

Subject: Child Transportation

Policy:

The transportation of children requires additional safety measures. The driver of a police vehicle is responsible for ensuring compliance of occupant restraint use by all occupants of the vehicle they are operating. Approved child restraints shall be used for all children as prescribed by law. While transportation of a child in a law enforcement vehicle may be necessary, transportation by law enforcement should be a last resort. Transportation may be required after the arrest of an adult family member/caregiver, or other situations where a child is removed from his/her environment for the child's greater health and safety.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures to ensure the safe transportation of children when such transportation is necessary.

Procedures:

The following are guidelines and protocols for transporting children under 13 years of age, in a law enforcement vehicle.

1. Law enforcement officers may only transport children under 8 years of age in a proper child safety restraint when the vehicle allows for proper restraint installation, and the law enforcement officer is knowledgeable of how to use and install the child restraint.
2. A child restraint **must never** be installed in the rear seat of a police vehicle with a prisoner cage and/or a molded seat.
3. A rear-facing child restraint **must never** be installed in the front seat of any vehicle, including police vehicles.
4. Before transporting a child in a police vehicle, the officer must ensure that there are no loose items in the vehicle that could become projectiles in a crash. Officers shall not transport children in the front seat of the patrol vehicle if there is any equipment that is located fully or partially in the passenger side the vehicle.
5. If an officer must transport a child, he/she will contact a fellow officer with a vehicle suitable for the correct installation of a child restraint. Police detectives generally have vehicles in which a car seat may be more readily installed.
6. Law enforcement officers should call for assistance before attempting to transport children younger than 13 years of age when situations require. A law enforcement officer should attempt to contact a child passenger safety technician prior to transporting a child in a child restraint unless the officer is knowledgeable in its use.
7. If the law enforcement officer does not have a suitable vehicle, child restraint or knowledge of how to use the child restraint, he/she will not transport children. In the event of an emergency that requires transporting children in the absence of one of these items, alternative transportation should be found as soon as practical, including friends or family, human services, or other vehicles.
8. While transporting children, law enforcement officers shall remain vigilant and take every precaution to ensure the safety of the child.