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Release of Towed/ Stored Vehicles  
Towed/ Stored Vehicles  
Vehicle Releases



CALEA Standards 17.4.1, 17.4.2, 17.4.3, 61.4.3

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Organizational Value #6 – Integrity in the conduct of our business

### RELEASE OF TOWED/STORED VEHICLES

The purpose of this order is to set forth procedures for the release of vehicles towed and stored by order of the Oakland Housing Authority Police Department.

#### I. OVERVIEW OF RELEASE PROCEDURES

- A. Legal/registered owners must present valid identification, proof of ownership, and current registration. The person taking possession of the vehicle shall be required to sign for the release.
- B. Pertinent documents shall be photocopied and attached to the form.
- C. An administrative Vehicle Release Fee shall be collected prior to the release of the vehicle.

#### II. LOCATING RECORDS OF TOWED/STORED VEHICLES

- A. The license number, year, make, last known location and the date of tow shall be obtained from the individual seeking the release. Records may be found from a TRIP query on the CLETS terminal, which will return Automated Warrant System (AWS), Stolen Vehicle System (SVS), and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) records. Records also may be found in the Vehicle Tow file or in the Wrecker portion of the CAD/RMS System.
- B. If the individual does not know the license number and has proper identification, DMV shall be queried for all vehicles registered in his name.
- C. If the vehicle is not in the system, the Stored Vehicle Report shall be checked.
- D. If there are no records, the vehicle may have been towed incident to an arrest or collision at the owner's request. Owner request (O/R) tows are not

considered Oakland Housing Authority Police Department requested tows. Therefore, no paperwork is generated, notification is not made to OPD for entry into SVS, and a vehicle release is not required.

### III. VEHICLE HOLDS

- A. Vehicles with investigative holds cannot be released without written authorization from the assigned investigator. Prior to releasing a vehicle, the Stored Vehicle Report shall be reviewed, and/or the assigned OHA investigator or OPD CID investigator shall be contacted to determine whether a hold has been placed on a vehicle.
- B. Investigative holds, unless extended by an investigator, expire after 72 hours. Investigators may issue a form authorizing the release of the vehicle prior to the expiration of the hold.
- C. Vehicles towed for a removed or altered VIN (10751 VC) shall not be released without authorization from the OPD Auto Theft Unit.
- D. OHA-generated vehicle holds do not expire (EXCEPTION: 14602.6 V.C.), and require specific documentation for removal (see section V.). These holds are as follows:
  - 1. 22651(o) VC: Expired registration
  - 2. 22651 (i) VC: Five or more outstanding parking violations
  - 3. 22651(p) VC: No valid driver's license (14602.6 V.C. 30-day hold)
  - 4. 22651(j) VC: No evidence of registration

### IV. INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY OBTAIN A RELEASE

- A. The current registered owner of record with DMV
- B. The legal owner of record with DMV
- C. An individual with notarized authorization from the current registered or legal owner
- D. A reposessor, with proper documentation
- E. An insurance company's representative, with proper documentation

- F. A driver holding inter-changeable papers for a trailer/chassis/container towed for 22651 (n), (b), (l)
- G. Individuals possessing a release from the agency having jurisdiction and seeking a vehicle recovered without holds may go directly to the tow company.

V. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR RELEASES

- A. Acceptable identification is as follows:
  - 1. Valid California or out-of-state driver's license
  - 2. California DMV Identification Card
  - 3. Passport
  - 4. Government agency or military photo identification
  - 5. Other identification, with approval of a supervisor
- B. Individuals who use items 2 to 5 must have another person with a valid driver's license present who will take responsibility for driving the stored vehicle.
- C. Acceptable Proof of Ownership Documentation
  - 1. Current registration or a DMV Deposit of Fees/Pending Master File with a Temporary Operating Permit
  - 2. A standard sales contract confirming payment of current registration and license fees. Auto dealers are exempt from this requirement.
  - 3. A court order identifying ownership
  - 4. If the registered owner cannot produce acceptable identification, a notarized letter from the registered owner authorizing release of the vehicle to a person with satisfactory identification, shall be accepted.
  - 5. A will or court order designating a person as owner or executor of an estate and a copy of the registered owner's death certificate shall be accepted as proof of ownership.

D. Legal Owner's/Representative's Documentation

1. Representatives of private legal owners must present a notarized letter from the owner authorizing them to take possession of the vehicle. Representatives must provide authorization in an original letter on the legal owner's company letterhead.
2. The company letter and a photocopy of the representative's identification shall be attached to the form, along with a DMV printout of the driver's license, and placed in the released vehicle file.

E. Removal of OHA-Generated Vehicle Holds

An authorized release form shall be required to release all vehicles. Prior to issuing the release form the following shall be obtained:

1. 22651(i) VC (five or more parking citations)
  - a. Parking Citations Center clearance form
  - b. DMV parking citation clearance form
2. 22651(p) VC (no valid driver's license)
  - a. Valid California driver's license or registered owner's agent with a valid California driver's license
  - b. Attached printout of driver's DMV record to validate the driver's license status
3. 22651 (j) VC (no license plates or registration)
  - a. Evidence of address of registered owner within the state
  - b. Proof of current registration.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE VEHICLE RELEASE FEE

- A. An administrative Vehicle Release Fee (VRF) shall be applied to the issuance of a release for all impounded vehicles except the following:
1. 22651(c) VC: Recovered stolen vehicle
  2. 22651(g) VC: Driver injured or incapacitated

3. 22655 VC: Hit and run vehicle, victim's vehicle only
  4. 22655.5 VC: Evidence tow
  5. 10751 VC: Removed or altered VIN
  6. Vehicles towed in error
- B. Employees authorized to release vehicles shall complete a VRF and collect the fee in accordance with the most current approved Oakland Housing Authority Fee Schedule. The VRF shall include a section to indicate receipt of fee.
- C. Fees shall be paid in the form of cash, money order, or a cashier's check made payable to Oakland Housing Authority.

#### VII. MAINTAINING CASH FUND

- A. Receipts for all fees collected shall be reconciled every 3 months. Cash Settlement Sheets and all supporting documents shall be forwarded to the Finance Department for processing.
- B. A copy of the Settlement Sheet and receipts shall be retained by the Department for a period of at least three years.
- D. Cash, checks, money orders, and receipts shall be held in a locked cash box or safe located in a secure (lockable) room with limited access. When not being used to collect money, the cash box shall be locked in a desk or cabinet out of the general view of passersby. Only authorized personnel shall collect fees for releases.
- E. No checks may be cashed out of the vehicle release fund at any time, by anyone, for any purpose.

#### VIII. ACCOUNTABILITY

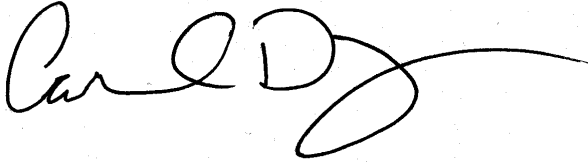
- A. Each transaction shall be entered in a cash ledger.
- B. The ledger shall be reconciled at least once a month by the Administrative Assistant.
- C. Cash collected must be accessible for unannounced audits at all times.

DEPARTMENTAL GENERAL ORDER  
OAKLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY  
POLICE DEPARTMENT

J-2  
Rev  
21 Jul 05

**(REFERENCE: GENERAL ORDER J-3, TOWING PROCEDURES)**

By order of

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carel J. Duplessis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carel J. Duplessis  
Chief of Police