

PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND DEPLOYMENT

TRANSMITTAL OF WRITTEN DIRECTIVE

FOR SIGNATURE OF: James E. White, Chief of Police

TYPE OF DIRECTIVE: Directive 201.6 / Special Order 24-06

SUBJECT: Stolen and Wanted Motor Vehicles

ORIGINATED OR REQUESTED BY: Planning, Research, and Deployment

APPROVALS OR COMMENTS:

The contents of the above manual directive, in part, were previously reviewed and approved by attendees of a Policy Focus Group consisting of members of Professional Development Bureau (PDB), Planning, Research, and Deployment (PRD), Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC), and additional members of the Detroit Police Department (DPD). Revisions are indicated with italics. This newly revised directive will rescind the current Special Order, # 24-06.

Meeting Attendees:

Commander Michael Parish (PDB)

Lieutenant Michelle Averill (PRD)

Lieutenant Nathan Miller (CAT)

Sergeant Antonio Allen (CAT)

Police Manager Felecia Tyson (BOPC)

Executive Secretary Reatta A. Stroud

201.6 - 2 Policy - this section was added to provide the department expectations. The language is as follows, "*Members shall make every effort to detect stolen and wanted motor vehicles using the procedures set forth in this directive. In accordance with MCL 257.252, upon receiving reliable information that any registered vehicle has been stolen, members shall ensure the theft is immediately reported through the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN). Furthermore, members shall ensure that any previously stolen vehicle that has been recovered is promptly reported through LEIN.*"

201.6 - 2 Identifying – is now **201.6-3 Identifying Stolen Vehicles**. This section was expanded to elaborate on signs of potentially stolen vehicles, *incorporating new technology, LPR's*. The following numbers and language was added to this section:

12. *Suspicious behavior around the vehicle;*

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13. Improperly plated vehicles. (e.g., plates registered to a GMC but are on a Honda).

14. The public VIN plate located on the driver side dashboard and the VIN sticker located on the driver side front pillar post do not match;

15. The VIN sticker, located on the front door pillar post, appears tampered with, replaced, placed over another VIN sticker, or missing.

201.6 - 3 Reporting - is now **201.6-4 Reporting Stolen Vehicles** and is now **201.6 – 4**. The language in this section explains the steps members have to make when receiving information on a possible stolen motor vehicle.

Sub-section 201.6 – 3.1 Partial Report. Partial Reports was removed from the directive as the information was inaccurate per MCL 257.252. There is no requirement that the registered owner be present or available to contact for completion the motor vehicle theft report nor is there a requirement that vehicle documentation be presented for the stolen vehicle entry into LEIN. Language from MCL 257.252 replaced the previous language and is as follows:

Pursuant to MCL 257.252, there is no requirement that the registered owner of the vehicle make the report or that the person making the report have documents pertaining to the vehicle. If the reporting party is able to provide reliable information regarding the crime, including information sufficient to allow for the identification of the vehicle through reasonable investigation, the report shall be taken.

201.6 – 5 was added and is now **Recovery of Stolen Motor Vehicles** (previously 201.6-4) now incorporates **201.6-4.1 Disposition**. This section was condensed but better clarifies what actions a member shall take related to determining the status of the vehicle, proper notifications and reporting and reporting writing requirements. The section also includes upward notifications when contact is not made with TCRU for immediate entry into LEIN and the procedure instances when LEIN is down.

201.6-4.1 Disposition was partially transitioned into **201.6 – 5 Recovery of Stolen Motor Vehicles** and was removed from the directive.

201.6-Partial Recoveries (previously 201.6-4.2) was condensed to only provide what a partially stolen vehicle is and to reflect current protocol in which a DOSO is responsible for the entry into LEIN, not TCRU. Language related to recoveries for

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outside jurisdictions was removed as it is covered under **201.6 – 5 Recovery of Stolen Motor Vehicles**.

201.6-7 Wanted Vehicles (previously 201.6-6) - Language in the sub-section was revised for clarity, expanded in areas, and better elaborates what is expected of members when investigating and recovering stolen vehicle. Additionally, a definition of what constitutes a wanted vehicle was added and is as follows: 1. A *"wanted vehicle" refers to a vehicle used to commit a crime or a vehicle that constitutes evidence of a crime and that is being sought by law enforcement (e.g., homicide vehicles)*.

