



GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Operations

Section: 408.9

Subject: Traffic

Topic: Traffic Direction and Control

Accreditation: OPR. 07.11, 07.12, 07.13

Revised:

Reaffirmed:

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to provide guidelines for traffic direction and point control.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to ensure the safe and expeditious flow of traffic through the county by taking specific actions when indicated. These actions include traffic direction and point control for brief or long periods of time at controlled or uncontrolled intersections, roadways, whether occurring on a one time basis or on a recurring basis.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Traffic control signals

Traffic direction is in accordance with §46.2-834, Code of Virginia, as amended.

1. To stop traffic by hand signals:

Stand with shoulders parallel to moving traffic. Raise arms forty-five degrees to the shoulder with the hand extended and palm toward the moving traffic to be stopped.

2. To move traffic by hand signals:

Stand with shoulders parallel to the traffic to be moved. Extend the right arm and hand full length at the height of the shoulders and towards traffic. The fingers are extended and joined together, palm down. Move the hand sharply in the direction the traffic is to move. Repeat the movement with the left arm and hand to start traffic flowing from the opposite direction.

3. To stop and start traffic by whistle:

One whistle blast directs moving traffic to stop. Two whistle blasts directs

traffic in the opposite direction to move.

4. Emergency stopping of traffic by whistle:

Three or more short whistle blasts directs all traffic to clear the intersection immediately and stop.

B. Clothing

1. Under all circumstances, personnel shall wear their issued, high-visibility traffic vests while engaged in traffic control.

IV. TRAFFIC CONTROL TRAINING

All deputies receive training in traffic direction and control as a course of instruction while in academy training. All supervisors shall randomly monitor persons under their command for proficiency in traffic control and direction. Deputies found to be deficient shall receive additional training from a supervisor. This training shall be documented in squad personnel files and reflected in performance evaluations.

IV. AUTOMATED TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS

When traffic lights malfunction or are out, deputies should advise the Emergency Communications Center to notify either the State Highway Department or the power company, whichever is appropriate. In the case of malfunctioning lights, deputies shall request a control box key from a supervisor to access the control box and move the toggle switch down to place the lights in a flashing mode. In the event lights are out, deputies shall manually direct traffic at the intersection when deemed necessary.

V. TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Temporary traffic control devices may be utilized during special events, when road hazards exist, or in the event of accidents. The following may be used as temporary traffic control devices:

- A. Wooden or similar barricades
- B. Detour signs and other descriptive signs, as applicable
- C. Traffic cones or flares

- D. Sheriff's vehicles (in emergency situations)

Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring proper placement and removal of such temporary traffic control devices should they be utilized.

VI. TRAFFIC SURVEYS

The Operational Support Division (OSD) Commander shall on, at least, an annual basis meet with representatives of the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation to survey key areas where point traffic control may be required. The results of these surveys shall be forwarded to the Sheriff.

- A. The OSD Commander shall utilize these surveys to analyze such criteria as speed, pedestrian traffic, traffic volume, peak period volume, and the need to remove traffic control devices.
- B. On a daily basis, shift supervisors shall utilize the same criteria listed above as well as any emergency situation, i.e. power failure, broken or malfunctioning signals, etc. to determine the need for manual traffic direction.
- C. The OSD Commander shall, on an annual basis, conduct a survey of parking control activities. This shall be to ensure cost effectiveness in parking enforcement activities. This survey should also identify those areas where parking control may be required.

VII. SPECIAL EVENTS TRAFFIC CONTROL

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office develops plans to contend with high traffic or pedestrian incidents occurring at special events. (See General Order #401.9, Special Events) The agency's objective is to eliminate confusion, move traffic in an orderly manner, and reduce decision-making processes for motorists and pedestrians.

The Field Operations Division Commander, or his designee, shall address the following areas and circumstances during special events:

- A. Emergency vehicle access
- B. Ingress and egress of pedestrians
- C. Parking

- D. Crowd and spectator control and movement
- E. Relief of deputies assigned to traffic control
- F. Public transportation, if applicable
- G. Alternative routes for through traffic
- H. Temporary traffic controls such as detours, parking restrictions, etc.
- I. Postal service vehicles

VIII. TRAFFIC CONTROL (FIRES, ACCIDENTS, OR OTHER HAZARDS)

The Sheriff's Office has the authority and the responsibility to regulate traffic at the scenes of fires, accidents, and other hazards. Situations will occur at certain incidents where, due to a lack of manpower or other circumstance, personnel from the Department of Fire and Rescue Services or responding volunteer companies will be asked to assist. This assistance is authorized under §27-15.1, Code of Virginia, as amended.

The control and route of the traffic flow will be a joint decision made on the scene of the incident by the senior deputy and the Department of Fire and Rescue Services Commander. The main objective for those deputies assigned to direct traffic at these scenes is to utilize all means available to protect lives and aid the injured. Other essential duties shall be to provide traffic direction of motorists and pedestrians and to ensure proper ingress and egress for emergency vehicles.

In the event a fire and rescue volunteer member responds to any situation in his/her private vehicle, they will be directed to park in an area that does not interfere with the effective movement of emergency equipment or operation.

IX. TRAFFIC CONTROL DURING ADVERSE ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office has the authority and the obligation to regulate traffic for public safety reasons during extreme situations such as snow storms, flooding, severe storms, fog, ice, smoke, downed power lines, damaged bridges, or any other potential hazard. During such situations, the senior supervisor on duty shall declare an emergency and take whatever measures are necessary to close roadways or detour traffic for the general safety of citizens.

X. NON-SWORN PERSONNEL CONTROLLING TRAFFIC

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office does not employ non-sworn personnel for law enforcement functions. However, on occasion, the following non-sworn personnel may perform traffic control:

- A. The Sheriff's Office Auxiliary Unit may be used for traffic direction and control and assist sworn staff at special events.
- B. School crossing guards are used to provide traffic direction and control at assigned school locations and at other times as directed by the Sheriff. (Refer to General Order #409.12, School Crossing Guards).
- C. Members and volunteers of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services may assist deputies with traffic direction and control at incidents when insufficient Sheriff's Office resources are available.

Department of Fire and Rescue Service members and volunteers will be requested to wear reflective turnout gear during these times to promote visibility and safety. All school crossing guards are required to wear their assigned uniforms to include high visibility vests.

XI. ESCORTS

From time to time, Sheriff's Office personnel may be engaged in escort duty. These may include VIP's, dignitaries, or other officials. (See General Order 401.9, Dignitary Security)

Deputies shall not engage in the escort of emergency vehicles except during extreme situations and as approved by a supervisor. Under no circumstance shall a deputy escort a civilian vehicle in an emergency situation.

Deputies may, with approval by a supervisor, escort funerals, oversized loads, lost motorists, or other vehicles during non-emergency situations.