

# PROCEDURE MANUAL

## 09-04



MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

## Closure of State Highways

**Purpose:** This manual provides procedures for members to follow when closing state highways. The general nature of state highway closures requires a prompt, coordinated response and effective action.

**Effective Date:** April 19, 2022

## Table of Contents

---

### Closure of State Highways

<b>Section 1: Closure of State Highways</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Authority	1
1.2 Emergency/Disaster Identification	2
1.3 Highway Closure Procedures	3
1.4 Tasks	3
1.5 Re-Opening Closed Highways	5

## Definitions:

---

None

## Section 1: Closure of State Highways

---

### 1.1 Authority

- a. The State Constitution and statutes establish the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) as the owner and operator of state highways. This primary responsibility is not preempted by emergency/disaster conditions.

When an emergency/disaster is declared by proper authorities, the [Michigan Emergency Management Plan](#) and the [Emergency Management Act](#) provides for emergency/disaster response operations within the state.

- b. Highway Closures

The legal authority and responsibility of the State Transportation Commission for closing trunk lines is found in [MCL 750.497](#), which authorizes the closure of highways to ensure the public safety.

- c. Enforcement Member Authority

The authority cited in the Michigan Vehicle Code, [MCL 257.602](#), provides that a person shall not refuse to comply with a lawful order or direction of a police officer when that officer, for public interest and safety, is guiding, directing, controlling, or regulating traffic on the highways of this state.

- d. All closures of state highways are similar in procedure and responsibilities; however, severe weather conditions can involve a much larger closure area. These conditions require a greater degree of coordination between involved agencies and the public.

- i. During major incidents, the decision to completely close state highways, the general area affected, and the anticipated length of time will be made jointly by the involved State Police district commander and MDOT Region Associate Engineer or representative.

- ii. If an incident allows for a decision concerning timing of state highway closures, it is best to postpone the closure during peak hours. This closure postponement can only be considered if vehicles have been adequately removed from the traveled portion of the roadway and are not interfering with safe traffic flow.
- iii. An official bulletin will be prepared jointly by the involved State Police district commander and MDOT Region Associate Engineer or representative and released immediately to the news media.

This announcement will state as precisely as possible the travel restrictions and area affected by the restriction.

## 1.2 Emergency/Disaster Identification

The need for complete, temporary, or partial closure of state highways may be necessary under any of the following conditions:

- a. Natural Disasters
  - i. Flooding
  - ii. Tornadoes and/or Windstorms
  - iii. Ice and/or Snowstorms
  - iv. Earthquakes
  - v. Forest Fires
- b. Nuclear or Radiological Incidents
  - i. Nuclear Power Plant Incidents
  - ii. Radiological Incidents
- c. Technological Incidents
  - i. Explosions
  - ii. Hazardous Materials
  - iii. Fires
  - iv. Transportation Facility Failures
- d. National Security
  - i. Civil Defense
  - ii. Military Action
  - iii. Terrorism
- e. Major Traffic Incidents
  - i. Traffic Crashes
  - ii. Unusual Congestion

- iii. Damaged Highway and/or Bridge

### 1.3 Highway Closure Procedures

When an incident occurs, enforcement members shall initially assess the situation and its scope to determine whether additional assistance is needed. Other agencies may become involved depending on the nature of the incident. Temporary closures will be provided under police authority. If a closure is expected to last four or more hours, assistance can be requested from the MDOT Region Associate Engineer or representative. Enforcement member response procedures listed below should be followed:

