



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

630 – VEHICLE THEFTS, PRIOR AUTHORITY VEHICLE USE AND THEFT BY FRAUD

GENERAL ORDER: 2024-49
ISSUED: October 25, 2024

EFFECTIVE: October 25, 2024

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Nicole Waldner
DATE: September 20, 2024

ACTION: Amends General Order 2022-52 (December 2, 2022)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): NONE

ROLL CALL VERSION

Contains only changes to current policy.
For complete version of SOP, see SharePoint.

630.10 VEHICLE THEFT INVESTIGATION

- C. Department members shall file a Theft by Fraud [943.20\(1\)\(e\)](#) incident report where the member's investigation reveals a person who rented/leased a vehicle fails to return a rental vehicle upon the expiration of a written lease or rental agreement. Member's shall not list "EAN HOLDINGS" or "PV HOLDINGS" as the victim business and shall list the name of the rental company itself to ensure the correct company can be notified when the vehicle is recovered.
- H. Once it is determined that a vehicle theft occurred and the complainant has signed the *Vehicle Supplement* (form PT-37), the investigating member shall obtain a case report number. The member shall then file a *Stolen Auto Report* in the Record Management System (RMS). An automatic email will be sent to the Stolen Vehicle Desk upon the member submitting the report.

Note: If the incident is determined to be an attempt motor vehicle theft, the member shall file an *Initial Report* in RMS as a Motor Vehicle Theft [943.23\(2\)](#) and select attempted in the offense tab. Member shall not use the *Stolen Auto Report* template for attempted motor vehicle thefts.

- M. The investigating member shall first query the license plate and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) through the Department of Transportation (DOT) to verify vehicle ownership.
1. The member shall then contact the Department of Public Works (DPW) Parking Information Desk and provide the VIN and license plate number to ensure the vehicle has not been towed or repossessed.
 2. If the vehicle status is reported as "Junked" by DOT, the member shall complete an *Unreported Stolen Auto and Recovered Report*.
- N. If a vehicle is taken in or used in a major crime (e.g., robbery, burglary) that information shall be entered into the incident report by the investigating member under the 'vehicle'

tab. The vehicle information shall also be included on the ALL DABS teletype within 60 minutes of the member beginning the investigation. The Stolen Vehicle Desk shall immediately enter the stolen vehicle information into the NCIC/CIB System.

630.15 RECOVERED STOLEN AND THEFT BY FRAUD

B. RECOVERY PROCEDURES

1. Police members locating a reported stolen vehicle or verifying a vehicle recovered by the owner/operator as described in subsection A above shall:
 - c. If the vehicle must be processed for evidence, the member shall call for a crime scene trained officer (CST) or community service officer. If the member needs a forensic investigator or crime scene investigator, the member shall notify their shift commander. Shift commanders shall then notify the Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB) at extension [REDACTED], and the CIB shift commander shall determine if a CST, forensic investigator, or crime scene investigator will respond to the scene.
 - de. Reasonable effort shall be made by the investigating member to contact the vehicle owner. This may be done in person, by phone, or by leaving a *Referral Memo* (form PR-3) at the owner's residence.
 - ed. If the owner is unavailable or unable to come to the scene to claim their vehicle within a reasonable amount of time, the investigating member shall contact the DPW Parking Information Desk and obtain a tow reference number. Members shall refer to SOP 610 Towing of Vehicles if the vehicle needs to be towed.
 - fe. If a vehicle will be towed, all relevant information shall be documented on the tow slip including all damage to the vehicle and property located inside of the vehicle. The member requesting the tow shall conduct an inventory search of the vehicle in accordance with SOP 610.05 Towing of Vehicles.
 - gf. The investigating member shall file a *Stolen Auto Report – Recovery* in RMS. An automatic email will be sent to the Stolen Vehicle Desk upon the member submitting the report. Member's must click the submit button once this report is completed to ensure the Stolen Vehicle Desk is notified.
 - hg. Upon receiving the email that a *Stolen Auto Report – Recovery* was submitted in RMS, Stolen Vehicle Desk personnel shall immediately remove the stolen vehicle from the NCIC/CIB system and file a supplemental report regarding this entry. They shall enter the license plates into the NCIC/CIB system if not recovered with the vehicle.
2. If a latent print identification lead is generated from the exterior or interior of a recovered vehicle with no suspects in custody:
 - e. An *Investigative Alert* shall only be entered into RMS in accordance with SOP 150.60(E) Court Procedures under the following circumstances:

1. When the victim of the motor vehicle theft is unable to be located to view an elimination photograph or photo array.
2. The person identified by a recovered latent print from the stolen vehicle has no prior arrest history for OVWOC, is not on bail for a violent felony, or is not on probation or parole.
3. When otherwise approved by the member's shift commander. The member shall include the approving shift commander's name and a brief explanation of the reason for not entering a *Suspect Alert* in the *Investigative Alert* narrative.

