



**Las Cruces Police Department**  
**GENERAL ORDERS**  
**FIELD OPERATIONS VOLUME 2**  
**GO-246 DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERT**  
**Revised 12/15/2005**

**246 DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERT**

**DISCUSSION**

To purpose of the Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) program is to enhance the Department's ability to recognize persons driving while under the influence of drugs and to assist in the investigation of other crimes.

A DRE is a commissioned police officer specially trained to conduct systematic examinations of suspected drug-impaired drivers. Such examinations are conducted to determine if (1) the suspected driver is impaired; and if so, (2) whether the impairment is drug or medically related; and if so, (3) the broad category or combination of drug categories likely to have caused the impairment.

**246.01 DRE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

DREs will:

- A. Arrest persons suspected of driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and conduct drug evaluations of the suspected impaired driver.
- B. Respond to requests requiring drug recognition skills. The DRE:
  - 1. Gathers all pertinent information from the arresting officer in order to proceed with a drug evaluation.
  - 2. Makes a determination based on the information obtained as to whether to proceed with a drug evaluation.
  - 3. Obtains medical assistance for the arrestee if the observed impairment is medically related.
  - 4. Follows the twelve (12) step process as outlined in the DRE Manual.
  - 5. Requests a toxicological sample (blood or urine) from the arrestee. The DRE is responsible for urine sample collection. The arrestee may be turned over to the arresting officer for collection of a blood sample from qualified medical personnel. All toxicological samples will be placed into evidence as dictated by current policy.



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6. Submits a Drug Influence Evaluation Report to the designated DRE coordinator for review within one working day after completion of the drug evaluation. The DRE Coordinator will then submit the completed report to the Records Unit.

**246.02 WHEN TO CALL A DRE**

- A. When the operator of a motor vehicle has been detained by an officer and the officer suspects the driver is under the influence of alcohol or drugs; **and**
- B. The officer has administered field sobriety tests to the suspected driver, and it is the officer's opinion that the driver is impaired and cannot safely operate a motor vehicle; **and**
- C. The officer has placed the impaired driver under arrest for Driving While Under the Influence of alcohol or drugs; **and**
- D. The arrested person submits to a breath alcohol test, the results of which are below the legal limit of .08; **and**
- E. The observed impairment is not consistent with the alcohol level present.
- F. A DRE may also be called when an on-duty supervisor, after consulting with the arresting officer and / or investigating detective, determines that a drug evaluation would be useful in the investigative process.
- G. The on-duty supervisor, arresting officer and / or investigating detective should consider the following indicators and circumstances when deciding whether to call a DRE:
  1. Drugs or drug paraphernalia in the arrestee's possession or in the arrestee's vehicle.
  2. Statements of drug use by the arrestee.
  3. Odor of drugs or volatile substances emitting from the arrestee.
  4. Fresh injection marks.
  5. Physical indicators such as slurred or rapid speech; body tremors etc.
  6. Whether or not the arrestee admits to being ill or taking medication.



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7. Whether the arrestee has suffered a blow to the head or other injury.
8. The on-duty supervisor must first authorize all DRE off duty callouts.
9. Two DREs may be called out to conduct a single drug evaluation.

**246.03 DRE RECORDS MAINTENANCE**

DRE officers are responsible for maintaining copies of all drug evaluations, certification and re-certification documents, progress logs and resumes. All such documentation will be made available to the DRE Coordinator when requested. The DRE Coordinator will maintain a central file for all DRE records.

**246.04 DRE OFFICER QUALIFICATIONS**

DRE training is available to any non-probationary, commissioned officer at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his / her designee. Interested officers must be certified in the use of breath testing equipment and remain certified while participating in the DRE program. Officers must also be trained and certified to administer standardized field sobriety tests, satisfactorily complete all aspects of the DRE training program, and maintain all DRE certification and reporting requirements.