

# USE OF VEHICLE SEAT BELTS

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<i>Effective Date:</i> <b>April 15, 2013</b>	<i>Directive Number:</i> <b>10-2-2</b>	
<i>Special Instructions:</i>		
<i>Distribution:</i> <b>All Sworn &amp; Civilian Personnel</b>	<i>Last Re-Evaluation Date:</i>	<i>Total Pages:</i> 2

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to insure department personnel and/or passengers use available safety belt equipment in motor vehicles to be in compliance with the Occupant Protection System Safety Act Title 21, Sections 4801 & 4802. Numerous studies have show that the use of restraint devices reduces the possibility of death or serious injury in case of an accident.

## **II. POLICY**

Motor vehicles purchased by the Town of Cheswold for use by the Police Department personnel are equipped with safety belts in compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Standards.

All department personnel who drive Town vehicles shall use and insure that all passengers use available safety equipment installed in the vehicles being operated. This policy includes, but is not limited to, unmarked vehicles, emergency vehicles, pick-ups, seized vehicles, etc.

## **III. PROCEDURE**

- A. Department personnel shall insure that all occupants of the vehicle are using the safety belt / shoulder harness before moving a motor vehicle.
1. When arriving at an emergency call, the operator may remove the restraint device just prior to stopping for quick exit and to prevent becoming entangled in the restraint device.
  2. Department personnel may remove the safety restraint device just prior to coming to a stop on a vehicle / traffic stop. Caution should be exercised to insure the violator is in fact going to stop. This would prevent becoming involved in a pursuit without the use of safety restraint devices.
  3. Officers will restrain prisoners in the rear of the vehicles using the safety belt/shoulder harness. **EXCEPTION:** If the prisoner is so combative as to create a potential injury to the officer or prisoner, the belt need not be used until the prisoner can be safely restrained.

- B. Department personnel will adjust the safety restraint device(s) so that they are comfortable yet provide maximum protection in the event of an accident. Department personnel will inspect the serviceability of the harness at the start of each tour.

**IV. VIOLATION OF POLICY**

It is the specific intent of this policy to comply with State Statute Title 21, Section 4801 and 4802 (Occupant and Driver Protection System Safety Act). Violation of this law may result in disciplinary action. Penalty under the law may also be assessed.

ORDER EXECUTED and ISSUED this 15th day of APRIL, 2013

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Christopher Workman  
Chief of Police