



**San Diego County Sheriff**

**Training Bulletin**

**William D. Gore, Sheriff**

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## **Factors in Terminating a Pursuit**

Traffic pursuits are an inherently dangerous part of a career in law enforcement. When engaged in a pursuit, deputies must weigh the seriousness of the violator's suspected crime against the potential for death or injury if the pursuit is continued. When balancing the interests of public safety with effective law enforcement, each deputy and supervisor involved in a pursuit should carefully and continuously consider the following factors in determining whether or not to initiate, limit, discontinue, or otherwise control the pursuit:

- Safety of the public and deputies
- Traffic conditions
- Weather conditions
- Roadway conditions
- Location familiarity
- Time of day
- Speed
- Suspect's driving behavior
- Capabilities/conditions of vehicles
- Capabilities/conditions of personnel
- Quality of radio communications
- Juvenile occupant(s) of pursued vehicle

In a pursuit, the violator frequently refuses to give up and the deputy feels an obligation to succeed in the pursuit. This psychological phenomenon can cloud one's judgment and may cause the deputy to continue the pursuit beyond the point where common sense and good judgment would require the pursuit to be terminated.

If the determination has been made to terminate the pursuit, deputies shall turn off the emergency lighting and siren on their vehicle as soon as safely possible. Additionally, consider making an overt action to give the appearance of fully terminating the pursuit i.e. when safe to do so, pull to the shoulder of the roadway and come to a complete stop.

The "Rules of the Road" (21055 CVC) exemption does not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway, nor does it protect him/her from the consequences of an arbitrary exercise of the privileges granted in that section (21056 CVC). Deputies may be subject to administrative action for negligent emergency vehicle operation and the entity may be found liable in civil actions. If the emergency vehicle operation rises to the level of criminal negligence, deputies may be subject to criminal prosecution.

The information in this Training Bulletin was provided by Corporal Michael Pepin and edited for distribution by the In Service Training Unit. If you have expertise in a particular subject and would like to write a training bulletin, please contact Corporal Michael Cruz at In Service Training via email at [REDACTED]