

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

**SUBJECT: TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL**



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INDEX: TRAFFIC CONTROL, EMERGENCY SCENE DUTIES

## I. PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY:

- A. Purpose: To set the policy and establish procedures pertaining to the traffic direction and control functions at the Monroe Police Department.
- B. Responsibility:
  - 1. It will be the responsibility of the Patrol Division Commander to coordinate this Department's activities concerning traffic control related to special events.
  - 2. It will be the responsibility of Patrol Division (PD) officers assigned to fire incidents to establish control of traffic to facilitate the fire fighting efforts and protection of fire personnel on the scene.
  - 3. It will be the responsibility of the PD Commander to coordinate and supervise the use of civilian school crossing guards in this jurisdiction.

## II. DISCUSSION:

- A. This general order deals with traffic direction and control. Many situations demanding traffic direction and control are predictable. Conditions and circumstances at a given location may be such that the kinds of services needed,

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:           TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

and the times at which they are required, can be identified with a high degree of precision. This permits the timely planning of traffic direction and use of traffic control devices, and the assignment of resources for implementing traffic control functions. This directive identifies those situations requiring direct police action to allow the safe direction and control of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

### III. DEFINITIONS:

- A.    SCHOOL CROSSING SUPERVISION: Control of pedestrians and vehicles by adult school crossing guards, or control of students only by student safety patrol.
- B.    TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICE: All signs, signals, markings and devices placed on, over, or adjacent to a street or highway by authority of a public body or official having jurisdiction to regulate, warn or guide traffic.
- C.    TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL: Any device, whether manually, electrically, or mechanically operated, by which traffic is alternately directed to stop and permitted to proceed.
- D.    TRAFFIC SURVEY: An examination of traffic characteristics, such as volume, speed, delay, accidents, origin, destination, etc.

### IV. POLICY:

- A.    It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department in conjunction with traffic engineering authorities and other cognizant officials, to carry out periodic analysis of traffic direction and control needs of the community to identify and anticipate to the extent possible, the numbers and kinds of resources needed.
- B.    It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department to assign Department personnel to carry out identified traffic direction and control functions at those times and places where law enforcement authority is deemed necessary.
- C.    It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department to use non-sworn personnel to carry out those traffic functions judged to require human intervention to assure safety, but where a need for law enforcement is not anticipated.

### V. PROCEDURES:

- A.    TRAFFIC ENGINEERING ACTIVITIES: The traffic engineering activities of this

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:           TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

Department are primarily aimed at the discovery and remedy of accident and engineering deficiencies. These activities are performed in conjunction with state and municipal traffic engineering agencies. Department activities, conducted by personnel assigned to the Patrol Division, include collecting and compiling traffic data; conducting special traffic surveys and studies; analyzing accident and enforcement data; preparing special reports and making recommendations concerning the efficient use of traffic control devices, new or revised laws or ordinances, and engineering improvements; and participating in local and/or regional transportation system management planning. The following procedures govern this Department's activities related to traffic engineering:

1.    **TRAFFIC ENGINEERING COMPLAINTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS:** All traffic engineering deficiency complaints or suggestions will be referred to the PD Commander. The PD Commander will prepare work orders for municipal road engineering deficiencies. The SSD Commander will prepare reports to the State Department of Transportation for state road engineering deficiencies.
  2.    **TRAFFIC ACCIDENT AND ENFORCEMENT DATA:** The SSD Commander will cause accident and enforcement data to be transmitted to municipal and state traffic engineering authorities.
- B.    **TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL:**
1.    **ACCIDENT SCENE:**
    - a.    At accident scenes, patrol officers will use the patrol vehicle's overhead lights, flares, and other appropriate warning devices, as necessary, to stabilize the scene and to alert and detour approaching traffic;
    - b.    If damage exists that will require the roadway to be closed for a relatively long period of time, barricades, traffic cones, or other appropriate devices or personnel must be used;
    - c.    Once the scene has been cleared of vehicles and debris, the officer will arrange for the prompt removal of flares or other warning devices used to protect the scene.
  2.    **MANUAL CONTROL:** Manual traffic direction and control will be performed

