

**STOCKTON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**GENERAL ORDER**

**STOLEN VEHICLES**  
**SUBJECT**

**DATE:** June 17, 2019

**NO:** U-1

**FROM:** CHIEF ERIC JONES

**TO:** ALL PERSONNEL

**INDEX:** **Embezzled Vehicle**  
**Misplaced Vehicles**  
**Stolen Vehicles**

**I. POLICY**

All reports involving theft and recovery of vehicles within the City of Stockton will be investigated by the Stockton Police Department.

**II. LAW**

Officers will become familiar with section 10851 of the Vehicle Code and section 499b of the Penal Code.

**III. PROCEDURE**

**A. Telecommunications Center Duties**

1. Upon receiving a report of a stolen vehicle, Telecommunications Center personnel will:
  - a. Query license through Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) to determine status.
  - b. Complaint Receipt Operator (CRO) will generate a call for service.
  - c. Broadcast a description and license number of stolen vehicle as well as call history number assigned for complaint.
  - d. Assign the stolen vehicle report to the appropriate personnel.
  - e. Reports of embezzled vehicles will be handled by patrol and ARS report routed to the Auto Theft Unit.

**B. Investigating officer's duties:**

1. Upon arriving at the call location, the investigating officer must determine that a vehicle has been stolen and that it is not a civil matter.
2. When a vehicle has actually been stolen, the investigating officer shall:
  - a. Complete a stolen vehicle crime report.
  - b. Advise the Operations Desk immediately, so the stolen vehicle information can be sent to the Telecommunications Center for broadcasting.

- (1) Advise the Operations Desk via MDC, telephone, or Channel 5 and obtain the Clerk's name to confirm the message was received. List the name of the Operations Desk personnel to whom the information was relayed.
  - c. Check the immediate area for witnesses.
  - d. Check the area for the stolen vehicle, since it may be abandoned or misplaced.
  - e. In instances where a Stolen Vehicle Report was determined to be unfounded, and an ARS Crime Report was generated, a subsequent ARS report must be completed, stating the initial report was "unfounded." On the incident tab, in the status field, input a SUP in the field to indicate that the report was unfounded.
3. When a victim or reporting party wishes to report a vehicle stolen, but, is unable to provide the person taking the report with a vehicle identification number (VIN) and/or a license plate number and this Department is not able to verify through DMV, the following shall occur:
- a. A stolen vehicle report shall not be taken.
  - b. The officer shall list the vehicle as a misplaced vehicle, (503a), notifying-the Operations Desk of this. The Operations Desk personnel will place the vehicle on the "Hot Car Sheet" as a 503a. The officer will file an S.I.R.
  - c. The reporting party will be advised to call the Department if /when they locate the VIN and/or license plate number. This information shall then be included in a subsequent report to the original S.I.R. and the report classification shall be changed to 10851 VC. This can be done by TRU, as long as there is no new suspect information or workable leads being reported by the calling party.

C. Misplaced/Loaned Vehicles (503a)

- 1. For cases where an owner has loaned a vehicle to another and now desires to report the vehicle as stolen (or similar circumstances), a misplaced vehicle report should be taken.
- 2. Original 503a reports shall normally be taken by Patrol and not TRU. This is so that the circumstances can be accurately assessed in the field to determine if the vehicle is merely "misplaced" or if it should actually be listed as stolen.
- 3. The officer shall list the vehicle as a misplaced vehicle, (503a), notifying the Operations Desk of this. Operations Desk personnel will place the vehicle on the "Hot Car Sheet" as a 503a. The officer will file an S.I.R. The officer shall advise the owner that if the vehicle is not returned within a reasonable time frame (72-hours is a general guideline), the owner can call and request to upgrade the report to a 10851.
  - a. Citizens calling after 72-hours of the original 503(a) report to upgrade the report to a 10851 may be referred to TRU if the caller is the actual registered owner and is not reporting any new workable leads/suspect information. "Workable leads" include new identifying information on the suspect, actual location of

suspect, or other information that could be immediately followed-up by an officer to make an arrest.

