

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 04-20

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Orders 03-24
SOP: 501.61.00

DATE: June 15, 2004

PARKING ENFORCEMENT

I. PURPOSE.

To establish guidelines which governs the activities of the Police Department's Parking Control Unit and related enforcement activities.

II. DEFINITIONS.

Parking Enforcement - Enforcement activities designed to monitor and regulate motor vehicle parking in accordance with existing local ordinances.

Parking Meter - A coin-operated device that registers the purchase of parking time for a motor vehicle.

Point Traffic Control - The control of vehicular and pedestrian movement at a particular place on a roadway, such as an intersection.

III. ENFORCEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

Sworn employees operating in conjunction with Parking Control personnel will enforce all duly established parking regulations within the City's corporate limits. In this regard, members of the Parking Control unit will primarily concentrate on meter enforcement, but shall also monitor and enforce other parking violations, to include among others: private property violations, taxi stands, handicapped parking, bus zones, mail boxes, fire hydrants, no parking zones, and double-parking.

A. Additional Parking Control Unit Responsibilities

1). Broken Meters

Those meters which are discovered to be jammed or otherwise broken during routine patrol by Parking Control personnel will be covered with a colored meter hood. The meter hood will advise the general public of the meter's condition and that a one-hour parking limit has been imposed.

Should a vehicle park at the meter, Parking Control personnel shall chalk the tires, and issue a meter violation in the event the vehicle exceeds the one hour limit.

At the end of each working day, the Parking Control personnel will deliver Meter Repair Request forms to the City Garage, and retain a copy for internal use. Repair requests will include the meter number, location, and description of the problem (if known).

Should an inoperable meter be reported directly to the department, communications personnel will obtain as much pertinent information as possible and apprise the City Garage of same.

2). Vehicle Lockouts

Parking Control personnel will handle vehicle lockouts in compliance with the General Order covering motorist Assistance.

3). Traffic Control

Parking Control personnel will assist uniform patrol officers with point traffic control at the direction of the on-duty uniformed supervisor or watch commander.

4). Deliveries

Parking Control personnel will make official deliveries as directed.

5). Special Events/Details

The planning officer for each special event or detail will assign Parking Control personnel to static traffic control posts and/or other positions suitable to their level of authority, as necessary.

IV. GENERAL.

Sworn officers and Parking Control employees will enforce established parking regulations as required. Should a vehicle be found in violation, department members shall have the discretion to order the vehicle moved (if occupied), issue a parking ticket, or tow the vehicle, contingent upon the circumstances.

The issuing employee will log the license number, the description of the vehicle, the location of the violation, the date and time, and the violation for which the vehicle is being cited on the parking citation. The issuing employee will then affix their name and department serial number in the appropriate spaces at the base of the ticket form, or the case of Parking Control staff, their DSN shall automatically be printed on the ticket.

Once a uniformed officer has completed a parking citation, the officer will retain the original (white) copy of the citation, while the defendant's (yellow) copy shall be affixed to the vehicle. As Parking Control personnel utilize a Ticket-Trac computer, violation data will be entered into same, after which time, the device will produce a hard copy of the ticket to be placed on the defendant's vehicle.

Sworn employees will submit all completed parking citations to their supervisor, at which time they will be reviewed. Upon completion of the review, the tickets will be delivered to the records unit for entry into the department's computer system. Parking citations will then be forwarded to the Traffic Violations Bureau.

At the end of each shift, the Parking Control supervisor shall download a citation count and related violation information from each of his/her subordinate's Ticket-Trac machines. The Parking Control supervisor shall then notify the Traffic Violations Bureau that the download is complete and available to be accessed. If a ticket is voided, it will be turned over to the Parking Control supervisor who will review same and subsequently forward it to TVB.

