



# ***GENERAL ORDER***

**DURHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT  
DURHAM, NC**

**NUMBER:**

**4033 R-2**

## **TRAFFIC CONTROL**

Effective Date: 12/15/1995

Revision Dates: R-1 01/10/2005; **R-2 09/19/2014**

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is the policy of the Durham Police Department to utilize traffic direction and control where and when necessary to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

### **VEHICLE PLACEMENT**

Upon arriving on the scene of an incident occurring on an interstate or freeway, officers should utilize the attached Highway Incident Management Parking Guideline whenever possible.

### **CITY TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

The responsibility for analyzing vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow in determining appropriate traffic control devices and road design belongs to the City of Durham's Transportation Department. However, the Police Department has much input into the decision making process. Observations and suggestions concerning vehicular and pedestrian traffic may be forwarded at any time by any sworn personnel to the Transportation Department through the normal chain of command. The Transportation Department routinely requests input from the Police Department before implementing plans or making changes in established traffic flows.

### **REFLECTIVE TRAFFIC VESTS**

All officers are *required* to wear their issued reflective traffic vest or their issued reflective rain jacket whenever they are directing traffic.

### **TRAFFIC CONTROL PERSONNEL**

In accordance with N.C.G.S § [20-114.1](#), sworn law enforcement personnel, uniformed regular and volunteer firemen, uniformed regular and volunteer rescue squad members when in the performance of their official duties, and non-sworn traffic control officers appointed by the Chief of Police as school crossing guards are authorized to direct traffic upon the streets and public vehicular areas of the City of Durham. Sworn personnel are also authorized to direct traffic upon private property when and where it is necessary to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians. In addition, fire and rescue squad personnel as well as appointed traffic control officers may regulate the flow of traffic on private property when performing their official duties.

## **MANUAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION LOCATIONS**

Manual direction of traffic is the responsibility of the Patrol Services Bureau. Manual direction will be used in situations where traffic control signals or devices are not present or adequate. Emergency conditions may dictate the manual control of traffic. These include, but are not limited to: accidents, out of service signals, road construction and special functions.

## **SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS**

Scheduled school crossing guard assignments will be handled by non-sworn traffic control officers appointed by the Chief under the direction of the Community Services Unit, see GREAT Crossing Guard Job Description. In the event that an assignment cannot be covered by a school crossing guard, the Community Services Unit Commander is responsible for obtaining substitute coverage. Officers assigned to the GREAT Unit will be the primary back-up for this assignment. If a GREAT Unit member is unable to provide coverage, the Community Services Unit commander will coordinate with the appropriate patrol district supervisor to cover the assignment. Patrol officers assigned to work a school crossing guard detail are expected to remain on post (see GO 4033 Attachment 1 – School Crossing Guard Locations) for the duration of the assignment. In the event that the officer needs to leave their post for an emergency dispatch or assignment, the patrol supervisor will be notified.

## **MANUAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION PROCEDURES**

Manual direction of traffic by an officer will be handled in a manner that would enable drivers and pedestrians to recognize and respond to audible and gestured motions.

*To Stop Traffic:* An officer extends his arm outward with the palm toward the car to be stopped. The officer may use verbal and/or whistle commands to enhance the physical gesture.

*To Start Traffic:* Starting from the stop position, the arm will be moved at the elbow in a manner to indicate that the traffic may now proceed. This is done by swinging the arm upwards (from the elbow down) toward the direction in which traffic is to flow.

*Right Turns:* The officer shall gesture to the driver of a vehicle turning right to perform the turn by extending the arm toward the direction in which the turn is to be made.

*Left Turns:* These turns are to be made only when there is a gap in traffic or oncoming traffic is completely stopped. The officer will point in the direction of the turn when such movement can be made safely. Officers may utilize flashlights, the traffic wand, road flares and/or traffic cones while manually directing traffic. These will be used in a manner to enhance visibility and promote traffic safety. Officers should remain calm and professional whenever directing traffic. There are times when drivers and pedestrians do not understand officers or may refuse to obey such directions. The officer will handle these instances with courtesy and professionalism within the guidelines of accepted procedures.

