



# NORTH MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



### SUNPASS PROGRAM 400.11

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-12-2023

APPROVED: *Cherie H. Gause*  
Chief of Police

SUPERSEDES: N/A

CFA: N/A

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#### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish a SunPass Transponder Program and ensure that all SunPass transponders are used in accordance with the State Statute, and are properly accounted for at all times.

#### II. POLICY

SunPass Slim Portable Transponders and SunPass Mini-Sticker Transponders are the only authorized toll devices to be utilized in City owned vehicles. The non-revenue SunPass Mini-Sticker Transponders will only be assigned to official law enforcement vehicles for use in accordance with Florida State Statute (FSS) Section 338.155(1). SunPass Mini Sticker Transponders are immovable and shall not be transferred from one vehicle to another.

SunPass Slim Portable Transponders will be made available through the SunPass Program Coordinator or his/her designee or assigned on a permanent basis to personnel as approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

At no time may an employee utilize a Department owned SunPass or transponder for personal use. Any misuse of a Department issued SunPass transponder whether revenue or non-revenue can result in discipline up to and including termination.

### III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the Department.

### IV. DEFINITIONS

**SunPass Mini-Sticker Transponder (Non-Revenue):** A device, affixed semi-permanently to the windshield of a vehicle that registers passage through a specially designated toll lane and does not require a toll fee. This device is designed to operate when affixed to glass windshields.

**SunPass Program Coordinator:** Personnel responsible for the daily accountability of all SunPass transactions.

**Marked Police Vehicle:** Any vehicle that is equipped with emergency lights, siren, and is easily and readily identifiable as a vehicle within the North Miami Police Department (NMPD).

### V. PROCEDURE

#### Use of SunPass transponders

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) establishes toll accounts with law enforcement agencies that are authorized under Florida law to pass through Florida toll roads without charge. The Office of Toll Operations in Tallahassee provides this service as stated in:

**FSS Section 388.155(1)(a)** *A person may not use a toll facility*

*without payment of tolls except:*

6. *A law enforcement officer operating an official vehicle while on official law enforcement business.*
1. At the discretion of the Chief of Police or his/her designee, employees of the NMPD may be issued, permanently or temporarily, a SunPass portable transponder for use in unmarked NMPD owned vehicles, rented or leased vehicles.
2. Officers who drive a **marked** or unmarked vehicle owned by the NMPD upon a State of Florida road to travel to and from their place of residence to their daily work assignment may use the SunPass mini transponder (non-revenue). Personally, owned SunPass Mini-Sticker Transponders are not authorized for use in a marked vehicle.
3. Paid transponders will only be used when on official departmental business.
4. The use of a SunPass mini transponder is authorized for official business only. Personnel who are authorized to use a city vehicle for personal use, are responsible to pay for tolls when not on official business.
5. Employees that are not assigned a mini transponder (non-revenue) must sign-out a paid SunPass transponder for official business travel or Department training via the SunPass Coordinator.
6. Transponders issued for travel or training must be returned immediately upon the employees return to work.

## **VI. PURSUITS**

Vehicle operators involved in a declared pursuit or on an emergency signal are exempt from paying tolls and will proceed cautiously through all toll plazas.

## **VII. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ISSUING SUNPASS TRANSPONDERS**

The responsibility of issuing SunPass transponders is of the Special Services Major or his/her designee. The duties are as follows but not limited to:

1. Issuance of all SunPass transponders designated for out of town department travel and training.
2. Ensure that non-revenue SunPass transponders are issued to

only authorized employees.

3. Maintain a usage log for NMPD employees to be used for travel and training.
4. Process invoices and payments related to the use of SunPass transponders.
5. Replacement of lost or damaged SunPass transponders.
6. Employee requesting a replacement transponder must submit a memo via chain of command detailing the circumstances surrounding a replacement.
7. Cost for a replaced transponder will be the responsibility of the employee involved.
8. Obtain or replace SunPass transponder by submitting a request on Department letterhead by email or fax to the FDOT to ensure proper deactivation of the lost or damaged SunPass transponder.
9. Maintain a list of all paid, non-revenue and mini-sticker SunPass transponders issued to the NMPD. Each SunPass transponder issued to an employee must be included on the accountability list.

## **VIII. RECEIPTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS**

When use of a SunPass transponder is appropriate but not feasible, (e.g., surveillance or undercover), the vehicle operator may obtain a receipt for reimbursement.

## **IX. INVENTORY**

Annually, the Special Services Major or his/her designee shall inventory all SunPass transponders. The inventory shall be documented and maintained by the Special Services Section.