



CRYSTAL POLICE DEPARTMENT

Department Policy Manual

TITLE: Operation of Vehicle Without Lights
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DEFINITIONS

OPERATING WITHOUT LIGHTS: means a peace officer operating a vehicle, which is owned or leased by the city, without lights as an exception to MSS §169.48 to 169.65. This definition does not include a parked vehicle.

PEACE OFFICER: as meaning given in MSS §626.84 Subd.1(c), a full-time licensed Crystal police officer.

BACKGROUND

The operation of law enforcement vehicles without activated head and tail lights for the successful apprehension of criminals is a necessary police tactic. Certain police operations require such action so as to not compromise the covert nature of the operation. Peace officers who approach potentially dangerous situations in squad cars often extinguish all lighting just prior to arrival as an officer safety precaution. MSS §169.541 gives statutory authority to peace officers to operate law enforcement vehicles without lights in accordance with POST Board standards and this department's policy.

POLICY

In accordance with Minnesota POST Board standards, a peace officer may not operate a law enforcement vehicle without lights:

- On interstate highways,
- At speeds greater than what is reasonable and prudent under existing weather, road, and traffic conditions,
- In situations where the peace officer is an active participant in pursuing a motor vehicle being operated in violation of MSS §609.487,
- Contrary to the elements listed in MSS §169.541, and
- Contrary to any written policies or procedures established by the chief law enforcement officer of this agency.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Only sworn full-time police officers while in the performance of their duties may operate a law enforcement vehicle without lights.

The officer decision and conduct in operating his/her vehicle without lights must be reasonable and must be consistent with the standards adopted by the POST Board.

The officer must reasonably believe that operating a vehicle without lights is necessary under the circumstances to investigate a criminal or suspected criminal violation of state laws or local ordinances. Routine random patrol without lights is precluded by this policy.

Officers may park vehicles alongside or adjacent to roadways without lights illuminated to monitor traffic. However, officers may not conduct moving traffic patrol without lights.