A. Employee Parking

The department has provided a reserved parking area to accommodate marked and unmarked police vehicles, as well as personal motor vehicles owned and operated by department employees. The parking area will be located in the lower level of the parking structure south of police headquarters and except for those spaces reserved for official use, will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Department employees will be provided with a swipe card to operate the gate controlling access to the parking area. This will allow for ready ingress/egress of their personal vehicles.

Off-duty department employees shall, while engaging in business, personal, or recreational pursuits within the City, park their personal vehicles in compliance with established parking regulations.

B. Police Vehicle Parking

Garage parking spaces have been provided for the entire fleet of marked and unmarked vehicles. These parking spaces are reserved for those vehicles which are not actively being utilized, and for those where the officer operating the vehicle needs to return to the department.

Officers may also utilize the parking zone in front of police headquarters to park on a temporary basis. However, no more than two marked cars shall be parked at that location at any given time.

1). Other Police Agency Parking

Due to the lack of parking space within or adjacent to the St. Louis County Government Center, police vehicles manned by officers from outside law enforcement agencies shall be permitted to park at metered parking spots (without payment) to facilitate the conduct of official business.

In those instances where a police vehicle from another agency is discovered illegally parked, and the vehicle is located other than at a meter, the police vehicle shall be issued a parking ticket in accordance to the applicable ordinance.

C. News Vehicle Parking

When necessary, the news media will be permitted to park their vans in those areas commonly restricted to parking, which will also include parking on the sidewalk, as long as they allow sufficient room for pedestrians to pass. However, news vehicles will not be permitted to park in taxi or bus zones (as those areas are essentially leased from the City by private enterprise), nor shall they be permitted to impede the normal flow of traffic.

If a media news van is found to be in violation of these guidelines, the operator of the vehicle will be approached and requested to relocate their equipment in a polite but firm manner. Should they refuse to relocate, or deliberately delay complying with the request, the vehicle shall be issued a parking citation for the appropriate violation.

D. Bus Parking at Hotels

Due to the lack of space for bus parking on private property at Clayton Hotels, buses will be permitted to park on the street (including overnight) in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Requests for bus parking will be made to the Police Department by the hotel(s) at least twenty-four hours in advance. These requests shall be directed to the Commander of the Field Operations Bureau, or in his absence, the on-duty watch commander.
2. Department personnel will hood the required number of meters at the appropriate time, and will remove the meter hoods at the end of the allotted time period.
3. Extended and/or overnight parking of buses will only be permitted from 1700 hours on Friday to 0800 hours on Monday.
4. Parking meters will be hooded for no more than two buses at one time.
5. Should a request be received to park more than two buses, or at some time other than a weekend (as specified above), the hotel will be advised to park their buses on the south side of Shaw Park. In the event of special circumstances, the hotel contact person will be referred to the Chief of Police.

E. Posting No Parking Signs/Hooding Meters

Requests for meter hooding will be handled by the Public Works Department except in emergency situations, or in the case of special events, at which time the Police Department may hood such meters as are necessary.

In those instances where this department receives a non-emergency request to hood parking meters, the caller will be advised to contact the Finance Department in regard to renting the meters for a specific time period.

No parking signs and meter hoods will be placed and removed according to the following procedure.

Following a request for this department to post no parking signs, or to hood meters in special circumstances, records or other agency personnel will document the request and contact the Field Operations Bureau Watch Commander or supervisor for approval. He/she shall grant or deny approval of the request and log all pertinent information in regard to the request on the original posting form. The original form and three copies will then be distributed in the following manner:

1. The original form shall be forwarded to the Commander of the Field Operations Bureau, or in his absence, the on-duty uniformed supervisor.
2. A copy will be delivered to the Administrative Division for future reference.
3. A copy will be placed on the officer's time sheet board.
4. A copy will be forwarded to Parking Control.

When meter postings, etc. are required at night or on the weekend, the Field Operations Bureau supervisor will assign the duty of posting no parking signs or hooding meters to those sworn personnel working the appropriate patrol area. They will also ensure that such requests are handled in a timely manner.

