

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 5

February 6, 2015

**SUBJECT:** SAFETY BELTS IN DEPARTMENT VEHICLES - REVISED

**PURPOSE:** This Order updates Department Manual Section 4/289, *Safety Belts in Department Vehicles*, to reflect the California Law changes as of January 1, 2012.

**PROCEDURE:** Department Manual Section 4/289, *Safety Belts in Department Vehicles*, has been revised. Attached is the revised Manual Section with revisions in italics.

**AMENDMENTS:** This Order revises Section 4/289 of the Department Manual.

**AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY:** The Commanding Officer, Internal Audits and Inspections Division, will review this directive and determine whether an audit or inspection will be conducted in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.



CHARLIE BECK  
Chief of Police

Attachment

Distribution "D"

**DEPARTMENT MANUAL**  
**VOLUME IV**  
**Revised by Special Order No. 5, 2015**

**289. SAFETY BELTS IN DEPARTMENT VEHICLES.**

**Employee's Responsibilities.** Employees and all others operating or riding in Department vehicles *must* wear three-point safety belts when provided. Two-point safety belts (lap belts) *must* be worn when three-point safety belts are not provided. Employees intending to operate or ride in a Department vehicle *must* ensure that all occupants of the vehicle are using the available safety belts before the vehicle is operated.

**Child Seat Restraints.** A child **twelve** (12) years of age and under, who is to be transported in any Department vehicle, *must* be secured in the **rear** seat of the vehicle. A child who is under *eight* (8) years of age or less than *4 feet 9 inches tall* *must* be secured in a child passenger seat restraint (car seat or booster seat). *Any child under the age of two(2) should be in a rear facing car seat. A car seat or booster seat must never be secured in a Department vehicle that has a hard plastic rear seat.*

Employees *must* place the child in a car seat or booster seat which is Federal Safety Standard approved, and employees should attempt to place the child in a car seat or booster seat which is appropriate for the child's *height and weight*.

Traffic Coordination Section should be contacted for clarification regarding the appropriate car seat or booster seat for the child's *height and weight*.

**Note:** A Department vehicle is any motor vehicle which is under the direction and control of the Department, including privately-owned vehicles used for City business.

Safety belts *must* be adjusted so they provide maximum protection with reasonable comfort.

Safety belts *must* be inspected at the start of each watch. Any Department vehicle equipped with an unserviceable safety belt *must* be removed from service.

**Tactical Considerations.** When a potentially dangerous tactical situation is perceived or anticipated, the safety belt may be removed to allow adequate time for safe response to the situation. During special operations, the safety belt may be removed when, in the belted employee's judgment, wearing the safety belt might adversely affect the special operation or endanger the employee.

**Examples:**

- Officers may remove their safety belts immediately prior to arriving at the location of an emergency call so they can quickly leave their vehicles upon arrival.
- Officers may remove their safety belts immediately prior to stopping a suspect. However, officers should be careful not to remove their safety belts prematurely and thus risk being without safety belt protection during a pursuit.