201.6-8 Failure to Return /Taken without Owners Permission was add to this directive

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APPROVED
FEB 26 2025
[Signature]
COMMANDER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

APPROVED
FEB 26 2025
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SECOND DEPUTY CHIEF
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APPROVED
FEB 25 2025
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ASSISTANT CHIEF
OFFICE OF FIELD SUPPORT

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Series 200 Operations	Effective Date TBD	Review Date Three Years	Directive Number 201.6
Chapter 201 - Patrol Operations			
Reviewing Office Commercial Auto Theft			<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised <i>Revisions are in italics</i>
References			

STOLEN AND WANTED MOTOR VEHICLES

201.6 - 1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and procedures for identifying, reporting, and recovering stolen and wanted vehicles.

201.6 – 2 Policy

Members shall make every effort to detect stolen and wanted motor vehicles using the procedures set forth in this directive. In accordance with MCL 257.252, upon receiving reliable information that any registered vehicle has been stolen, members shall ensure the theft is immediately reported through the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN). Furthermore, members shall ensure that any previously stolen vehicle that has been recovered is promptly reported through LEIN.

201.6 - 3 Identifying Stolen Vehicles

Members will normally receive information on stolen vehicles from teletypes, broadcasts from police radios, police reports, LEIN, License Plate Readers (LPR's), or from their own observations. Officers shall be observant for the following characteristics that may contribute to a probable cause determination that a vehicle is stolen:

1. Damaged ignition or steering column;
2. Punched or damaged doors or trunk locks;
3. Broken windows;
4. An open car window in inclement weather;
5. The inability of the driver to answer questions about the car *they are* driving and trouble finding dashboard instrument controls;
6. Several juveniles driving during hours in violation of curfew;
7. Evidence of forcible entry;
8. Any attempt to disguise the appearance of the car;
9. License plates that appear altered, bent or improperly displayed in such a manner as to make reading them difficult;
10. Vehicles parked in the same place for an unusual period of time; or
11. Vehicles parked with the engine running or with the key in the ignition.
12. *Suspicious behavior around the vehicle;*
13. *Improperly plated vehicles. (e.g., plates registered to a GMC but are on a Honda).*



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14. *The public VIN plate located on the driver side dashboard and the VIN sticker located on the driver side front pillar post do not match;*
15. *The VIN sticker, located on the front door pillar post, appears tampered with, replaced, placed over another VIN sticker, or missing.*

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is the only reliable identifier for a vehicle and is usually located on the driver's side of the dashboard, close to where the dashboard meets the windshield. Members shall investigate any vehicle with a VIN that appears to have been altered or that have been reattached by screws or devices other than factory welds and rivets. *Members must also ensure that information corresponding to the VIN matches the vehicle under investigation.*

201.6 - 4 Reporting Stolen Vehicles

When a member receives information about a potential stolen vehicle, they shall first determine if the vehicle was repossessed, seized, loaned, or taken without consent. If the officer determines the vehicle was unlawfully taken, the following procedures apply:

1. Members are required to obtain all relevant information from the reporting party so that a thorough Motor Vehicle Theft incident report can be completed, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Complainant's name, address, telephone number (business and residence), age, sex, and race;
 - b. Owners name, address, telephone number (business and residence), if different from the complainant's information;
 - c. Place of occurrence, date and time the vehicle was last seen, and the date and time when the vehicle was discovered missing;
 - d. Location of the vehicle when stolen (street, driveway, parking lot);
 - e. A complete description of the vehicle (color, year, make, model, body style, license plate, and VIN)
 - f. *Whether* the key was in the vehicle and if the vehicle was locked; and
 - g. Name of the insurance carrier *and policy number*.
2. *Pursuant to MCL 257.252, there is no requirement that the registered owner of the vehicle make the report or that the person making the report have documents pertaining to the vehicle. If the reporting party is able to provide reliable information regarding the crime, including information sufficient to allow for the identification of the vehicle through reasonable investigation, the report shall be taken.*
3. *Members shall contact TCRU for completion of the RMS report and entry into LEIN. TCRU members shall run the VIN in LEIN and check GovTow to ascertain if the vehicle was impounded. If the vehicle is at a tow lot, TCRU shall convey that information to the notifying member so they may advise the reporting party. If the vehicle has not been impounded, the Telephone Crime Reporting Unit (TCRU) operator shall provide the member with the RMS and LEIN reference number to document on the member's Officer's Daily Report.*



