



COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

"Policing Excellence through Community Partnerships"

Directive Type: General Order	Effective Date: 09-15-2016	General Order Number: 06.04
Subject: <i>Traffic Direction and Control</i>		
Amends/Supersedes: Section 06, Chapter 06, <i>Traffic Direction and Control 2008</i>	Chief of Police: <i>W.A. Hinkle</i>	
Distribution: All Personnel	Review Date: July 1	# of Pages: 5

1.0 DIRECTIVE

This Department will perform traffic direction and control functions such as manual traffic control, parking control, school crossing guard supervision and provide traffic safety information and recommendations.

2.0 PURPOSE OF TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

The purpose of traffic direction and control is to facilitate the safe and orderly movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the streets and roadways of the City of Columbia.

Sworn personnel may be required to establish temporary manual traffic control at any one of the following locations:

- Accident scenes.
- Traffic hazard locations.
- Storm damage areas.
- Roadway construction site.
- Locations with malfunctioning traffic control devices.
- Any other location where vehicle or pedestrian traffic is impeded.

The Region supervisor, upon receiving information of the development of a potentially dangerous situation, shall be responsible for ensuring the establishment of a manual traffic control point, if needed.

3.0 METHODS OF MANUAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

In order to ensure that traffic direction and control techniques are standardized all officers will utilize the methods and techniques currently taught by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

All uniformed Officers will be issued reflective vests and whistles that shall be utilized while performing manual traffic direction and control assignments. Officers will also be issued a flashlight with a traffic baton to be used while performing traffic direction and control functions at night or during inclement weather.

3.1 Objectives

The primary objective of traffic direction and control is the safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The Officer involved in traffic direction and control must be able to communicate, without using verbal

communications, how, when and where pedestrian and vehicle traffic is to move.

3.2 General Rules

The following general rules will be followed to make traffic direction and control operate smoothly:

- Stand where people can see you, normally in the center of the intersection.
- Use uniform signals and gestures.
- Break traffic at natural gaps if possible. If no normal break occurs, break the line behind a slow moving vehicle.
- Keep stragglers and "day dreamers" alert and rolling.
- Don't get excited or lose your temper.

3.3 Procedures for Stopping Traffic

The following procedures were established to stop traffic using hand signals or gestures:

- When directing a vehicle to stop, the Officer will position himself so that the side of his body is facing the traffic to be stopped.
- Two gestures will be used to stop traffic. First, point to the driver to be stopped, with your arm and index finger, and look straight at him. Watch the driver and hold this position until the driver sees you, then raise your pointing hand (but not your whole arm) so that your palm is towards the driver. Hold this position until he stops.
- Traffic from both directions must be stopped to allow traffic on the cross street to move. Stop the traffic coming from one direction first, then from the other. After traffic in one direction has been stopped with one hand, hold that hand in the stop position and turn to the other direction and repeat the process. Do not lower either arm until vehicles approaching from both directions have stopped.

3.4 Procedure to Start Traffic Moving

The following hand signals or gestures will be used to start traffic moving:

- The Officer will point with his arm and index finger towards the vehicle he wishes to start. Hold this position until you get the driver's attention.
- With the palm of the pointing hand facing up, the hand will be swung up and over to the chin. The arm will bend at the elbow only.
- When traffic starts moving in one direction, repeat the procedure to start traffic from the opposite direction.

3.5 Procedures for Left Turns

The following procedures were established to allow an uninterrupted flow of traffic when one vehicle wishes to make a left turn:

- If traffic is approaching the vehicle wishing to make a left turn, from the opposite direction, the vehicle turning left will have to wait until a gap in the traffic makes it possible for the vehicle to turn.
- The vehicle waiting to turn should be signaled to move into the center of the intersection to allow following vehicles to continue on.
- The vehicle turning left should be given the same hand gesture as was given to start traffic moving. With the other hand, the Officer will point to the spot in the intersection where the vehicle is to stop.
- The vehicle turning left will be signaled to turn, when it is clear, by pointing to the driver and then swinging the arm in the direction of the turn.

3.6 Emergency Vehicles

The following general rules will be followed when directing and controlling traffic and an emergency vehicle, utilizing its emergency equipment, approaches:

- Halt all traffic and clear intersection.
- Move all traffic in the lane of the emergency vehicle to allow the emergency vehicle to go through the intersection.
- Be alert for emergency vehicles approaching at right angles.
- After the emergency vehicle has passed, hold all movement until you know that no other emergency vehicles are following.

3.7 Traffic Whistle

The whistle is an audible traffic control aid that assists in attracting the attention of drivers and pedestrians.

The whistle will be used in the following manner:

- One long blast will mean, "stop".
- Two short blasts will mean, "go".
- Several short blasts will be used to get the attention of a driver or pedestrian who does not respond to a given signal.

3.8 Illuminated Traffic Baton

The illuminated traffic baton is a traffic control aid used to make signals or gestures at night or during inclement weather when visibility is poor.

To stop a vehicle with the baton, the Officer will face the moving line of traffic, standing slightly to one side of its direct path. Hold the baton in the right hand in front of the body with the elbow bent. The baton is now in a vertical position and should be moved slowly from the left to the right side of the body in an arc of about 45 degrees.

The "go" signal is given in the normal manner. Turn the body parallel to the traffic that is to be moved and give the normal "go" arm movement. The signal should be exaggerated and repeated because of poor visibility.

