

12.536 FOOT PURSUITS

References:

Procedure 12.140 – Canine Operations
Procedure 12.175 – Use of Special Weapons and Tactics Unit
Ohio Revised Code 2921.31 - Obstructing Official Business
Ohio Revised Code 2921.331 - Failure to Comply with Order or Signal of Police Officer
Illinois v. Wardlow (2000), 528 US 119
Terry v. Ohio (1968), 392 US 1

Definitions:

Foot Pursuit: A situation in which an officer, on foot, chases a suspect in an effort to detain or arrest that individual who he has reasonable suspicion to believe is about to commit, is committing or has committed a crime and who is resisting apprehension by fleeing from the officer.

Suspect: Includes any individual who a police officer reasonably believes is about to commit, is committing or has committed an offense or poses an immediate threat to the safety of the public, other officers, or themselves.

Contact/Cover: Describes the practice of having two or more officers working together during a foot pursuit. The officers work in unison via direct or indirect communication to coordinate their efforts, remain aware of the locations of officers and suspects, and keep abreast of the status of the pursuit.

Purpose:

To facilitate the safe apprehension of a suspect who flees on foot and to prevent officer injury.

Policy:

Whenever an officer decides to engage, or continue to engage, in a foot pursuit a quick risk assessment must take place. They must evaluate the risk involved to themselves, to other officers, the suspect and the community versus what would be gained from pursuing the suspect. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing the tactical soundness of foot pursuits.

Procedure

- A. Factors to Consider when Initiating a Foot Pursuit
 - 1. Whether the suspect is armed
 - 2. The offense committed by the suspect

3. Location:
 - a. Nature of area: residential, commercial, school zone, expressway, etc.
 - b. Conditions of the structures: abandoned or condemned
 - c. Environmental factors: weather or darkness
 4. Ability to apprehend the suspect at a later date
 5. Communications
 - a. Familiarity with area, ability to transmit location of fleeing suspect
 - b. Radio frequency and coverage (dead spots)
 6. Availability of backup units to assist
- B. Pursuing Officer(s) Responsibility
1. The decision to initiate or continue a foot pursuit requires weighing the need to apprehend the suspect against the degree of risk to which the officer and others are exposed as a result of the pursuit.
 2. Once the foot pursuit has been initiated, the officer must notify Police Communications Section (PCS) of the following information:
 - a. Car number
 - b. Location
 - c. Direction
 - d. Description of suspect
 - e. If armed with a weapon
 - f. Reason for foot pursuit
 3. PCS will notify a supervisor of the pursuit circumstances and any other relevant information.
 4. The pursuing officer will coordinate with other officers to establish a perimeter in the area to contain the suspect.
 - a. In the event that a suspect is confined in an area, consideration should be given to the use of specialized units such as Canine Squad or SWAT Unit.
- C. If possible, officers should consider the feasibility of the following strategies or tactics prior to initiating foot pursuits:
1. Area containment

2. Surveillance
 3. Obtaining additional officers
- D. Police Officer should Terminate a Foot Pursuit:
1. If ordered by a supervisor.
 2. If the officer believes that the danger to the pursuing officers or the public outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension of the suspect.
 3. If the suspect's identity is known and he is not an immediate threat to the safety of the public or other officers, consider terminating the pursuit and apprehend at a later date.
 4. After termination of the foot pursuit, officers will notify Police Communications Section (PCS) with the last know location of suspect or point of apprehension.
- E. Supervisor's Role
1. The supervisor's role is to monitor a foot pursuit and appropriately direct resources to safely apprehend the suspect.
 2. The supervisor will terminate a foot pursuit at any time if it is determined the danger to the pursuing officers or the public outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension of the suspect.
 3. If the foot pursuit results in a reportable incident such as a use of force, injury to prisoner, injury to officer, auto accident etc., the supervisor will include an analysis of the tactical soundness of the foot pursuit in the appropriate report.