

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

To: Chief Lisa Davis, Austin Police
From: Director Gail McCant, Austin Police Oversight
Date: April 21, 2026
Subject: APO Policy Recommendation: 214 VEHICLE PURSUITS

Dear Chief Davis:

This memorandum provides feedback and recommendations to improve the Austin Police Department's (APD) General Order (GO) 214 VEHICLE PURSUITS.

The specific policy reviewed in this memorandum is as follows:

- 214.6.3 PRECISION IMMOBILIZATION TECHNIQUE

The analysis and recommendation focus on the use of precision immobilization techniques (PIT) by APD officers. The goal is to identify opportunities to strengthen policies and practices to ensure PIT maneuvers are used safely and appropriately. Because PIT maneuvers carry significant risks to officers, subjects, and the public, urgency should never outweigh the safety of drivers or pedestrians. APD's General Orders classify PIT maneuvers as Level 2 or Level 1 force, depending on whether they result in serious bodily injury or death. Given the potential for severe outcomes, officers need clear, consistent guidance on when PIT maneuvers may be used. Strengthening these standards will help ensure PIT is applied responsibly and with the highest regard for public safety.

The Austin Police Oversight (APO) believes this policy can be enhanced through the following recommendations and will benefit the City of Austin, APD, and community members. The APO remains dedicated to improving APD policies to increase transparency, accountability, and public trust in law enforcement.

Sincerely,



Gail McCant
Director
Austin Police Oversight

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

214 Vehicle Pursuits

Recommendation #1: Austin Police Oversight (APO) recommends that the Austin Police Department (APD) require supervisor approval prior to initiating any PIT deployments.

GO 214.6.3 states that, “the use of the PIT maneuver ~~should~~ **shall** be approved in advance by the control supervisor.”

Given the inherent dangers of PIT maneuvers, officers must prioritize public safety and avoid increasing risks to other drivers, pedestrians, subjects, and themselves. Strengthening APD’s policy to explicitly require officers to obtain their supervisor’s approval prior to PIT use in **all** cases (not just when speeds exceed 40mph) would encourage safer, more consistent decision-making during vehicle pursuits.

