





POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

	PATROL OPERATIONS	
	POLICY NUMBER: 41-1	ISSUING AUTHORITY 
	EFFECTIVE DATE: June 12, 2025	Christine A. Elow Police Commissioner

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Accreditation standards for patrol relate to the administration, operation, and equipment of the patrol function. The word *patrol* is used in the broadest sense; it is a primary police function and embraces much more than the act of patrolling. It is defined as a generalized function in which personnel may engage in a variety of activities that can range from traditional response to calls for service to alternative strategies designed to support quality of life initiatives within the City.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Cambridge Police Department to:

- A. assign personnel to continuous patrol coverage such that sworn officers can respond to calls for service within its jurisdiction 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year;
- B. respond in a reasonable and measured manner depending on the nature of the call; and
- C. provide to officers adequate equipment to perform their jobs.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *LPR*: License Plate Recognition system.
- B. *MDT*: Mobile Data Terminal.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. 41.1.1 (M) Shift/Beat Assignment
 - 1. The department manages shift assignments according to the following procedures.

- a. To provide for continuous patrol coverage including calls for service and emergencies, the City is divided into five patrol sectors. Officers are assigned to a sector based on deployment strategies determined by supervisors and by a system of shift bidding.
 - b. Assignment to patrol shifts.
 - (1) Shifts are bid on by seniority and years of service. Officers can bid on the day shift, impact shift, or the alternating shift, which is on a 4-days-on and 2-days-off schedule. Once an officer is assigned to a shift, the officer can bid on certain routes based on seniority.
 - c. Frequency of shift rotation.
 - (1) Shifts are bid twice a year.
 - d. Assignment to service areas.
 - (1) The shift commander may assign officers to certain areas and functions based on the needs of the City at the time.
 - (2) For any shift or route there can be one-officer cars, two-officer cars, foot patrols, and bike patrols.
 - e. Frequency of service area rotation.
 - (1) This happens only twice a year at shift change.
 - f. Determination of days off.
 - (1) Days off are provided according to the respective contracts. Any benefited time such as vacation, sick time, personal time, parental and family leave are provided according to the CBA.
- B. 41.1.2 (M) Shift Briefing
- 1. Shift briefing procedures are as follows.
 - a. Anyone assigned to a patrol shift shall attend roll call at the assigned time (7am; 3pm; 11pm). On occasion, detectives may attend roll call to discuss a particular problem.
 - b. The shift commander conducts roll call and goes over the Crime Bulletin, which is prepared by the Crime Analysis Unit. The Bulletin is sent out to all personnel department-wide by email prior to roll call.
 - c. The Crime Bulletin is usually distributed every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
 - d. The Shift Commander confirms the route assignments and makes any last-minute changes.
 - e. Members of the Command Staff may attend roll call to provide information about new directives or other information.
- C. 41.1.4 (M) Agency Service Animals

1. The department does not have any service animals other than canines.
- D. 41.1.5 (M) Police Service Canines (See policy 41-3 Explosive Ordinance Disposal.)
- E. 41.2.1 (M) Responding Procedures
 1. Procedures for responding to non-emergency and emergency calls include the following.
 - a. Defining non-emergency calls.
 - (1) For non-emergency calls, which include but are not limited to parking and traffic complaints, noise complaints, minor roadway hazards, and when there is no advantage to arriving immediately, officers shall obey traffic laws and may not use lights and siren.
 - b. Defining emergency calls.
 - (1) Emergency calls are those that involve but are not limited to life-threatening medical issues, violence or crimes in progress, mental health crises, and missing children; for these calls, officers may activate emergency lights and siren and are not obligated to obey all traffic laws if they operate the cruiser safely and under control at all times.
 - (2) Officers shall stop for all school buses displaying a stop sign and flashing lights. Officers are required to comply with M.G.L. c. 89, § 7B.
 - c. Prioritization of call types for response.
 - (1) For the department there are only two call types, emergency and non-emergency. Crime Analysis may categorize types of calls for service in a different way for federal reporting purposes. However, for patrol, calls are either emergency or non-emergency.
 - d. Guidelines for the use of authorized emergency equipment.
 - (1) For non-emergencies, lights and siren are not authorized.
 - (2) For emergency calls for service, officers may use their discretion regarding the use of lights and siren depending on their abilities to drive safely.
 - (3) When lights and siren are not activated, such when it is advisable to avoid alerting suspects, officers shall exercise due caution and operate the cruiser safely and under control at all times.
- F. 41.2.2 (M) Pursuit of Motor Vehicles (See policy 41-4 Pursuit.)
- G. 41.2.3 (M) Roadblocks and Forcible Stopping
 1. Roadblocks and forcible stopping are inherently dangerous; all forms of roadblocks and forcible stopping are strictly prohibited.
 2. Tactical maneuvers including boxing in, heading off, paralleling, and ramming or deliberate contact with the suspect vehicle are strictly prohibited.

