

DNR SOP

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

**Standard Operating Procedures
Colonel T. White
DNR Command J. Dangle
D.M.R.P**



Established 06 July 2025



Mission Statement

MDNR MISSION STATEMENT

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is dedicated to establishing, promoting and maintaining the professional image of conservation law enforcement in Michigan, ensuring that current and future generations will understand and appreciate the essential role of natural resources protection in our most unique and diverse state.



Job Description

MDNR Duties

Primary Duties of MDNR

- **Protect and Conserve Michigan's diverse wildlife**
- **Protect Michigan hunters**
- **Enforce established Michigan hunting regulations and law**
- **Ensure hunting, fishing and trapping are being conducted lawfully by properly licensed individuals**

Secondary Duties of MDNR

- **May conduct traffic stops, respond to 911 calls as well as educate and inform the public on legal hunting, fishing and trapping.**
- **Act as a uniformed trooper to patrol Michigan highways and streets when not actively on a DNR scene.**
- **May carry out all duties of a normal trooper.**



MDNR Authority/ Laws

MDNR Conservation Officer Authority

MDNR has the authority to operate anywhere in the state with a focus on Natural resources protection including but not limited to State Parks, forests, lands, Public water way (Public water way is any water way that connects to a main body or state owned water way).

- MDNR must follow MSP guidelines unless otherwise specified in this SOP
- MDNR enforces all state laws including but not limited to: Hunting, fishing, boating, ATV regulations. Drugs, alcohol, and State Laws.

MDNR authority is addressed by the following Michigan laws

28.6a Conservation officers; appointment by commissioner as state police officers.

The commissioner is hereby authorized, with the approval of the director of conservation and the governor, to appoint any conservation officer as a special state police officer, who shall be vested with the powers of an officer of the state police, and who shall in his capacity as special state police officer be under the direction of the commissioner.

257.602a Failure to stop at signal of police or conservation officer; penalty; subsection (1) inapplicable unless officer in uniform and vehicle identified; violation of subsection (1) as felony; conviction for conduct arising out of same transaction; "serious injury" defined.

(1) A driver of a motor vehicle who is given by hand, voice, emergency light, or siren a visual or audible signal by a police or conservation officer, acting in the lawful performance of his or her duty, directing the driver to bring his or her motor vehicle to a stop shall not willfully fail to obey that direction by increasing the speed of the motor vehicle, extinguishing the lights of the motor vehicle, or otherwise attempting to flee or elude the officer. This subsection does not apply unless the police or conservation officer giving the signal is in uniform and the officer's vehicle is identified as an official police or department of natural resources vehicle.

300.21 Conservation officers as peace officers; powers, privileges, prerogatives, and immunities.

Sec. 1. Conservation officers appointed by the director of the department of natural resources and trained and certified pursuant to the Michigan law enforcement officers training council act of 1965, Act No. 203 of the Public Acts of 1965, being sections 28.601 to 28.616 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, are peace officers, and except as otherwise provided by law, are vested with all the powers, privileges, prerogatives, and immunities conferred upon peace officers by the general laws of this state.

300.22 Service and execution of criminal process; fees.

Sec. 2. Except as otherwise provided by law, conservation officers appointed by the director of the department of natural resources have the same power to serve criminal process and to require aid in executing criminal process as sheriffs, and are entitled to the same fees as sheriffs in performing those duties.

324.1601 Duties of department and appointed officers.

The department and any officer appointed by the department shall do all of the following:

- (a) Enforce the statutes and laws of this state for the protection, propagation, or preservation of wild birds, wild animals, and fish.
- (b) Enforce all other laws of this state that pertain to the powers and duties of the department or the commission.
- (c) Bring or cause to be brought or prosecute or cause to be prosecuted actions and proceedings in the name of the people of this state for the purpose of punishing any person for the violation of statutes or laws described in this section.

324.1606 Department and conservation officer or peace officer; powers and duties; fees; park and recreation officers; enforcement of rules, orders, and laws; powers, privileges, and immunities; arrest powers; issuance of civil infraction citation; appearances; "minor offense" defined.

