee contributed to the collision.

If the employee is deemed to be at fault or having contributed to the collision, supervisors will take the following action:

- 1st collision that the employee contributed to within a three year period will result in a Verbal Warning Report.
- 2nd collision that the employee contributed to within three years will result in a Written Reprimand and loss of their take home car privilege for one pay period (2 weeks).
- 3rd collision that the employee contributed to within three years will be sent to the Collision Review Board. At a minimum the employee will be suspended for 8 hours and loss of their take-home car privilege for two pay periods (4 weeks).

The listed criteria do not prevent supervisors from distributing disciplinary action that is higher than those listed above, however, lower forms of discipline will not be considered unless unusual circumstances exist.

Supervisors will be responsible for tracking employee collisions, whether they contributed to the collision or not. This documentation will be forwarded to the appropriate Lieutenant in the event of a Deputy's transfer to another unit.

Hobart Lewis, Sheriff