H. 41.2.4 (M) Notification Procedures

1. The specific circumstances and procedures for notifications by first responder units in emergency situations are as follows.
 - a. Whereas every emergency call for service is different, first responding officers will assess the scene and determine who should be notified.
 - b. The officer on scene will alert ECD to the circumstances and the need to make further notifications. ECD will contact EMS and Cambridge Fire if necessary.

I. 41.2.5 (M) Missing Persons (See policy 41-5 Missing Persons.)

J. 41.2.6 (M) Missing Children (See policy 41-6 Missing Children.)

K. 41.2.7 (M) Mental Health Issues (See policy 41-7 Mental Health Issues.)

L. 41.3.1 (M) Patrol Vehicles Lights, Sirens

1. All vehicles used in routine or general patrol service, whether conspicuously marked or unmarked, will be equipped with operational emergency lights and a siren.
2. Patrol vehicles will also be equipped with public address speakers, exterior spotlights, alley lights, and front scene lights.

M. 41.3.2 (M) Equipment Specification/Replenishment

1. The equipment to be included in every patrol vehicle and the system to ensure replenishment of supplies for operational readiness are as follows.
 - a. Patrol Supervisor Vehicle
 - (1) Less Lethal 40mm Launcher
 - (2) M5 Rifle
 - (3) Tactical Armored Vest
 - (4) Tactical Helmet
 - (5) Defibrillator
 - (6) Medical Bag
 - (7) Crime Scene Kit
 - (8) Life Ring
 - (9) AED
 - (10) Fire Extinguisher
 - (11) Opioid Kit and Domestic Violence Kit
 - (12) On the Go Bags (Autism Spectrum Disorders)

(13) Catch Pole

b. Patrol Officer Vehicle

(1) Same as above except for the Less Lethal Launcher

(2) Most vehicles have an AED

- c. At the beginning of every shift officers are required to conduct a vehicle inspection via the Fleetio App. Any deficiencies shall be reported to the appropriate responsible person who will address the issue, either by replenishing missing items or fixing faulty equipment.

N. 41.3.3 (M) Occupant Safety Restraints

1. Any member of the department operating a department-owned vehicle equipped with factory-installed occupant safety restraining devices shall use such devices while operating the vehicle with the following exceptions.
 - a. Prior to approaching an assigned call or traffic stop when there is a tactical need to release the seatbelt.
 - b. Any response when a quick or immediate exit may become necessary.
 - c. While the vehicle is stationary.
 - d. On injured passengers or detainees when the seatbelt might further aggravate the injury.
 - e. During an approved training class when instructed to do so by a certified instructor.

O. 41.3.4 (O) Authorized Personal Equipment

1. Authorized personal equipment not issued by the department that may be carried by officers include the following items.
 - a. A folding pocket-knife conforming with Massachusetts law.
 - b. Medical scissors.
 - c. A window punch or glass breaking device.
 - d. Seatbelt cutting device.
 - e. Door stopper/door wedge.
 - f. Flashlight.

P. 41.3.5 (M) Protective Vests

1. The department provides protective vests to all sworn officers.
2. Officers assigned to patrol functions and who work paid details are required to wear their protective vests while on duty.

3. Tactical teams may use a higher-level vest on tactical operations than that which is supplied for regular patrol.

Q. 1.3.6 (M) Protective Vests/Pre-Planned, High-Risk Situations

1. The department requires the wearing of protective vests by personnel engaged in pre-planned, high-risk situations as appropriate for each situation.
 - a. The members of the Special Response Team are the only department personnel involved in planned high-risk situations. Members of this team shall wear protective vests to a protective level appropriate for each situation.

R. 41.3.7 (M) Mobile Data Access

1. Procedures for the use of computerized mobile data access capabilities or other similar technologies are as follows.
 - a. Authorized users of each system.
 - (1) All patrol vehicles are equipped with MDTs. All sworn officers are authorized to use this system.
 - b. Authorized uses of the system.
 - (1) The system may be used for criminal history records, both in-state and out-of-state.
 - (2) Registration and licenses, in-state and out-of-state.
 - (3) Missing and wanted persons.
 - (4) Stolen property.
 - (5) Firearms licenses.
 - c. Unauthorized installation of software programs or other files.
 - (1) All members of the department are prohibited from installing software programs or other files unless authorized by Public Safety Information Technology.
 - d. Manipulation or alteration of current software running on department-owned mobile, desktop, or handheld computers.
 - (1) Likewise, manipulation or alteration of current software on agency-owned mobile, desktop, or handheld computers is prohibited.
 - e. Supervisory responsibilities regarding the review of radio transmissions.
 - (1) Supervisors are responsible for monitoring radio transmissions by officers on the shift.
 - (2) Any violation of department policy will be addressed by the patrol supervisor.

S. 41.3.8 (M) In-Car and/or Body-Worn Audio/Video

1. The department does not own or deploy any in-car audio/video equipment. Refer to Policy 41-9 (Body Worn Cameras) for the procedures pertaining to body worn cameras.

T. 41.3.9 (M) License Plate Recognition Systems

1. The department does not own or deploy a license plate recognition system.