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| PBP FORM 290  PITTSBURGH BUREAU OF POLICE <i>"...accountability, integrity and respect."</i> | | SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES – USE OF WHEELCHAIR VAN (3WC1) | ORDER NUMBER: 30-4 |
| | | PLEAC STANDARD: 2.5.7 | PAGE 1 OF 4 |
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| | | | AMENDS: ALL PREVIOUS |

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide general regulations regarding the transportation of people with disabilities by members of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police.

2.0 POLICY

2.1 It is the policy of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police to provide proper care for all persons for whom they have assumed responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, persons who are in custody and persons who have become victims of crime. Officers shall take any reasonable and necessary actions to ensure that these persons are secure, that they do not inflict any injury on themselves or others, and that they do not suffer any further injury.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 **DISABILITY** – A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. An individual with a disability also includes someone who has a history of such impairment.

3.2 **WHEELCHAIR VAN** – A vehicle specially designed and adapted for the transportation of persons with disabilities. The PBP has obtained such a vehicle, which will be maintained and deployed in accordance with this policy.

3.3 **AMBULATORY DEVICE** – Any instrument that aids a person with a disability and assists with that person’s mobility. For the purposes of this order, this definition includes, but is not limited to, manual and power wheelchairs, crutches, canes, and walkers.

3.4 **PHYSICAL RESTRAINING DEVICE** – Any instrument, such as handcuffs, leg shackles, restraining straps, stretchers, etc., that is designed to physically limit the freedom of motion of any person.

4.0 TRANSPORTATION OF PRISONERS – GENERAL REGULATIONS

4.1 All PBP vehicles will be thoroughly searched at the beginning and end of every shift by the operator(s) of that vehicle (*refer to General Order 50-01 Handling of Prisoners – General Regulations, section 6.0 Vehicle Inspections*) to ensure that there are no weapons or contraband inside of the vehicle.

4.2 Any PBP vehicle used for the transportation of prisoners and/or civilians will also be thoroughly searched immediately prior to that transport to ensure that there are no weapons and/or contraband inside.

5.0 Prohibited Uses

5.1 The Wheelchair Van (Unit 3WC1) is not configured for regular patrol activities, and shall not be used for regular patrol.

5.2 Additionally, the Wheelchair Van is **NOT** pursuit rated, and it is **PROHIBITED** from engaging in any kind of vehicular pursuit. The size and weight distribution of this vehicle will make it especially unstable and dangerous if used in a vehicle pursuit. The use of Unit 3WC1 in a vehicle pursuit is prohibited by this policy.