To permit a left turn movement, after having stopped conflicting through traffic, point the lighted end of the baton toward the vehicle that is to make the turn. Swing the baton in an arc toward the direction of the left turn movement. This sign may also have to be repeated.

Be sure to exaggerate the movements when using the baton.

4.0 SPECIAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Traffic Control at Fire Scenes

The fundamental task of this Department's personnel engaged in traffic direction and control at fire scenes will be to maintain access to and egress from the scene by fire and other emergency vehicles. Officers responding to the scene of a fire will ensure that the following rules are observed in regards to traffic control:

- No vehicles will be allowed to drive into the block where fire vehicles are parked and operating.
- No vehicle shall be allowed to drive over fire hoses without the approval of the on-the-scene fire Commander. (S.C. code 56-5-3850)

- The exceptions to the above rules shall be emergency vehicles on actual calls for service.
- Vehicles that are parked or interfere with fire fighting operations may be towed as necessary.

4.2 Traffic Control at Special Events

The Department shall provide only that degree of traffic directions and control service in support of special events as is absolutely necessary. The primary task of Departmental personnel conducting traffic direction and control in support of a special event is to assist motorists and/or pedestrians in the vicinity of the event.

The Department's Special Events Coordinator shall be responsible for the preparation of a traffic control operational plan that shall include:

- Ingress and egress of vehicles and pedestrians
- Provisions for parking
- Provisions for spectator control
- Public transportation
- Provisions for the news media
- Alternate routes for through traffic
- Provisions for temporary traffic control and parking prohibitions
- Adequate emergency service access.

The Special Events Coordinator will also be responsible for preparing an After Action Report on the event identifying successes or failures of the Traffic Control Plan.

4.3 Traffic Control during Adverse Road and Weather Conditions

In the event of severe or adverse weather conditions, the Region supervisor or the Watch Commander shall be responsible for notifying any agency which may be affected by or needed to help control traffic or road conditions to prevent accident or injuries from occurring.

The Region supervisor or the Watch Commander will also notify Emergency Medical Service, the Public Works Department and the Fire Department of adverse road conditions which might affect the general public.

The Region supervisor or Watch Commander may close a street, if in his opinion, the surface conditions and terrain are unusually hazardous. The Public Works Department should also be notified and their assistance should be requested in alleviating the problem.

Departmental personnel will provide traffic direction and control services and scene protection services in the vicinity of adverse road and weather conditions, when appropriate.

4.4 Traffic Control at Critical Incidents

Department's personnel engaged in traffic direction and control at critical incident scenes will;

- Establish a traffic perimeter around the scene at the direction of the Incident commander.
- Maintain access to and egress from the scene of the critical incident for emergency vehicles and personnel.
- Establish an exit corridor in the event of an evacuation.
- Prohibit spectators and non-emergency vehicles from entering the scene.
- Refer all media inquires to the Watch Commander or City Public Information Officer.

5.0 USE OF TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Temporary traffic control devices which include movable barriers, temporary signs and traffic cones may be utilized during peak traffic hours, special events or while an Officer is investigating a traffic accident.

Temporary traffic control devices may be deployed in support of traffic direction and control activities only with specific prior approval of supervisory or command personnel. The exception to this will be the use of the traffic cones in the patrol vehicles for traffic accident investigations.

Portable or part-time stops signs shall not be used as temporary traffic control devices, except in emergency situations.

A patrol vehicle, utilizing blue lights and emergency flashers, may be used to block access to a street or portion of a street due to an emergency situation occurring in the area. (IE: fire, hostage situation, accident, etc.)

As soon as practical following the termination of the need for the temporary control device, the supervisor authorizing the deployment of the device will ensure that it is removed.

6.0 MANUAL OPERATION OF TRAFFIC SIGNALS

In certain situations, Officers may be required to manually operate traffic control signal lights. This will normally be done in an attempt to recycle a signal light or to place the signal lights on flashing. Manual operation of traffic signals will be authorized when:

- School crossing is in effect.
- Pedestrian traffic at special events warrants such action.
- Assisting traffic engineers during maintenance work.
- Necessary to facilitate movement at traffic accidents or other emergencies.
- Traffic congestion is such that normal cycling of a traffic signal is not sufficient to handle the traffic flow.

Normally, the supervisor on duty will have access to the signal control box. The supervisor or an Officer shall ensure that the signal control box is secure at the completion of the assignment.

7.0 USE OF TRAFFIC CHECKPOINTS

Checkpoints may be established at the discretion of the shift supervisor to perform traffic enforcement functions. Checkpoints will be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Each checkpoint must have an approved Operational Plan. The plan will identify the location(s) to be targeted and the reason for the operation, i.e., community complaints, holiday suppression and/ or analysis have shown that a significant number of violations have occurred involving impaired drivers.
- The checkpoint(s) will be set up in such manner as to provide optimum safety for both police officers and motorists.
- Signs will be set out alerting motorists to the checkpoints.
- A supervisor will be on site during the operation of all checkpoints.
- All officers will wear full duty uniform to include a hat and reflective vest.
- Sufficient police personnel will be available to allow the checkpoint(s) to be conducted in an expeditious manner.
- All observed violations of law will be uniformly enforced. This will preclude claims of unfairness by any driver.
- An After Action report will be completed detailing the results of the operation.

No officer will intentionally establish a roadblock to forcefully stop a vehicle. The only exception to this will be by direct order of the Chief of Police, his designee, or a Command Staff Officer at which time specific procedures for implementation will be given.