During normal business hours, Monday through Friday, it shall be the responsibility of the Parking Control supervisor to ensure that all no parking signs and meter hoods are posted, and/or removed at the date and time indicated on the form. On the weekend or during the evening, it will be the responsibility of the on-duty patrol supervisor to ensure the removal function is accomplished.

Once the signs and/or meter hoods have been removed, the parking controller or officer who removed same will complete the final section of the posting form and deliver it to the Commander of the Field Operations Bureau. A record of all no parking postings and meter hoodings will be maintained for a period of thirty days by that office. All other copies of the form may be discarded following completion of the steps outlined above.

V. OVERTIME METERS/CHALKING.

Parking Control personnel will select an area to chalk and designate a starting point. The time and location will be recorded and the left rear tires of each vehicle within the area shall be marked with a line of chalk. At the moment the last vehicle is marked, the time and location will again be recorded.

Once the designated time has elapsed, Parking Control personnel will return to the initial starting point and check the parked vehicle for chalk marks on their tires. Should a chalk mark be observed, the vehicle shall be issued a parking ticket for "Extended Time at a Meter." It makes no difference if the meter shows available time remaining, as these violations refer to the vehicle being parked at the same meter, without having been moved, thereby monopolizing the space.

A copy of the ticket shall be placed on the vehicle and the remaining copy retained by the issuing employee. The number of tickets will then be downloaded into the TVB computer system on a daily basis and tabulated by the Parking Control supervisor.

VI. PERMIT PARKING.

Parking Control personnel will enforce permit parking as required.

A. Public Permit Parking

All City-owned parking lots provide a designated amount of permit parking. These spaces are leased and administered by a private management company on a monthly basis and require the payment of a specified fee. As part of this process, each parking lot has been assigned a letter code, and those individuals who rent a parking space are issued a numbered hang tag to place in their vehicle.

Upon receipt of a complaint of a vehicle illegally occupying a rented space, Parking Control personnel will normally be dispatched to the scene. On arrival, the vehicle will be located and ticketed. As all parking lots are posted with the City's towing ordinance, the illegally parked vehicle may be automatically towed.

In cases where a decision is made not to tow the vehicle, a copy of the ticket will be placed on the offending vehicle, with duplicate data stored in the Ticket-Trac machine. Same shall then be downloaded on a daily basis into the Traffic Violations Bureau computer system. Should a uniformed officer be responsible for the ticket, the duplicate copy of the ticket will be returned to this department, tabulated, and forwarded to TVB.

B. Residential Permit Parking

City residential areas have been divided into separate zones for the purposes of residential parking. Similar to the public parking lots, these areas have also been color-coded, and a one or two hour time limit established to govern the time span of residential parking.

The City Finance Department will issue a color-coded tag to each resident to place in the rear window of their respective vehicles. Five additional tags will be issued to provide for guests of residents.

Residents in possession of one colored tag may not park in a different colored area and exceed the designated time limits without being considered in violation.

Parking control personnel shall routinely check such residential areas. Resident vehicles discovered to have the wrong color-code tag displayed in the rear window will have their tires chalked in the same manner as those vehicles with no parking tags at all. Once the designated amount of time has elapsed, Parking Control members will return to the area and issue citations to those vehicles still found in violation.

A copy of the ticket shall be placed on the vehicle, with duplicate data stored in the Ticket-Trac machine. Same shall then be downloaded on a daily basis into the Traffic Violations Bureau computer system and subsequently tabulated.

VII. VEHICLE TOWING.

Police officers and Parking Control personnel are authorized to remove vehicles from streets, alleys, and parking lots under the following circumstances:

1. When a vehicle is parked on public property in violation of restrictions and the area is posted as a tow-away zone.
2. When a vehicle is parked without a permit on a public parking lot where permits are required.
3. When a vehicle is parked on public property in violation of any parking restriction, is unattended, and has an accumulation of six or more unanswered parking tickets totaling \$75.00 or more, that have exceeded the ten-day response period.