6.0 TRANSPORTATION OF PRISONERS WITH DISABILITIES

- 6.1 The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police recognizes that there may be times when a person with a physical or mental disability needs to be taken into custody and transported from the scene of a crime.
- 6.2 If it is determined that a prisoner with a physical disability, or one who requires the use of an ambulatory device, needs to be transported, the arresting officer will notify EOC via police radio and request that the Wheelchair Van (3WC1) be dispatched.
- 6.3 Officers will exercise care when transporting a prisoner with a physical or mental disability, or a prisoner who requires the assistance of an ambulatory device.
- 6.4 Officers will not lift or remove a person from a wheelchair unless that person has requested assistance in doing so. Officers will not lift a wheelchair off of the ground by hand while it is occupied, except in instances where life threatening circumstances exist.
- 6.5 The fact that a prisoner has a physical disability does not, in and of itself, preclude the use of physical restraining devices. However, handcuffing a prisoner to his/her wheelchair is prohibited.
- 6.6 All prisoners are to be searched in conformance with PBP policy (*refer to General Order 50-01 Handling of Prisoners – General Regulations, section 4.0 Prisoner Searches*).
- 7.0 OPERATION OF THE PBP WHEELCHAIR VAN (3WC1)**
- 7.1 Operation of the Wheelchair Van requires two officers. Training specific to the operation of the Wheelchair Van and its specialized equipment is available through the Pittsburgh Police Academy. When Unit 3WC1 is activated, at least one of the officers assigned to operate the van must have received the training.
- 7.2 When it is determined that an arrestee with a physical disability needs to be transported, the arresting officer will notify EOC via police radio and request that the Wheelchair Van (3WC1) be dispatched.
- 7.3 The arresting officer will notify EOC of the following information:
 - 7.3.1 Exact location;
 - 7.3.2 Number of persons with disabilities that need to be transported;
 - 7.3.3 Destination of the transport;
- 7.4 EOC will dispatch a two-officer unit (or two, one-officer units if necessary) to pick up 3WC1 from Zone 2 Police Station and respond to the scene. At least one of those officers must have received the specialized training (available from the PBP Academy) in the operation of the Wheelchair Van.
- 7.5 Upon responding to Zone 2 Police Station, the officers assigned to drive 3WC1 will sign out and inspect the vehicle prior to its use (*refer to General Order 50-01 Handling of Prisoners – General Regulations, section 6.0 Vehicle Inspections*). This inspection will include the vehicle interior and exterior, the lift mechanism, and the all wheelchair seatbelts and tie downs:
 - 7.5.1 If any damage is observed, it will be noted on the vehicle log at Zone 2;
 - 7.5.2 The officer will complete a PBP Special Report to the officer's Zone Commander detailing the date, time and location of the damage that was found;
 - 7.5.3 The officer will forward an email to the Fleet Operations Supervisor, including a copy to the officer's immediate supervisor.
- 7.6 Once the Wheelchair Van has been inspected, the two-officer unit will notify dispatch that they are now in service as Unit 3WC1, and they will respond to the location of the transport.
- 7.7 At the location of the transport, **ALL emergency lighting will be activated** during the loading process for the safety of the officers, the prisoner(s) and the public.

- 7.8 The officer(s) who have received the special training in the operation of the Wheelchair Van will operate the lift mechanism in accordance with that training.
- 7.9 During transportation, a prisoner with a physical disability will be handcuffed in the rear, like any other prisoner, unless special circumstances exist that preclude handcuffing in the rear. In the event that special circumstances are present, officers will make every effort to ensure that the prisoner is restrained in a manner that prevents escape and/or injury to self or others (*refer to General Order 50-01 Handling of Prisoners – General Regulations, section 9.3 Transporting an injured or disabled prisoner*).
- 7.10 The wheelchair will be securely fastened within the Wheelchair Van as prescribed in the training. A user’s manual will also be kept inside of the vehicle that will guide the use of the lift mechanism and securing the passenger(s).
- 7.11 After all passenger(s) and equipment is secured, the officers will then notify EOC of the beginning and ending of the transport as with any other prisoner transport.

8.0 TRANSPORTATION OF CIVILIANS WITH DISABILITIES

- 8.1 At the discretion of the Zone Supervisor, the Wheelchair Van may also be used for the transportation of civilians who have physical disabilities (i.e. – transportation of disabled witnesses and/or victims to court proceedings).
- 8.2 When it is determined that a situation exists where the PBP Wheelchair Van is required for the transportation of civilian(s) with physical disabilities, the requesting officer will notify the EOC via police radio and request that the Wheelchair Van (3WC1) be dispatched.
- 8.3 The requesting officer will notify EOC of the following information:
- 8.3.1 Exact location;
 - 8.3.2 The fact that the Zone Supervisor approved the civilian transport;
 - 8.3.3 Number of persons with disabilities that need to be transported;
 - 8.3.4 Destination of transport;
- 8.4 EOC will dispatch a two-officer unit (or two, one-officer units if necessary) to pick up 3WC1 from Zone 2 Police Station and respond to the scene in accordance with this policy.

9.0 DOCUMENTATION

- 9.1 Use and operation of the Wheelchair Van will be documented on the Daily Assignment Sheet(s) of the officers assigned to operate the vehicle by EOC.
- 9.2 Documentation of a prisoner transport will be documented on the PBP Supplemental Report in accordance with PBP Policy, as is required for any prisoner transport.
- 9.3 Documentation of a civilian transport will be only on the Daily Assignment Sheet of the officer(s) who complete the transport.

Approved By:

Regina McDonald
Acting Chief of Police

Date