4. The reporting party will be advised to call the Department to cancel the report if the vehicle is returned. TRU can handle this type of report cancellation.

D. Operations Desk Personnel duties:

1. After being contacted by an investigating officer in regard to a report of a stolen vehicle, Operations Desk personnel, as quick and efficiently as possible, shall:
  - a. Make entry into SVS
  - b. Enter into Hot Car Sheet.
  - c. Send to reporting officer(s) the FCN number for their ARS report.

E. Recovering Stolen Vehicles.

1. Telecommunications Center Duties:

- a. Upon receiving information that a stolen vehicle has been located by a citizen or an officer, the Telecommunications Center shall:
  - (1) If the vehicle is from an outside agency, call the agency and verify that it is stolen.
- b. Verify that the vehicle is, in fact, stolen.
- c. Dispatch a unit to the scene for investigation, if one is not already there.

2. Investigating Officer's Duties:

NOTE: Stockton Police Department units will not be dispatched to recover stolen vehicles outside the City of Stockton, unless exceptional circumstances are present.

- a. Contact the Telecommunications Center to verify the vehicle is still listed as stolen.
- b. Have photographs taken of the entire vehicle (including license plate), if it was occupied at the time of recovery.
- c. Determine the condition of the vehicle (drivability) and advise ~~Operations~~ Desk personnel.
  - (1) Coordinate with Operations Desk personnel to insure that the owner/victim is notified of the recovery.
  - (2) If the owner is located and comes to the scene and takes possession of the vehicle, this fact will be noted on the MVR.
    - (a) All stolen vehicle recoveries (local/outside) will require a recovery report in ARS as well as completing a MVR report form. The owner must sign the MVR before the vehicle can be released.
    - (b) If the owner is located and comes to the scene and takes

possession of the vehicle, this fact will be noted on the MVR.

- (3) If the owner cannot be located or refuses to come to the scene, the vehicle will be towed. (22651(c)CVC).
- (4) Contact Operations Desk Personnel, as soon as possible, by telephone radio-Channel 5, or by MDC and supply the necessary information for the cancellation in the Stolen Vehicle System.
- (5) File a ARS Subsequent Report for Stockton Police Department cases or an "Outside 10851 CVC Recovery" Crime Report, if the vehicle was reported stolen to another agency. All recovered stolen vehicles still require officers to complete a MVR as the tow company representative still needs to sign for the stolen vehicle prior to taking possession of it.
  - (a) The report will contain complete information relating to the recovery, disposition of the vehicle (include tow company), and any items that had been stolen.
  - (b) State in the report whether or not the victim was notified of the recovery.
  - (c) If the report is an "Outside 10851 CVC Recovery," include the victim's name, originating agency, case number, and other information from the Stolen Vehicle System.
- (6) If an arrest is made, stand-up photos shall be taken of the suspect. (Per General Order P-10)
- (7) If the suspect(s) are known, an attempt to obtain latent prints will be made, when practical.

3. Operations Desk Personnel duties:

- a. Upon receiving notification that a stolen vehicle is being recovered, Operations Desk Personnel shall:
  - (1) Check the Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) to verify if the vehicle is stolen.
  - (2) After the investigating officer advises that the vehicle was towed, log this information into SVS and clear it from the "Hot Car Sheet."
- b. A printout of the SVS hit will be produced. The printout will then be scanned as an attachment to the original report.
- c. Notify the owners/victims of recoveries by U.S. mail as required by law.

F. Outside agency recoveries on vehicles reported stolen to the Stockton Police Department.

1. Operations Desk personnel shall:
  - a. Attempt to notify the owner/victim.
  - b. Complete a Subsequent Report, indicating whether the owner/victim was notified.

- c. Complete a Stolen Vehicle System cancellation.
- d. Send a locate message if the vehicle was reported stolen to another agency.
- e. Notify the owners/victims of recoveries by U.S. mail as required by law.

G. Vehicles recovered before reported stolen.

- 1. All stolen vehicles must be entered into the Stolen Vehicle System even though the vehicle has been recovered before the theft report was taken.
  - a. The stolen vehicle entry will be immediately followed by the recovery entry cancellation.