- (1) The department and conservation officers appointed by the department are peace officers vested with all the powers, privileges, prerogatives, and immunities conferred upon peace officers by the general laws of this state; have the same power to serve criminal process as sheriffs; have the same right as sheriffs to require aid in executing process; and are entitled to the same fees as sheriffs in performing those duties.

324.1608 Obstructing, resisting, or opposing officers as misdemeanor; penalty.

A person who knowingly or willfully obstructs, resists, or opposes the department, an officer appointed by the department, or any other peace officer in the performance of the duties and execution of the powers prescribed in this part or in any statute or law, in making an arrest or search as provided in this part, or in serving or attempting to serve or execute any process or warrant issued by lawful authority, or who obstructs, resists, opposes, assaults, beats, or wounds the department, any officer appointed by the department, or any other peace officer while the department or officer is lawfully making an arrest or search, lawfully serving or attempting to serve or execute any such process or warrant, or lawfully executing or attempting to execute or lawfully performing or attempting to perform any of the powers and duties provided for in the statutes or laws described in section 1601, is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable as provided in section 479 of the Michigan penal code, Act No. 328 of the Public Acts of 1931, being section 750.479 of the Michigan Compiled Laws. In making an arrest or search as provided in this part, or in serving or attempting to serve or execute any process or warrant, the department, any officer appointed by the department, or any other peace officer shall identify himself or herself by uniform, badge, insignia, or official credentials.

324.43103 Prohibited acts; trespass on premises; killing, trapping, injuring or disturbing fur-bearing animal; consent. Without the permission of the owner of a privately owned fur-bearing animal described in this part, a person shall not enter the enclosure within which the privately owned fur-bearing animal is kept, or trespass on private ground adjoining such an enclosure and knowingly annoy or disturb the animals. A person shall not knowingly and willfully kill, trap, or injure any fur-bearing animal owned by another person without the consent of the owner. However, a duly authorized peace or conservation officer may enter upon such premises in the performance of his or her regular duties.

324.43516 Hunting, fur harvester, or fishing license; carrying license; exhibiting license on demand; firearm deer license with unused kill tag; exhibiting tag on request.

(1) A person who has been issued a hunting, fur harvester's, or fishing license shall carry the license and shall exhibit the license upon the demand of a conservation officer, a law enforcement officer, or the owner or occupant of the land if either or both of the following apply:

(a) The person is hunting, trapping, or fishing.

(b) Subject to section 43510(2) and except as provided in section 43513, the person is in possession of a firearm or other hunting or trapping apparatus or fishing apparatus in an area frequented by wild animals or fish, respectively.

(2) Subject to section 43510(2) and except as provided in section 43513, a person shall not carry or possess afield a shotgun with buckshot, slug loads, or ball loads; a bow and arrow; a muzzle-loading rifle or black powder handgun; or a centerfire handgun or centerfire rifle during firearm deer season unless that person has a valid firearm deer license, with an unused kill tag, if issued, issued in his or her name. The person shall exhibit an unused kill tag, if issued, upon the request of a conservation officer, a law enforcement officer, or the owner or occupant of the land.

324.82135 Failure to stop on signal of uniformed officer; penalty; identification of official vehicle.

An operator of a snowmobile who is given by hand, voice, emergency light, or siren a visual or audible signal by a peace, police, or conservation officer acting in the lawful performance of his or her duty, directing the operator to bring his or her snowmobile to a stop, and who willfully fails to obey the direction by increasing his or her speed or extinguishing his or her lights, or who otherwise attempts to flee or elude the officer, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

The officer giving the signal shall be in uniform. A vehicle or snowmobile which is used by an officer at night for purposes of enforcing this part shall be identified as an official law enforcement vehicle or snowmobile.

600.8321 Civil process; service.

(1) Civil process in the district court shall be served by a sheriff, deputy sheriff or a court officer appointed by the judges of the court for that purpose, except that officers of the department of state police or conservation officers of the department of natural resources may serve civil process in any action to which the state is a party and police officers of an incorporated city or village may serve civil process in any action to which the incorporated city or village is a party.