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4. *Under no circumstance shall a member fail to make a Motor Vehicle Theft report when a vehicle is impounded prior to the report being made. The investigating entity will be responsible for determining whether a false report has been made.*
5. *At no time shall a member fail to complete a Motor Vehicle Theft Report when received from the reporting party.*
6. *Members shall ensure that the reporting party also completes an Auto Theft Affidavit. The affidavit shall be scanned and attached to the incident report in RMS by utilizing the paperclip icon. It shall be the responsibility of the supervisor approving the affidavit to ensure that a digital copy is attached to the incident report prior to forwarding the original affidavit to Commercial Auto Theft (CAT) through department mail.*
7. *If the theft was recent, the member shall relay the vehicle information to the zone dispatcher for a general broadcast.*
8. *Members shall advise the reporting party that the vehicle will be impounded and taken to an authorized tow lot or DPD evidence lot if located and recovered. The owner will be notified of the recovery and location of the vehicle.*

201.6 - 5 Recovery of Stolen Vehicles

1. *Members that come into contact with a vehicle believed to be stolen shall—*
 - a. *Check LEIN utilizing the VIN to determine if the vehicle is stolen or wanted. Note any special instructions regarding the vehicle (e.g., hold for prints).*
 - b. *Contact the jurisdiction who reported the vehicle stolen to confirm its status, if the vehicle was reported out of another jurisdiction.*
 - c. *Order a tow from the recovery scene and ensure the vehicle is towed to an authorized lot in accordance with DPD protocols.*
 - d. *Process items of significant value in accordance with DPD property procedures, unless doing so would jeopardize the evidentiary value of the vehicle.*
2. *Recovered stolen vehicles not wanted in connection with another crime (e.g., RA UDAA) may be released at the scene to its owner upon request. Vehicles impounded in conjunction with an arrest for possession of a stolen motor vehicle shall not be released without the approval of the member's supervisor.*
3. *Members recovering a vehicle reported stolen out of this Department shall notify TCRU as soon as possible following the recovery. TCRU shall obtain the original report number from the reporting officer, complete a supplement, and make necessary LEIN and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) entries.*
4. *Members making an arrest for PSMV or UDAA with no additional charges shall contact TCRU to ensure a supplement regarding the recovery is completed and shall complete their own supplements corresponding to the arrest. TCRU shall ensure that LEIN and NCIC is updated.*



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5. *Members recovering a stolen vehicle in conjunction with an arrest with additional charges (CCW, R&O, etc.) shall generate a new incident report. The report shall include the initial Motor Vehicle Theft Report number to ensure the reports are linked in RMS. The member shall notify TCRU to complete a supplement to the original theft report on the recovery and ensure LEIN and NCIC is updated.*
6. *Members recovering vehicles reported stolen through an agency other than DPD shall contact TCRU to generate a new incident report. TCRU shall transmit a LEIN message to the reporting jurisdiction for removal from LEIN and NCIC. If an arrest is made in conjunction with the recovery, the member shall complete a supplement corresponding to the arrest.*
7. *If TCRU cannot be reached, the officer in charge of the desk shall attempt to contact a TCRU supervisor. If contact is still unsuccessful, the desk supervisor shall make upward notifications until the vehicle is entered into LEIN and NCIC. The member must document on their Officer Daily Report the reason for the lack of immediate entry into the system along with the name of the desk supervisor notified.*
8. *If LEIN is down, the member shall provide TCRU with all information needed to complete the report and update LEIN and NCIC once the system is operational. TCRU shall contact the officer once the appropriate entry is made.*
9. *Recovering members shall place the vehicle information, complaint number, LEIN Reference Number, and TCRU operator's name on their Officers Daily Report.*

201.6 - 6 Partial Recoveries

1. *A "partial recovery" is a vehicle that has signs of being stolen (punched ignition, damaged steering column, missing wheels, etc.) but has not been reported stolen.*
2. *Members impounding a vehicle as a partial recovery shall enter the vehicle into GovTow and complete an incident report. The member shall indicate in the Tow Type and Impound and Tow Reason, "Partial Recovery." The Desk Operating Support Officer (DOSO) or other designated member assigned to the command in which the vehicle is recovered shall ensure the vehicle is entered into LEIN.*

