



RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER



Subject: **SHOPLIFTING AND PETIT LARCENY ARREST WARRANTS**

Chapter
6

Number
16

Pages
4

Standards:

CALEA 1.2.5, 1.2.6

VA Code 18.2-95, 18.2-96, 18.2-104, 19.2-71, 19.2-72,
19.2-73, 19.2-74, 19.2-81, 19.2-82, 9.1-138, 9.1-146

Related Orders:

GOs: 01-02, 01-14, 06-04

Effective Date: **05/29/2025**

Revised By: **Review**

Prv. Review Date: **08/03/2021**

*If any provision of this General Order conflicts with any collective bargaining article,
the collective bargaining agreement shall govern.*

Chief of Police:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish the guidelines for providing assistance to various types of individuals in cases of shoplifting and petit larceny. When requested, Richmond Police Officers may provide assistance to armed and unarmed security officers, loss prevention specialists, business owners and their representatives, special conservators of the peace, and registered security officers.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGE

This general order has undergone a triannual review. Department of Emergency Communications was changed to Department of Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response. This change is printed in bold and italicized text.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department (**RPD**) to provide its members with uniform guidelines when arresting suspects for shoplifting and petit larceny; and providing assistance to various types of law enforcement individuals in cases of shoplifting and petit larceny in accordance with federal, state, and local laws. It is also the policy of the Department to cooperate with and provide assistance to police officers from other agencies when requested to do so in the performance of their duties, including lawful transport, if the requests are in accordance with state codes and City of Richmond ordinances.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines set forth in this general order. Failure to comply will result in appropriate corrective action. Responsibility rests with the division commander to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and appropriate training, counseling, or disciplinary action is initiated.

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or case in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this Department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

V. DEFINITIONS

Listed below are categories of security officers that interact with Richmond Police Officers and are certified by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) or the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond. Please see General Order 01-14, Special Conservators of the Peace/Registered Security Officers, for the assistance that the Richmond Police Department Officers render to these categories of security officers. (VA Code § 9.1-138)

- A. **ARMED SECURITY OFFICER** – A person employed to: (i) safeguard and protect persons and property; or (ii) deter theft, loss, or concealment of any tangible or intangible personal property on the premises the officer is contracted to protect, and who carries or has access to a firearm in the performance of their duties.
- B. **UNARMED SECURITY OFFICER** – A person who performs the functions of observation, detection, reporting, or notification of appropriate authorities or designated agents regarding persons or property on the premises the officer is contracted to protect, and who does not carry or have access to a firearm in the performance of their duties.
- C. **LOSS PREVENTION SPECIALIST** – A person in a private business who performs the functions of observation, detection, reporting, or notification of appropriate authorities or designated agents regarding persons or property on the premises that the individual is contracted to protect, and who does not carry or have access to a firearm in the performance of their duties.
- D. **SPECIAL CONSERVATOR OF THE PEACE** – A person registered with DCJS and certified by the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond to be a special conservator of the peace under the supervision of the person or agency making application for the appointment.
- E. **REGISTERED SECURITY OFFICER** – A person registered with DCJS to perform security services within the Commonwealth of Virginia. This registration category includes armed and unarmed security officers.

VI. PROCEDURE

A. Procedures for Issuing a Summons in Place of a Warrant in a Misdemeanor Case:

- 1. The arresting officer(s) shall make a warrantless arrest **by** issuing a summons to the individual, pursuant to VA Codes §19.2-74 and §19.2-81, and General Orders 01-02, Constitutional Rights and 06-04, Virginia Uniform Summons.

NOTE: VA Code §19.2-74 requires that whenever any person is arrested for a misdemeanor violation, except as provided for in VA Code §18.2-266, 18.2-388 or Title 46.2 as amended; the arresting officer shall establish the identity

of the person, including their name and address. The arrested person shall then be notified in writing to appear at a time and place to be specified on the summons. Once the person has given their written promise to appear at such time and place, the officer shall release the person from custody.

2. Situations when summons will not be issued. Officers will proceed to the magistrate in the following cases: [CALEA 1.2.5, 1.2.6]

- a) When the officer believes that the accused is likely to disregard the summons
- b) When the officer believes that the accused is likely to cause harm to themselves or others
- c) When the accused fails to give written promise to appear
- d) When the accused fails to or refuses to discontinue the unlawful act; or
- e) When the accused is unable to reasonably establish their name and address.

3. In such cases, the officer(s) shall present the following to the magistrate:

- a) Suspect's full name
- b) Item(s), photographs, or description of items unlawfully taken or concealed
- c) Name of property owner; and

4. If the item stolen or concealed and is less than \$1,000, it shall be considered petit larceny. If the value of the goods or merchandise involved in the offense is \$1,000 or more, it shall be considered grand larceny.

(VA State Code §18.2-95, §18.2-96)

B. Richmond Police Department Officers making shoplifting or petit larceny arrests and transporting individuals for DCJS-Certified Officers and Others:

1. DCJS-certified armed security officers do have the power to arrest at their place of employment. According to Va. Code §9.1-146, an arrest can be made for an offense occurring in the armed security officer's presence on the property or in the presence of a merchant, agent, or employee of the merchant the private security business has contracted to protect, if the merchant, agent, or employee had probable cause to believe that the person arrested had shoplifted or committed willful concealment of goods.
2. Unarmed, certified, security officers, do not have arrest authority, and, therefore, can only detain a suspect until an RPD officer arrive to make the arrest.
3. Loss prevention specialists can legally detain an individual suspected of theft until a police officer arrives. RPD officers shall handle the mechanics of the

arrest, complete the IBR, transport the arrestee, obtain the warrant(s), and subpoena the loss prevention specialist as a witness.

4. Business owners and representatives can legally detain an individual suspected of theft until a police officer arrives. RPD officers shall handle the mechanics of the arrest, complete an IBR, transport the arrestee, obtain the warrant(s), and subpoena the business owner or representative as a witness.
5. In all situations, even when an involved armed security officer is DCJS-certified and has arrest powers, the responding RPD officer shall:
 - a) Convey the necessary information to the magistrate, if the officer chooses to take the suspect before the magistrate, pursuant to guidelines set forth in this policy
 - b) Obtain the arrest warrant, if necessary
 - c) Make the arrest
 - d) Complete all necessary reports; and
 - e) Summon the armed security officer as a witness for the court appearance, along with other witnesses.

VII. FORMS

A. Incident Based Report (IBR)