- a. Incidents or traffic crashes involving hazardous materials
  - i. In the event an enforcement member arrives at the scene of a hazardous materials traffic crash or incident before any other police agency or organized fire department, they shall immediately notify the Bureau of Fire Services and the organized fire department of the area in which the incident occurred as required by MCL 29.5g and otherwise comply with directives that address hazardous materials incidents.
  - ii. If an incident involving hazardous materials affected a state highway, the response procedures described in Section 1.4 shall be followed.
- b. Enforcement members shall report incidents affecting state highways to the Regional Communication Center (RCC) and local post.
  - i. The RCC will notify the appropriate MDOT Regional Office of all partial or full state highways closures. Closures shall be reported to the MDOT Regional Office as soon as possible.
  - ii. The RCC and/ or post will notify the Special Operations Division (SOD) via the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN) or telephonically, of all full state highway closures.
- c. Requesting Assistance
  - i. The local MSP post shall contact the MDOT Regional Office when an incident requires a detour of traffic from the state highway system. MDOT may assist with selecting appropriate alternate routes by considering load limits, bridges, overpasses, or other limiting factors.
    - 1. For extended state highway closures, MDOT resources such as arrow boards, signs, signals, barricades, and/or vehicles can be requested.
    - 2. For damage to state highways or bridges, and severe weather that causes hazardous road conditions, resources can be requested through the appropriate MDOT Regional Office.
  - ii. MSP assets can be requested based on the circumstances at the scene.

### 1.4 Tasks

- a. MSP Responsibilities:

Continuously inform the RCC, Operations Section, and SOD via telephone, radio, or LEIN of local hazardous or restrictive road conditions for immediate release to the news media.

- i. Post Commanders or their representative(s) will maintain coordination with road authority agencies and other police agencies within the affected area, and alert and work with county/city emergency management coordinators concerning the possible need for shelters and rescue operations within the affected area.
  - ii. Regional Dispatch Centers will alert the district commander, Operations Section, emergency management coordinator (SOD), and traffic crash reconstruction specialists.
  - iii. District Commanders or their representative will coordinate efforts with the MDOT Region Associate Engineer or their representative concerning road closures within the district. If adjoining districts are involved, coordination will be through the Operations Section and SOD.
  - iv. District Emergency Management Coordinators will assist post commanders in the coordination of response and recovery operations.
  - v. District Traffic Crash Reconstruction Specialists will assist the MDOT Region Traffic and Safety Engineer regarding safety requirements and plans for alternate routes within the district.
  - vi. SOD will notify MDOT's Emergency Management Coordinator for coordination of highway operations. The information may also be broadcast to all affected police agencies via LEIN. The SOD will also alert Operations Section personnel as well as the MSP Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (EMHSD) duty officer.
- b. MDOT Personnel: Members will, when appropriate, assist MDOT personnel in their effort to follow applicable procedures as provided in the Emergency Management Response Call List (red book). Members should be aware of the following list of MDOT activities that may require communication with or the assistance of the department:
- i. Coordinate activities with the MSP district commander.
  - ii. Maintain communication with affected highway superintendents and contract county superintendents for up-to-date road condition assessments.
  - iii. Deploy region equipment and request additional equipment from other MDOT regions when required.
  - iv. When appropriate, coordinate emergency efforts with the MSP district commander on state highway closures.
  - v. When incident management plans are not available, assist MSP in determining road closure terminals for affected highways within the MDOT region and coordinate closures with adjacent MDOT regions when required.
  - vi. Contact other MDOT regions outside the emergency area of the possible need for their assistance to the affected area.
  - vii. Contact and work with personnel, as necessary, from the Mackinac, Blue Water and International bridges.

- viii. Notify and continuously update the MDOT Region Engineer, Chief Operations Officer, and the Emergency Management Coordinator.
- ix. MDOT Emergency Management Coordinator will coordinate with MSP Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division and SOD along with the affected MDOT districts to ensure an overall coordinated effort.

### 1.5 Re-Opening Closed Highways

- a. Affected road authorities and MDOT personnel will report information to the MDOT Associate Region Engineer or their representative when a major highway can be re-opened.
- b. Affected MSP posts will immediately report road conditions to their district headquarters and Operations Section.
- c. MSP and MDOT officials will coordinate re-opening of highways with Operations Section and affected road agencies or MDOT personnel.
- d. The SOD, along with Operations Section personnel, will compile information on travel restrictions and re-opening of highways. Data will be provided to the news media and broadcast to affected police agencies based on information received from NOAA Weather Wire and LEIN.
  - i. During SEOC activations, SOD will provide this information to the Operations Section.