

# Asheville Police Department Policy Manual

**Chapter:** 13 - Traffic

**Original Issue:** 6/1/1994

**Policy:** 1304 - Checking Stations & Roadblocks **Last Revision:** 12/30/2025

**Previously:** 2363 - Traffic Checkpoints

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## Associated Directives

[Policy 700 - Vehicle Pursuits](#)  
[Policy 1300 - Traffic Enforcement](#)  
[Policy 1305 - DWI Enforcement](#)  
[Policy 1307 - Vehicle Towing](#)

## Introduction

The purpose of this direction is to provide procedures for the implementation and operation of checking stations and roadblocks. [61.1.1 d]

## Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Asheville Police Department (APD) to conduct periodic checking stations to ensure motorists' safety and reinforce compliance with Chapter 20 Motor Vehicle Laws. Checking stations and roadblocks will be conducted in compliance with [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-16.3A](#).

## Definitions

**Checking Station:** a preplanned, systematic stopping of vehicles to check motorists for violations within Chapter 20 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

**Roadblock:** a preplanned, systematic stopping of vehicles that can be used to distribute information or apprehend an offender who is trying to escape by means of a vehicle, search for a missing person, or to search for a wanted vehicle involved in a crime.

## Rules and Procedures

### 1304.1 General Procedures

- A. APD officers may use checking stations as an enforcement tool to ensure compliance with North Carolina motor vehicle laws. [61.1.1 d] [6.14]
- B. APD officers may use any type of roadblock, provided it is established and operated in accordance with the provisions of the United States and North Carolina Constitutions.
- C. Checking stations and roadblocks will be implemented and removed only by the authority of a supervisor.
- D. Checking stations and roadblocks should be operated to avoid unnecessary traffic congestion and traffic hazards.
- E. The sites for checking stations will be selected with due regard for the safety of motorists and the members operating the checking station. A sufficient distance must be provided to allow a motorist to travel at the speed limit and stop their vehicle in a normal manner under existing conditions.
- F. The placement of checking stations should be random or statistically indicated and will avoid being placed repeatedly in the same location or proximity thereof.
- G. No checking station or roadblock will be conducted without at least two (2) uniformed officers present and at least one (1) marked patrol vehicle actively utilizing emergency lights.
- H. Officers are required to wear a reflective traffic vest issued by the department when conducting any checking station or roadblock. [61.3.2 e]
- I. All checking stations will designate in advance the pattern for both stopping vehicles and requesting drivers that are stopped to produce their driver's license, registration, or insurance information. The officer in charge may allow a variance from this requirement if traffic congestion or other factors create a hazard. Any variation must be documented by both time and reason.

### 1304.2 Checking Stations

- A. An event operational guideline must be completed and signed by the district commander or watch commander before conducting a checking station.
- B. Pursuant to this policy and in accordance with [N.C. Gen. Stat § 20-16.3A](#), traffic safety checking stations must, at a minimum:

1. Have a designated plan for the individual checking station, including a pattern for stopping vehicles.
  2. Have a designated pattern in advance for stopping vehicles and for requesting drivers who are stopped to produce a driver's license, registration, or insurance information.
  3. Be marked by signs and/or activated emergency lights, marked patrol vehicles parked in a conspicuous location, or other ways to ensure motorists know that an authorized checking station is being conducted. Flashing blue lights on at least one (1) law enforcement vehicle will be operating at all times.
- C. A supervisor or their designee will be the sole person controlling the checking station. The supervisor or designee is responsible for:
1. Observing the operation of the checking station, not checking vehicles.
  2. Documenting any deviation from the original plan.
  3. Determining if the checking station has become a hazard to motor vehicles or officers, or if the checking station needs to be shut down due to a lack of officers to check vehicles.
- D. If an officer determines that there is reasonable suspicion that an occupant has committed a motor vehicle violation or other provision of law, the Officer may detain the driver for further investigation.
- E. If an officer suspects a driver is under the influence of an impairing substance, they will have the driver exit the vehicle where it is stopped. Another officer will safely move the vehicle to a secure area within the checking station. For the safety of other officers and the driver, under no circumstances should the driver be allowed to move their vehicle if impairment is suspected.
- F. If, during the course of the stop, an officer determines that the driver previously consumed alcohol or has an open container of alcoholic beverage in the vehicle, the operator of any vehicle stopped at a checking station may be requested to submit to an alcohol screening test pursuant to [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-16.3](#).
- G. If a driver is suspected of having consumed an impairing substance, procedures outlined in [Policy 1305 - DWI Enforcement](#) will be followed.
- H. If the driver cannot attend to their vehicle (e.g., arrest or transport to the hospital), procedures outlined in [Policy 1307 - Vehicle Towing](#) will be followed.

- I. Officers may sit on the outskirts of the checking station to observe vehicles attempting to avoid it. Officers may follow these vehicles but must develop reasonable suspicion or observe a traffic violation before stopping the vehicle. Officers must also adhere to [Policy 700 - Vehicle Pursuits](#) if the vehicle attempts to flee.
- J. Checking stations in which the APD provides assistance to, or receives assistance from, other law enforcement agencies must be approved by the district commander or watch commander and comply with applicable mutual aid agreements.
- K. An after-action report must be completed at the conclusion of the checking station.
- L. Copies of the event operational guideline and after-action report should be made available to all officers involved in the checking station for court purposes.

### 1304.3 Roadblocks

- A. Roadblocks are investigative tools that may be utilized by APD officers. The purpose of a roadblock differs from that of a checking station in that officers are not looking for compliance with motor vehicle laws. Roadblocks may be used for the following purposes: [6.14]
  - 1. Distribute literature in an attempt to solve a crime from an active case.
  - 2. In search of a wanted person who may be fleeing the area in a motor vehicle.
  - 3. In search of a missing person who is in immediate danger.
- B. If an officer encounters a situation during a roadblock in which an arrestable crime has occurred, the officer has a duty to respond appropriately.
- C. An event operational guideline must be filled out and signed by the district commander or watch commander [for every roadblock conducted](#).
- D. [Completion of the event operational guideline should occur before conducting a roadblock. The district commander or watch commander may grant temporary verbal authorization in certain situations. The authorizing commander will then be responsible for ensuring the completion of the event operational guideline as soon as practical. Exceptions would be involving actively fluid situations in which delaying the setting up of a roadblock would:](#)

1. Significantly hinder the apprehension of the wanted subject.
  2. Endanger the life or well-being of the subject being sought.
- E. An after-action report must be completed at the conclusion of the roadblock.
- F. Copies of the event operational guideline and after-action report should be made available to the case officer for court purposes.

By order of:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Stepp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jackie Stepp  
Interim Chief of Police