4. When a vehicle is left unattended and parked illegally so as to constitute an obstruction or hazard to the normal movement of traffic on public streets and alleys.
5. When a vehicle is parked unattended on a public sidewalk.
6. When a vehicle is parked unattended in such a manner as to block access to a driveway or alley.
7. When a vehicle is parked within ten feet of a fire hydrant.
8. When the removal of a vehicle is necessary in the interests of public safety because of fire, flood, storm, snow, or other emergency.
9. When the driver of a vehicle is taken into custody, and such vehicle would thereby be left unattended, or the vehicle is required as evidence, or intended for seizure proceedings.
10. When a vehicle is being driven in a unsafe or improper condition.
11. When a vehicle is involved in an accident and is damaged to the extent that it cannot be safely driven from the scene, or the driver is injured or incapacitated to such an extent as to be unable to provide for the vehicle's custody and removal.
12. When a vehicle is parked unattended in an area designated as a taxi stand.
13. When a vehicle is parked unattended in a valet parking area, and the officer has attempted to locate the owner within the confines of the appropriate restaurant, and a fifteen minute grace period has elapsed.

If a vehicle is in the process of being towed and the owner or operator arrives on the scene, the vehicle should be released upon proper proof of ownership, except under those circumstances outlined in items 3, 9, 10, and 11 above. In the event, the tow service has already hooked onto the vehicle at the time the owner arrives, the owner/operator will be responsible to pay a hook-up fee prior to the vehicle being released to their custody. However, where no action has been taken by the tow service driver, no fees shall be charged to the vehicle owner.

All towed vehicles shall have an inventory search performed on same, however, department employees may not force entry into a vehicle towed in regard to a parking violation except where mitigating circumstances (recovered stolen/wanted vehicle, etc.) exist. Subsequent to a vehicle being towed, department employees shall document the event by a Missouri Department of Revenue tow form and/or incident report. When possible, inventory items will be listed on the face sheet of the tow form.

Towed vehicles shall also be listed on the department's Tow Log.

A. Vehicle Towed for Accumulated Tickets

Motor vehicles may be towed while on public property for an accumulation of parking tickets when the vehicle is unattended, there are six or more unpaid parking tickets on file which have exceeded the ten-day grace period, the accumulated fines total \$75.00 or more, and the vehicle is in violation at the time a tow is requested. However, Parking Control personnel will generally refrain from towing a vehicle until there is a minimum of \$100.00 in unpaid fines, and the vehicle is in violation at the time a tow is requested.

If the owner of a vehicle towed for unpaid parking fines requests the release of their vehicle during normal business hours, the owner will be directed and/or conveyed to TVB to arrange payment of the outstanding tickets, or request a court date, prior to the release of the vehicle. If the owner appears at the Police Department after TVB has closed, an officer will be called in to issue the owner a "Failure to Appear" summons, citing the oldest unpaid parking ticket on file by number and date. The vehicle owner will then be apprised of the next court date and instructed to contact TVB or appear in court on the date provided. The vehicle will then be released to the owner.

In those cases where an owner has accumulated an excessive amount of unpaid parking tickets, as established by the Associate City Attorney, and a warrant for "Failure to Appear" has been issued, the vehicle owner will be arrested at the time they attempt to pick up their automobile. Such individuals will then be booked and released on bond. Upon completion of processing, their vehicle will be released.

Vehicles may not be held in lieu of payment of parking fines.

VII. VOIDING OF PARKING CITATIONS.

In those instances where a parking summons is to be voided, the employee shall write "void" in large letters across the face of the ticket, and place their name, DSN, and the reason for the void on the rear of the document. Voided parking summonses, initiated by either sworn or Parking Control personnel, shall then be submitted to the appropriate supervisor for approval.

Voided parking tickets will be forwarded to the Traffic Violations Bureau for final action.

BY ORDER OF:

THOMAS J. BYRNE
Chief of Police

TJB:dld

CALEA Reference: 61.1.13