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:           TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

by uniformed PD officers in situations where existing traffic control signals or devices may be malfunctioning or lacking. In addition, the manual direction and control of traffic may be dictated by emergency situations such as accidents, fires, downed wires, or planned events such as road construction or parades. Manual direction and control of traffic by Department officers will be conducted in a manner that will enable operators and pedestrians to recognize and respond to verbal commands and hand gestured motions. Manual direction and control of traffic procedures:

- a.     To Stop Traffic: Full extension of the arm outward with the palm directed toward the vehicle or person to be stopped. Officers may use verbal or whistle commands to accentuate the hand gesture;
  - b.     To Start Traffic: From the stop position, the arm will be moved at the elbow in a manner to indicate the traffic may proceed. The forearm is raised upwards and in the direction in which traffic is to move;
  - c.     Right Turns: The officer will gesture to the operator of a vehicle desiring to turn right to perform the maneuver by extending the arm toward the direction in which movement is to be made;
  - d.     Left Turns: Left turns are to be permitted only when there is a gap in oncoming traffic sufficient to safely allow such a turn or when oncoming traffic has been stopped. The officer will point in the direction of the turn when such movement can be made safely;
  - e.     Professional Attitude: Officers will remain calm and professional at all times while directing traffic. There will be occasions when motorists and/or pedestrians do not understand the officers' directions or may attempt to avoid compliance. Officers will respond in these situations with courtesy and professionalism.
3.     FIRE SCENE: The primary duty and responsibility of officers dispatched to a fire scene is to establish traffic direction and control. The traffic direction and control should provide for the safe ingress and egress of all vehicles. The traffic control must ensure that all vehicles, including those that belong to volunteer firefighters, do not obstruct emergency operations.
  4.     ADVERSE ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS: Patrol officers will be cognizant of changing weather conditions during their tours of duty and the

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:                   TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

effect of the weather on road conditions. Adverse road conditions may also arise out of situations including depressions, construction, or downed power lines. These conditions may require the placement of temporary traffic control devices. The PD supervisor should be kept informed of adverse conditions so a determination can be made to notify the appropriate agency to reduce or remove the hazards or to place temporary traffic control devices. Field officers may be used to provide on-scene traffic direction, when necessary.

5.   **CONTROL SIGNALS MANUAL CONTROL:** Officers may manually operate a traffic control signal. Traffic control boxes are located on a corner of the intersection where the traffic control signal is located. A key to these boxes is maintained on the key ring of a marked patrol vehicle. When the need arises, the officer may open the control box and manually operate the traffic control signal. The actual operating procedures are fully explained on the inside of the control box doors. Some circumstances warranting manual operation may include:
  - a.   **MALFUNCTION:** Whenever a traffic control signal is malfunctioning the control signal may be put on the "flash" mode, provided such action does not result in the creation of a more hazardous situation;
  - b.   **EMERGENCY SITUATION:** The manual operation of a traffic control signal may facilitate the movement of traffic at a traffic accident scene, fire scene, or other emergency;
  - c.   **TRAFFIC BUILD UP:** The manual operation of a traffic control signal may alleviate the build up of traffic during motorcades, parades, and rush hour traffic.
  
6.   **TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES:** Temporary traffic control devices will normally be placed by Public Works personnel when there is sufficient time. Temporary traffic control devices may be used to direct or control traffic for:
  - a.   **Scheduled Special Events:** The PD Commander, an officer designated by the PD Commander, or the PD supervisor may direct the placement of temporary traffic control devices in planned special events;

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:           TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- b.       Emergencies: In the event of the failure of existing traffic control signals during severe accidents, fires, or natural disasters, the personnel of this Department may have to place temporary traffic control devices, such as portable stop signs, detour signs, warning signs, etc.
  
- 7.       HIGH-VISIBILITY CLOTHING: All officers are issued a reflectorized vest as part of the uniform. All uniformed officers are expected to have their vests at hand. Reflectorized vests will be worn by officers whenever they are given a manual traffic assignment or whenever they are on a public highway for a prolonged period of time. An exception to this procedure is in an emergency situation that requires the officer to exit the police patrol vehicle immediately. In such instances, the vest will be put on as soon as conditions permit. The issued uniform raincoat may be used in lieu of the vest provided the reflectorized side is exposed. Officers may also use flashlights and reflectorized gloves when directing traffic to enhance visibility.
  