Note: If an Investigative Alert is entered into RMS for a juvenile because the juvenile does not have a criminal record, the officer entering the Investigative Alert shall email the Office of Community Outreach and Education Office of Community Relations, Engagement, and Recruitment to have the juvenile referred to the Credible Messenger Program.

D. LOCAL STEAL/ LOCAL RECOVERY - ARREST FOR VEHICLE THEFT AND/OR THEFT BY FRAUD

Upon making an arrest for Operating Vehicle without Owner's Consent, the investigating member shall:

3. The investigating member shall request for the vehicle to be processed by a forensic investigator (if available). If a forensic investigator is not available, the investigating member shall then request a crime scene trained officer (CST) or community service officer to process the vehicle. If the member needs a forensic investigator or crime scene investigator, the member shall notify their shift commander. Shift commanders shall then notify the Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB) at extension [REDACTED] and the CIB shift commander shall determine if a CST, forensic investigator, or crime scene investigator will respond to the scene.

E. OUTSIDE JURISDICTION STEAL RECOVERED LOCALLY

1. Vehicles reported stolen by outside agencies and recovered in the city of Milwaukee, whether there is a related arrest or not, require teletype notification to the outside agency by the investigating member's work location or Stolen Vehicle Desk advising of the recovery and requesting the following:
 - a. Confirmation of the vehicle theft.
 - b. A copy of the outside agencies reports related to the theft.
 - c. If a member of the outside jurisdiction will be responding to the scene of the recovery.
 - d. If the vehicle owner will be responding to claim their auto or if it should be towed.

2. The investigating member shall contact the Stolen Vehicle Desk advising of the recovery at extension [REDACTED] and provide the following information to the Stolen Vehicle Desk:
 - a. Recovery address.
 - b. Date / time of recovery.
 - c. Any damage to the recovered vehicle.
 - d. How many license plates recovered and the license plate number and VIN number.
 - e. If any suspects are in custody.
 - f. Tow number (if applicable).
 - g. CAD / case number (the case number must be the MPD case number and not the outside agency's case number).

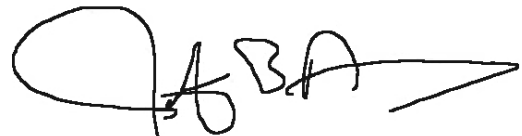
630.20 PRIOR AUTHORITY LOCAL RECOVERIES – WITH OR WITHOUT ARREST

A. ARREST AUTHORITY

1. Prior authority is not a reportable crime as defined by FBI ~~Uniform Crime Report (UCR)~~ National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) standards. Members do not have probable cause to arrest on prior authority and only have arrest authority if there is a warrant for a previous incident report or outstanding state warrant.
2. Department members recovering prior authority vehicles shall confirm ownership, license, VIN and registration of the recovered vehicle.
 - a. A wanted check on the driver of the recovered prior authority vehicle will reveal the *Prior Authority Vehicle Alert* and require the member to access the incident report to locate the owner's contact information. The *Prior Authority Vehicle Alert* is attached to the person who took the vehicle and not the vehicle itself.
 - b. After confirmation, the member shall contact the owner and request they come to the scene to claim their vehicle within a reasonable amount of time or the vehicle will be towed at the owner's expense.
 - c. Members shall then complete a *Prior Authority Report – Return* in RMS. An automatic email will be sent to the Stolen Vehicle Desk upon the member submitting the report.
 - d. The Stolen Vehicle Desk shall clear the *Prior Authority Vehicle Alert* from the system upon receiving the *Prior Authority Report – Return*.

630.25 STOLEN / MISSING LICENSE PLATES

- A. License plates known or believed to be stolen or that may have fallen off a vehicle and are considered missing can be entered in CIB / NCIC files.
- B. The investigating member shall advise the victim to obtain new license plates from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
- C. If only one license plate has been reported stolen or missing, the member must confiscate and destroy the remaining license plate from the victim or the license plate cannot be entered into CIB/NCIC as stolen or missing.
 - 1. The member shall document which license plate was stolen or is missing (front and/or rear) and what happened with the remaining license plate in the narrative of their report (e.g., recovered from the victim and destroyed).
 - 2. If the victim refuses to turn over the remaining license plate or intends to apply for duplicate license plates, the member shall inform the victim the license plates cannot be entered into the system as stolen. The member shall then document this information in the narrative of their report.
- D. Members shall complete an *Other Event Supplemental* in RMS when a license plate(s) is recovered.



JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk