



City of Racine Police Department
Policy and Procedure

Number: 809

Table with 3 columns: Subject (Release or Disposal of Impounded Vehicles), Date Issued (08-25-85), Effective Date (05-13-11), and Revision Number (3).

POLICY: The release or disposal of motor vehicles is an important task that must be completed in an objective and consistent manner. This procedure is in place to ensure the caretaker responsibilities of the Department as they relate to the control and release of citizens' vehicles are carried out.

PROCEDURE: The release or disposal of an impounded vehicle must be done in the following manner:

MEMBER/ ABANDONED VEHICLES OFFICER: When Communications dispatches you to the impound lot to release a vehicle:
1. Verify the person retrieving the vehicle has a driver's license (unless the vehicle is being towed out by a licensed towing agency).
2. Verify the person retrieving the vehicle has a white copy of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form stamped "Paid" for the vehicle being retrieved.
3. Re-secure the lot and building (if appropriate) after the parties leave the lot.
4. Reset the alarm for the facility upon your exit.
5. Return any paperwork and the impound lot keys to the Public Service Counter.

NOTE: Once a vehicle has been entered into the property system (Impound Lot Inventory Control Form), the vehicle may only be released only through the Public Service Counter.

UNIT COMMANDER:
1. When the release of an impounded vehicle is warranted and the member who is under your command that originally inventoried it is unavailable, consider the facts and circumstances and determine if the "Hold" on the vehicle should be removed or not.
2. Ensure you sign the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form in the "Hold Canceled by" fields.

PUBLIC SERVICE COUNTER PERSONNEL: When a vehicle owner comes in to pick up his or her vehicle:
1. Retrieve the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form and verify the vehicle is available for release (not on "Hold").
a. If there is a reason for not releasing the vehicle, advise the vehicle owner of the circumstances or who they need to contact.
b. Only the member or assigned investigator who placed the "Hold" on the vehicle, or his or her immediate supervisor, can release a "Hold" on a vehicle.
c. Re-file the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form.
2. If the vehicle can be released, verify the identity of the person wishing to retrieve the vehicle.
a. Ensure the person making the inquiry is the registered/titled owner.
b. If the actual owner of the vehicle is unavailable to retrieve the vehicle, then it may be released to a third party as long as a notarized statement signed by the vehicle owner accompanies the third party, appointing him or her as an agent on behalf of the actual owner.
3. Provide the vehicle owner with the dollar amount to be paid prior to the release of the vehicle.
4. Ensure that if the "Comments" section reflects instructions to issue citations to the vehicle owner, arrangements are made with the Courts Sergeant or the Shift Commander for the issuance or service of said citations.
5. After collecting the appropriate dollar amount for the combination of towing, storage, and miscellaneous fees, provide the vehicle owner with a receipt (both a

cash register receipt and a photocopy of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form) as well as instructions for the method of release.

- a. If the vehicle is unregistered, it must be towed out of the lot or the owner can come back with a valid registration certificate.
  - b. If the vehicle owner does not have a driver's license and the vehicle is legally registered, then the owner must provide a licensed driver to remove the vehicle from the lot or have it towed out of the lot.
6. Return any keys located in the "key envelope" drawer that may belong to the vehicle.
  7. Have the vehicle owner or agent sign the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form.
  8. If the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form has property inventoried in the BEAST system, contact the evidence clerks to arrange an appointment to have them retrieve the property (if releasable) that was removed from the vehicle at the time it was initially inventoried.
  9. Make arrangements with the Abandoned Vehicles Officer or the Shift Commander to have someone meet the vehicle owner at the impound lot to release the vehicle.
  10. Complete the "Release" section of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form, ensuring that the owner/claimant signs for the vehicle.
  11. Forward the white original to Records.
  12. Forward the goldenrod copy of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form to Courts for filing.
  13. Retain the yellow copy of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form and attach it to the day's tally.

#### **COURTS:**

1. Maintain and monitor the vehicles' to be released or disposed of from the Racine Police Department Impound lot.
2. Send out certified letters to the vehicle's registered owners and lienholders:
  - a. To notify them of the Department's statutory requirements.
  - b. To advise them when their vehicle can be returned.
3. If there are any citations waiting to be served on owners of vehicles being salvaged, determine if they need to be voided or make arrangements to have them served.
4. Prepare Salvage Bid list and give to Purchasing Department to obtain bids on junked cars.
5. Provide a signed Seized/Abandoned/Unregistered Vehicle Transfer Certificate (MV2419) to the winning bidder for each vehicle.
6. Arrange for salvage companies to pick up cars from the salvage list that need to be destroyed.
7. Maintain complete records on the history of each vehicle released or disposed of by the Racine Police Department.

#### **RELATED PROCEDURES:**

- [807 – Impounding of Motor Vehicles](#)
- [1201 – Property Inventory Excluding Vehicles](#)
- [1924 – Recovery of Motor Vehicles](#)
- [1925 – Snow Emergency Vehicle Removal](#)
- [1926 – Snowbound Vehicle Removal](#)
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