LIGHTING EXEMPTION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES [MODEL POLICY]

POLICY

It is the policy of the (*name of the law enforcement agency*) to provide uniform guidelines for all personnel to use when operating a department vehicle without headlights, taillights, or marine navigational lighting while functioning as a peace officer.

DEFINITIONS

Illumination Devices: means the headlights, taillights, and watercraft lights vehicles are required to be equipped with and use according to statute.

Vehicle: means every self-propelled vehicle and every watercraft that is owned, leased, or otherwise the property of this agency and used in the performance of [*an officer's*] law enforcement duties.

PROCEDURE

A peace officer shall operate a vehicle with its illumination devices on as described and guided by statute when:

- on an interstate highway,
- traveling at speeds greater than what is reasonable and prudent under existing weather, road, and traffic conditions,
- traveling faster than the posted speed limit, and
- the peace officer is an active participant in the pursuit of a motor vehicle in violation of MN Statute 609.487- Fleeing Peace Officer; Motor Vehicle; Other.

When the circumstances described above do not apply, a peace officer may apply the lighting exemption statute (MN Statute 169.541) and stop or interrupt the use of their vehicle illumination devices if 1) the peace officer does so in the performance of their duties, 2) the conduct is reasonable, and 3) the peace officer reasonably believes that turning off a vehicle's illumination devices is necessary under the circumstances to investigate a criminal violation or suspected criminal violation. The types of violations being investigated may be state laws, rules, orders or local laws, ordinances, or regulations.

STATUTORY REFERENCES

- MN STATUTE 84.87 – Operation; Regulations by Political Subdivisions
- MN STATUTE 84.928 – Operation Requirements; Local Regulation
- MN STATUTE 86B.511 – Lights
- MN STATUTE 169.48 – Vehicle Lighting
- MN STATUTE 169.541 – Lighting Exemption for Law Enforcement; Standards

 Revision approved by the POST Board on July 24, 2025.

- MN STATUTE 169.65 – Specifications for Lighting and Other Devices
- ADMINISTRATIVE RULE 6110.1200 – Navigation of Watercraft on the Waters of the State; Safety Equipment