

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §15-2-12

§15-2-12. Mission of the State Police; powers of superintendent, officers and members; patrol of turnpike.

(a) The West Virginia State Police shall have the mission of statewide enforcement of criminal and traffic laws with emphasis on providing basic enforcement and citizen protection from criminal depredation throughout the state and maintaining the safety of the state's public streets, roads and highways.

(b) The superintendent and each of the officers and members of the division are hereby empowered:

(1) To make arrests anywhere within the state of any persons charged with the violation of any law of this state, or of the United States, and when a witness to the perpetration of any offense or crime, or to the violation of any law of this state, or of the United States, to make arrests without warrant; to arrest and detain any persons suspected of the commission of any felony or misdemeanor whenever a complaint is made and a warrant is issued thereon for the arrest, and the person arrested shall be immediately brought before the proper tribunal for examination and trial in the county where the offense for which the arrest has been made was committed;

(2) To serve criminal process issued by any court or magistrate anywhere within this state: Provided, That they may not serve civil process; and

(3) To cooperate with local authorities in detecting crime and in apprehending any person or persons engaged in or suspected of the commission of any crime, misdemeanor or offense against the law of this state, or of the United States, or of any ordinance of any municipality in this state; and to take affidavits in connection with any application to the Division of Highways, Division of Motor Vehicles and of West Virginia State Police for any license, permit or certificate that may be lawfully issued by these divisions of state government.

(c) Members of the West Virginia State Police are hereby designated as forest patrolmen and natural resources police officers throughout the state to do and perform any duties and exercise any powers of forest patrolmen and natural resources police officers, and may apprehend and bring before any court or magistrate having jurisdiction of these matters, anyone violating any of the provisions of chapters twenty, sixty and sixty-one of this code. The West Virginia State Police is at any time subject to the call of the West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Commissioner to aid in apprehending any person violating any of the provisions of chapter sixty of this code. They shall serve and execute warrants for the arrest of any person and warrants for the search of any premises issued by any properly constituted authority, and shall exercise all of the powers conferred by law upon a sheriff. They may not serve any civil process or exercise any of the powers of an officer in civil matters.

(d) Any member of the West Virginia State Police knowing or having reason to believe that any person has violated the law may make complaint in writing before any court or officer having jurisdiction and procure a warrant for the offender, execute the warrant and bring the person before the proper tribunal having jurisdiction. The member shall make return on all warrants to the tribunals and his or her official title shall be "Member of the West Virginia State Police". Members of the West Virginia State Police may execute any summons or process issued by any tribunal having jurisdiction requiring the attendance of any person as a witness before the tribunal and make return thereon as provided by law. Any return by a member of the West Virginia State Police showing the manner of executing the warrant or process has the same force and effect as if made by a sheriff.

(e) Each member of the West Virginia State Police, when called by the sheriff of any county, or when directed by the Governor by proclamation, has full power and authority within the county, or within the territory defined by the Governor, to direct and command absolutely the assistance of any sheriff, deputy sheriff, chief of police, policeman, natural resources police officer and peace officer of the state, or of any county or municipality therein, or of any able-bodied citizen of the United States, to assist and aid in accomplishing the purposes expressed in this article. When called, any officer or person is, during the time his or her assistance is required, for all purposes a member of the West Virginia State Police and subject to all the provisions of this article.

(f) The superintendent may also assign members of the division to perform police duties on any turnpike or toll road, or any section of any turnpike or toll road, operated by the West Virginia Parkways, Economic Development and Tourism Authority: Provided, That the authority shall reimburse the West Virginia State Police for salaries paid to the members and shall either pay directly or reimburse the division for all other expenses of the group of members in accordance with actual or estimated costs determined by the superintendent.

(g) The West Virginia State Police may develop proposals for a comprehensive county or multicounty plan on the implementation of an enhanced emergency service telephone system and may cause a public meeting on the proposals, all as set forth in section six-a, article six, chapter twenty-four of this code.

(h) By July 1, 1993, the superintendent shall establish a network to implement reports of the disappearance of children by local law-enforcement agencies to local school division superintendents and the State Registrar of Vital Statistics. The network shall be designed to establish cooperative arrangements between local law-enforcement agencies and local school divisions concerning reports of missing children and notices to law-enforcement agencies of requests for copies of the cumulative records and birth certificates of missing children. The network shall also establish a mechanism for reporting the identities of all missing children to the State Registrar of Vital Statistics.

(i) The superintendent may at his or her discretion and upon the written request of the West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Commissioner assist the commissioner in the coordination and enforcement of article sixteen, chapter eleven of this code and chapter sixty of this code.

(j) Notwithstanding the provisions of article one-a, chapter twenty of this code, the Superintendent of the West Virginia State Police may sell any surplus real property to which the West Virginia State Police or its predecessors retain title, and deposit the net proceeds into a special revenue account to be utilized for the purchase of additional real property and for repairs to or construction of detachment offices or other facilities required by the West Virginia State Police. There is hereby created a special revolving fund in the State Treasury which shall be designated as the "Surplus Real Property Proceeds Fund". The fund shall consist of all money received from the sale of surplus real property owned by the West Virginia State Police. Moneys deposited in the fund shall only be available for expenditure upon appropriation by the Legislature: Provided, That amounts collected which are found from time to time to exceed the funds needed for the purposes set forth in this subsection may be transferred to other accounts or funds and redesignated for other purposes by appropriation of the Legislature.

(k) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, the agency for surplus property is hereby empowered to transfer funds generated from the sale of vehicles, other equipment and commodities belonging to the West Virginia State Police to a special revenue account within the West Virginia State Police entitled the West Virginia State Police surplus transfer account. Moneys deposited in the fund shall only be available for expenditure upon appropriation by the Legislature: Provided, That amounts collected which are found from time to time to exceed the funds needed for the purposes set forth in this subsection may be transferred to other accounts or funds and redesignated for other purposes by appropriation of the Legislature. Any funds transferred to this account may be utilized by the superintendent to defray the cost of normal operating needs of the division.

(l) If the State Police or any other law-enforcement agency in this state receives a report that a person who has Alzheimer's disease and related dementia is missing, the State Police or any other law-enforcement agency shall immediately open an investigation for the purpose of determining the whereabouts of that missing person. Any policy of the State Police or any other law-enforcement agency relating to a waiting period prior to initiation of an investigation of a missing person does not apply in the case of a person who has Alzheimer's disease or other related dementia of the type referred to in this subsection.

(m) Notwithstanding any provision of this code to the contrary, effective on and after July 1, 2007, the expenses and salaries paid to the members of the West Virginia State Police for the monitoring and enforcement duties defined in chapter seventeen-c of this code may not be paid from the State Road Fund or subject to reimbursement from the Division of Motor Vehicles but is subject to appropriation by the Legislature.