201.6 – 7 Wanted Vehicles

1. *A "wanted vehicle" refers to a vehicle used to commit a crime or a vehicle that constitutes evidence of a crime and that is being sought by law enforcement (e.g., homicide vehicles).*
2. *Members receiving information on a wanted vehicle shall ensure that an incident report has been prepared on the incident with which the vehicle is connected.*
3. *If the vehicle is not particularly described in the incident report, the member shall prepare a supplement report setting forth sufficient facts to justify entry into LEIN as a wanted vehicle. The report must contain a complete description of the vehicle as well as the registered owner's name and address, if available.*
4. *TCRU will only accept reports of this type after review and authorization by a supervisor assigned to the responsible investigative entity or the officer in charge of the precinct station desk.*



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5. TCRU must enter these vehicles into the LEIN and NCIC systems as "wanted" vehicles and complete a supplement report for the LEIN entry.
6. If a wanted vehicle is recovered, the member responsible for the recovery shall impound the vehicle as evidence and prepare an incident report. The member shall ensure proper care is used to avoid contaminating any evidence located in the vehicle. Special instructions (e.g., hold for prints) shall be noted on the impound card, if applicable.
7. The recovering member shall contact TCRU and obtain the name and command of the supervisor that authorized the initial entry of the vehicle, and include the information in the incident report.
8. TCRU shall be responsible for updating LEIN and NCIC and shall notify the vehicle owner that the vehicle has been recovered. The officer in charge of the case shall be responsible for cancelling all department teletypes regarding the *wanted vehicle* and for notifying the owner when the vehicle can be released.

201.6 - 8 Failure to Return / Taken without Owners Permission

Reports alleging that an individual lawfully obtained a vehicle but then later failed to return the vehicle shall be classified as a "Larceny – False Pretenses" in RMS. Reports alleging that a known individual has taken a vehicle without the owner's permission shall be classified as a "motor vehicle theft" in RMS. Members receiving complaints for either of these offenses shall require the reporting party to complete an Auto Theft Affidavit. The member shall generate an incident report for the offense and contact TCRU for entry into LEIN and NCIC and completion of a supplement report. TCRU shall ensure that these vehicles are entered into LEIN as stolen vehicles but shall include in the remarks the specific crime associated with the vehicle. These complaints will be investigated by the Precinct Detective Unit for the precinct in which the crime was committed.

Members recovering vehicles in these circumstances shall contact TCRU to report the recovery. TCRU shall ensure that LEIN and NCIC are updated and that a supplemental report is completed. If an arrest is made in conjunction with the recovery, the member shall follow the procedures set forth in section 201.6-5, Recovery of Stolen Vehicles of directive .

201.6 - 9 Removed, Altered or Unreadable Public Vehicle Identification Number

Each automobile manufactured in the United States after 1980 is equipped with a 17 digit VIN. The VIN is the only positive means of vehicle identification. The public VIN is etched in a plate or on a label on top of the driver's side front dashboard near where the windshield and dashboard meet. If a vehicle is discovered where the public VIN appears to have been removed, altered or has been made to be unreadable, members shall adhere to the following steps:



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1. Impound the vehicle for proper ownership. When placing the vehicle information in GovTow, leave the VIN blank.
2. Complete an Incident Report titled "General Information," which shall be routed to the CAT.
3. Notify the CAT, via telephone, from 8am-4pm, or by sending an email to CATS@detroit.gov. Vehicle Identification Technicians assigned to the CAT will then properly identify the vehicle and amend the offense code in RMS if needed. DPD members who are not assigned to the CAT should not attempt to identify a vehicle by any VIN other than Public VIN. Members should make an effort to remove any papers or other items that may be obscuring the public VIN. Debris obscuring (ex: leaf, piece of paper easily moved, etc.) the Public VIN does not constitute an unreadable VIN for purposes of this directive.

Related Policies:

- Directive 204.4 - Impounding of Vehicle

Related Forms:

- Evidence Property Tag (DPD 53)
- Impounded Vehicle card (DPD 406)