Additionally, many Michigan CO's possess federal enforcement authority through a deputization process from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

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- Under Michigan law ORVs are not to travel above 25MPH on any road way or trail and must stay to the right of the road in order for others to pass. May result in fine or jail time if driving is classified as reckless or both.
- Michigan law states you must possess a valid Michigan drivers license to operate a vehicle on state roads and trails. Can result in fine or arrest or both
- You must possess ORV tags for any motorized vehicles to operate on state trails or while operating off of the roadway on state land can be punished by fine.
- Michigan law states hunters and fisherman must own the proper license for the game the individual(s) is pursuing
- Operating a vessel you must meet USCG regulations. Vessels are subject to a safety inspection at any time without reason.
- Operators of a vessel must possess a boaters safety certificate for personal use or a captain's license for commercial use.

Find specific laws and regulations at <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/managing-resources/laws/regulations>



Training

MDNR CONSERVATION OFFICER TRAINING

Training Level 1:

- Includes class time that includes but not limited to: Hunting, Fishing, poaching, ORV, Parks and Camping, Laws and regulations. taught by an MDNR Officer FTO.
- Firearm Training will include department issued qualified firearms including but not limited to: service pistol, rifle, shotgun, etc.
- Patrol Vehicle Operations
- 1 Hour Ride Along with an MDNR FTO. FTO can choose if a recruit will be cleared for the road, re-trained, extend road time, or dismissal from position if found unfit.

Training Level 2:

- ATV/UTV Ops includes but not limited to: Snow Machine, Side by Side, Motorized Bikes.
- 30 minute skills demonstration course with ATV & UTV

Training Level 3:

- Boat Ops Include but not limited to: Boating Inspection, Life Rescue, Marine Accident Investigation, Boarding vessels. Public & Commercial boating & fishing Regulation Enforcement.
- Helicopter Training Conducted under MSP Flight Instructor, additional rescue training will be conducted by an MDNR Flight Training Officer.

Uniforms:

- Uniform of the day will be given by DNR team leader

Patrol Vehicles

- Conservation Officers primary vehicle is the Chevy Silverado.
- Officers may use boats and ATV/UTV if trained with no permission needed
- DNR Team lead and above may use the command Tahoe to supervise DNR activities
 - **DNR COMMAND TAHOE WILL BE USED FOR SUPERVISORY ACTIONS ONLY, IT IS NOT FOR PATROL.**

SOPs

Any SOP not established here Refer to Michigan State Police SOP.

Patrol ops:

1. MDNR Officers shall engage in as many DNR cases as possible
 - a. MDNR Officers will have at least one community engagement per hour
2. MDNR Officers will keep uniforms, vehicles and equipment in a professional and clean manner
3. MDNR may assist any agency on any call until no longer needed.
4. MDNR **primary** focus will be hunting, fishing, trapping, boating and license checks. **If** these situations do not arise you may patrol as normal but officers **will** try their best to RP these scenarios
5. Normal Duty loadout will consist of: Taser, duty weapon, flashlight, baton, pepper spray, carbine rifle and hunting rifle.
 - a. Hunting rifles will be kept in the bed locker of you issued duty truck
6. All MDNR personnel will be issued their own take home vehicle.
 - a. Issued vehicles shall be kept neat and professional in appearance, it is the officers duty to ensure vehicle is in patrol ready conditions at all time

ATV/UTV ops:

1. ATVs/UTVs will only be used for patrolling state trails and game areas. They will not be used to patrol paved road and will not be used on traffic stops, 911 calls or any other regular patrol duties
2. It should be noted ATV/UTV patrols are of higher risk to the officer

Boat ops:

1. The MDNR marine vessel will only be utilized when whether conditions permit
2. Officers will not put themselves at risk and boat ops may be terminated at any time by a command member
3. MDNR will utilize the vessel in a safe and reasonable manner
4. The vessel may be utilized for license checks, fishing checks, water rescues, education, commercial vessel checks and any other marine policing operations
5. Boat operation is a privilege within the department and may be taken away when deemed necessary

Helicopter ops:

1. MDNR does not currently crew our own helicopter
2. MDNR may utilize trooper 3 for necessary helicopter deployments
3. Officers are encouraged to utilize trooper 3 as it is equipped with thermal imaging and may help officers locate suspects/animals in the woods.
4. Officers may utilize trooper 3 for patrol purposes if 2 or more MDNR officers are in service and MSP is well staffed on the road

For any questions on MDNR SOP please reach out to a team leader or myself, J. Dangle