- C.       ESCORT SERVICES: Escort services may be provided in situations where such services would result in the safe passage of vehicles with a minimum of interference to normal traffic. Upon notification of a situation that may result in an increase of vehicular traffic in a defined area, the Chief of Police or the Captain, may authorize an escort of involved vehicles. Instances requiring an escort may include:
  - 1.       Funerals;
  - 2.       Motorcades for public officials or dignitaries;
  - 3.       Oversized vehicles;
  - 4.       Hazardous or unusual cargo;
  - 5.       Emergency vehicles: This Department does not authorize an escort of other emergency vehicles;
  - 6.       Civilian Vehicles: This Department does not authorize escorts of civilian vehicles in medical emergencies. The better procedure is to stabilize the victim and call for an ambulance to transport.
  
- D.       ROADBLOCKS: A roadblock is an obstruction in the roadway, natural or manmade, having the purpose of stopping vehicular traffic. The extreme dangers inherent in

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:           TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

the use of roadblocks mandates that they are employed only for purposes outlined in this directive:

1.     Purpose: The use of roadblocks is limited to the following reasons:
  - a.     To apprehend a subject who police have probable cause to believe has committed a felony involving death or serious physical injury, and who, unless immediately apprehended, poses a threat of serious physical injury to other persons;
  - b.     For specific law enforcement operations, including, but not limited to major crime investigations, Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) stop-checks, or similar activities.
  
2.     Procedures: The establishment of roadblocks will be performed in compliance with the following. The use of a roadblock must:
  - a.     Be approved by a command level officer;
  - b.     Be established in an area of sufficient visibility or illumination so that the approaching vehicles can observe the roadblock from a safe distance;
  - c.     Be of a fixed type;
  - d.     Involve unoccupied Department vehicles only, if motor vehicles are employed. Private vehicles will never be used as a barricade. Officers will position themselves safely away from the vehicle and on the same side of the roadway to prevent cross fire or line of fire situations;
  - e.     Have pursuit vehicles set up in proper positions. The officers assigned to pursuit vehicles will be informed of the roadblock and officers' positions;
  - f.     If established for traffic stop-checks, have a written plan, approved in advance by a command level officer. The plan will specify the duties of the assigned officers and the on-site supervisor, the equipment necessary to conduct the operation, and the procedures for directing and controlling traffic.

# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT: TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

### E. SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS:

1. **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY:** School crossing guards have the authority of a police officer in the direction and control of traffic at the crossing to which the guard is assigned. School crossing guards have no authority to arrest traffic violators.
2. **SELECTION:** School crossing guards will be screened and selected on the basis of their mental and physical aptitudes and abilities, consistent with the knowledge and skills required for the school crossing function.
3. **UNIFORM:** While at their assigned posts school crossing guards shall be in possession of all Department issued equipment. Issued reflectorized safety vests shall be worn at all times with the badge visible. The issued raincoat may be worn in conditions of inclement weather or limited visibility.
4. **LOCATION CRITERIA:** The establishment of school crossing locations is a collaboration of the school board authorities and this Department. The criteria for determining locations that require adult school-crossing guards are as follows:
  - a. Traffic volume and speed;
  - b. Number of turning movements;
  - c. Width of intersection;
  - d. Physical terrain;
  - e. Presence and types of traffic control devices;
  - f. Applicable statutes and ordinances;
  - g. Number of children crossing during peak hours; and
  - h. Special circumstances, such as handicapped children.
5. **LOCATION/SURVEY:** The PD commander will cause an annual survey in cooperation with the school board authorities to identify locations requiring school crossing guard supervision. The survey will form the basis for



# GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 7-613

## SUBJECT:                   TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

establishing school route plans and crossing points. The survey will take into consideration the criteria specified in section 4 above.

- F.    STUDENT SAFETY PATROL: This Department will continue to work with school board authorities to assist in organizing, instructing, and supervising student safety patrols. Student safety patrol activities are intended to compliment the adult school crossing guard program. Student safety patrols are not authorized to direct or control vehicular traffic in any way.
  
- G.    POLICE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATION: The Town Engineering Department participates at the local level in projects involving state or federal agencies. Information relevant to law enforcement traffic control and enforcement responsibilities is forwarded to this Police Department. Additionally, input from this Department is sought by other municipal agencies in conjunction with new developments and modifications impacting on local traffic. Traffic studies or surveys, when requested, are routinely conducted by the Support Services Division of this Department.