

PURSUIT INTERVENTION TECHNIQUE (PIT)

Codified: 75.2

Effective: 06/05/2025

Rescinds/Amends: NEW POLICY

Pages: 5

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide sworn personnel with a technique to utilize when slowing and terminating a motor vehicle pursuit. Motor vehicle pursuits are high-risk law enforcement activities that may pose inherent danger to community members, the involved officer(s), motorists, the fleeing individual, and passengers.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

It is the policy of the Santa Fe Police Department to establish rules, use considerations, and procedures for the proper use of the Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT), which can assist in slowing and terminating a motor vehicle pursuit.

DEFINITIONS

75.2.01:

- A. Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT): A precision maneuver that involves intentional, vehicle-to-vehicle contact and consists of a pursuing officer applying lateral contact with the front corner of their vehicle to the rear quarter panel of the fleeing suspect's vehicle, causing the suspect's vehicle to rotate into a stopped position.
- B. Motor Vehicle Pursuit: Department personnel shall refer to Policy Directive 75.1 entitled, "Pursuit of Motor Vehicles" for pursuit-related terms and definitions.
- C. Ramming Maneuver: The intentional use of a police vehicle to strike any vehicle to mechanically disable it in order to stop or prevent the vehicle from fleeing.

PURSUIT INTERVENTION TECHNIQUE PROCEDURES

75.2.02: Implementation of the PIT maneuver:

- A. Sworn personnel may utilize the PIT maneuver as an acceptable method of terminating a pursuit and the maneuver may be deployed when the use of force would be authorized under Department directive 72.1, entitled "Use of Force." The decision to utilize the tactic shall be based upon the judgment of the officer and/or supervisor and the guidelines outlined in this policy.

- B. Only sworn personnel who have successfully completed certification training in the proper use and execution of the PIT maneuver are authorized to employ the technique.
- C. The use of the PIT maneuver in an attempt by sworn personnel to stop or prevent a fleeing motor vehicle shall be objectively reasonable based on the totality of the circumstances.
- D. Prior to utilizing the PIT maneuver, sworn personnel actively involved in the motor vehicle pursuit, shall take into consideration the following factors:
 - 1. Location for executing the PIT maneuver;
 - 2. Speed of the fleeing vehicle;
 - 3. Traffic volume;
 - 4. Time of day;
 - 5. Lighting conditions;
 - 6. Oncoming traffic;
 - 7. Pedestrian volume;
 - 8. Weather conditions;
 - 9. Road conditions;
 - 10. Construction zones;
 - 11. Road design;
 - 12. School zones; and
 - 13. Size of the fleeing vehicle
- E. At the decision to utilize the PIT maneuver to bring a pursuit to a safe conclusion, the primary officer will notify the secondary officer that the PIT maneuver will be utilized and to prepare for a high-risk stop and containment.
- F. The ideal and recommended speed for deployment of the PIT maneuver is 35 miles per hour or below. Speeds over 35 miles per hour may cause the suspect vehicle to over rotate and can increase the risk of injury or death to officers or others.
- G. Once the PIT maneuver has been executed, high-risk and containment procedures shall be followed.

75.2.03: The PIT maneuver is not a ramming maneuver.

- A. Using a police vehicle to strike or intentionally collide with a pursued vehicle creates a significant risk of serious physical injury or death to the occupants of the pursued vehicle, involved sworn personnel, and potential bystanders.

- B. A ramming maneuver is considered deadly force and shall only be used if the fleeing vehicle presents a deadly threat to the officer, other sworn personnel, or the public.
- C. Before using a ramming maneuver, sworn personnel shall consider all other reasonable options for disabling the pursued vehicle to stop it from fleeing.

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

75.2.04: Officers shall determine the level of force required and if force is objectively reasonable prior to utilizing the PIT maneuver; refer to Department Directive 72.1 entitled, "Use of Force."

75.2.05: When feasible, officers shall make a reasonable attempt to obtain authorization from a supervisor prior to utilizing the PIT maneuver.

75.2.06: Assisting officer(s) shall make reasonable attempts to stop and/or detour traffic from the area of the PIT maneuver to ensure safety of the motoring public.

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

75.2.07: The supervisor shall complete a real-time evaluation as to whether the use of the PIT maneuver is objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.

75.2.08: The supervisor shall identify and assign available officers to respond and support the pursuing personnel to assist with detouring traffic, funneling the fleeing vehicle, and containment procedures once the PIT maneuver has been executed.

75.2.09: If the determination is made to utilize the PIT maneuver, considerations shall be made regarding the use of additional officers, to assist with the containment and high-risk stop of the suspect vehicle.

75.2.10: If practicable, the supervisor shall identify a location that will allow sufficient time for the arrival of support officers and proper staging for the application of the PIT maneuver. Time permitting, reasonable attempts shall be made to stage other resources to assist, such as medical and fire personnel.

75.2.11: The supervisor shall coordinate the request for additional resources and/or alerts to law enforcement agencies in adjacent jurisdictions.

75.2.12: If there has been a use of deadly force to terminate the pursuit, the supervisor shall notify the chain of command.

USE CONSIDERATIONS

75.2.13: Sworn personnel shall not utilize the PIT maneuver to stop the following vehicles unless the continued movement of the pursued vehicle could result in serious harm to others.

- A. Any vehicle known to be transporting a hazardous material as defined in section 66-1-4.8 NMSA 1978.
- B. Any passenger bus, school bus, or van that is known to be transporting passengers.
- C. Any high-profile vehicles, which may be higher or considerably heavier than the officer's vehicle.
- D. Motorcycles, ATVs, and scooters.

75.2.14: Geographic configurations and road conditions shall be considered to reduce the risk of injury to offender(s) or the public. The safety of the motoring public and pedestrians shall be a major consideration when determining whether to use the PIT maneuver to end a motor vehicle pursuit.

75.2.15: If the pursued suspect vehicle has an electronic stability control system, the effectiveness of the PIT maneuver may be reduced.

75.2.16: The PIT maneuver does not necessarily disable a suspect's vehicle, and pursuing sworn personnel should be prepared for the motor vehicle pursuit to continue after the PIT maneuver has been executed and there is no containment.

AFTER ACTION REPORTING

75.2.17: Officers shall treat the location of the PIT maneuver as a crime scene in accordance with Department policies.

75.2.18: The New Mexico State Police shall be contacted to conduct the investigation into the use of the PIT maneuver when the incident resulted in death and/or great bodily harm.


75.2.19: If in the case of great bodily harm or death and if the New Mexico State Police cannot conduct the investigation, the Santa Fe Police Department Fatal Team shall conduct the investigation.

75.2.20: If a PIT maneuver is executed, the supervisor/commander shall complete a use of force supervisor's report documenting the use of the PIT maneuver.

TRAINING

75.2.21: All sworn personnel who drive police vehicles shall be given initial and periodic update training in the agency's PIT policy, execution of the PIT maneuver, and high-risk/containment tactics.

Drafted (pjt, bdg/08-24)

Approved: 
Chief Paul Joye

Date: 6/5/2025