## **TRAFFIC SIGNAL BOXES**

In the event of a malfunctioning traffic signal, the signal may be manually placed in the “flash” mode. The officer assigned to check the signal or provide traffic control will request a supervisor who possesses a signal box key to respond and place the signal on manual “flash”. The Communications Center will be immediately advised of the signal placed on “flash” and will notify the Signal Shop of needed repairs. A written note explaining the problem *in detail* shall be left inside the signal box.

## **TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES**

For planned events that require barricades in order to restrict traffic based upon a permit issued to a group or organization, e.g. a parade or special event, planners are responsible and will be given instructions for renting the necessary barricades and equipment from a vendor. .

Usually the barricades will be left at the requested locations in a disassembled state. The officers assigned to the event and/or location will assemble the barricade, put same in place and at the conclusion of the event, disassemble the barricade and place them in a manner and location similar to that which they were found for retrieval by Traffic Engineering or a vendor.

Portable and temporary stop signs may be used in emergency and/or special cases. Portable stop signs can be obtained through the City Sign Shop. Communications has on-call information for after-hours needs. In certain emergency situations, the use of portable stop signs may become necessary. If the initial responder has reason to believe that such devices may alleviate a potentially hazardous traffic situation, he or she must notify the Watch Commander of the situation, and obtain clearance to implement utilization of portable stop signs. If the use of the stop signs is authorized, the initial responder will pick up and put in place. The District Sergeant will ensure that the signs are removed as soon as possible after the initial problem is corrected or notify the oncoming supervisor that they are in place.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Pre-scheduled events that fall under the planning responsibility of the Police Department that may involve large amounts of vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic shall be addressed in an operational plan submitted by the appropriate District or Division Commander prior to the event. These may include parades, picketing, demonstrations and road races. The operational plan will be comprehensive and carefully planned to allow for normal and emergency activities to continue with a minimal amount of disruption.

The Police Department may provide for crowd control by the use of foot patrol, motorcycle officers and officers in patrol vehicles. Before utilizing on-duty personnel, paid off-duty personnel and/or the Police Reserves shall be utilized.

## **MEDIA RELATIONS COORDINATOR**

The Media Relations Coordinator will release to the news media at the earliest possible date, information addressing changes or alterations to the normal flow and operation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic as the result of an upcoming special event or occasion.

## **FIRE SCENES**

Officers on the scene of fires will assess the hazards present and take action to minimize further damage to property or life. These may include directing traffic and/or evacuating the immediate area. Officers on the scene will ensure that emergency vehicles have access to the area and will restrict entry by unauthorized vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

The Police Department will work with the Fire Department in handling emergency scenes and to develop and implement plans and procedures for such scenes. Volunteer firemen arriving in private vehicles will be permitted to park at the perimeter of the fire scene but not near the actual emergency scene unless conditions so permit or necessitate.

## **ADVERSE WEATHER AND ROAD CONDITIONS**

Adverse road conditions may result out of many possible situations. These include accidental hazards such as downed power lines and debris or natural causes such as fog, ice and snow. Officers will be alert to changing weather conditions so emergency measures can be implemented. This includes calling out salt and sand trucks or snow plows. If emergency road crews are not already working, then officers will notify their appropriate supervisor of such problems so a determination can be made to call out the appropriate agency or department.

## **ROAD RESTRICTIONS & IMPEDING TRAFFIC**

At times it may be necessary to establish an obstruction in the roadway, natural or man-made for the purpose of stopping normal vehicular traffic. When the need for this action arises, the Watch Commander or his or her designee will evaluate the available information and determine whether a roadblock is warranted. DWI checking stations, and license checks are discussed in General Order 4012, *Checking Stations* and are not regulated by this General Order.

Safety of officers and civilians will be the primary concern in utilizing a road restriction. A decision to place a roadblock will be made considering several factors. These will include the number of officers available, seriousness of the known crime and/or danger to public safety. City vehicles should be used in establishing roadblocks. Civilian vehicles should not be utilized unless emergency considerations leave no other alternative.

The use of road restrictions will be documented in the CAD system, an incident report and/or an after action report (if applicable) that will be reviewed through the chain of command.

Should units be in pursuit, pursuing units must be advised of the roadblock and position of officers so that they have ample warning and distance to safely stop without being in the line of fire. Procedures and responsibilities regarding legal intervention utilized in pursuits are detailed in General Order 4019, *Vehicular Pursuits*.



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