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**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE – 112.041  
TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: April 7, 2009**  
**AFFECTS: Sworn Personnel**

**REVISION DATE: November 21, 2024**

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**I. PURPOSE**

To promote traffic safety through uniform traffic law enforcement.

**II. POLICY**

All officers are responsible for maintaining a working knowledge of traffic laws and their proper application. Accordingly, the department adheres to Traffic Code 720.002 that prohibits traffic-offense quotas. All uniformed officers who routinely work in an emergency vehicle equipped with lights and sirens are responsible for traffic enforcement. The Traffic Unit of the Support Services Division will be responsible for technical crash investigation involving serious bodily injury or death, traffic enforcement, traffic safety education, and will liaison with the City of Plano Traffic Engineering Division and traffic safety groups.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Traffic Enforcement Request (TER) – a complaint from a citizen regarding a traffic enforcement issue.
- B. Area patrol – moving patrol within a defined area, patrol beats or geographical boundaries for the purpose of increasing visibility or enforcement activities.
- C. Line patrol – patrol between two specific points on a given street
- D. Directed patrol – assignments or requests for increased traffic patrol coverage during a shift or unusual circumstances i.e., increased traffic enforcement during special events or major incidents.
- E. Special Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) - enforcement effort targeting driving behaviors that contribute greatly to the numbers and severity of traffic crashes.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

A. Traffic Enforcement Functions

- 1. Traffic enforcement functions encompass visible traffic patrol (area, line, directed), stationary observation (covert and overt), and the use of marked cars as directed by the shift supervisor.
- 2. Officers will conduct informal traffic surveys in an effort to identify and correct specific problem traffic areas within the city. These surveys may be initiated in response to citizen complaints, traffic enforcement requests, or upon normal observation as part of patrol duties.

B. Performance Objectives

- 1. It is the responsibility of each law enforcement employee to perform their duties in such a manner as to enhance the accomplishment of the following goals:
  - a. Reduction of traffic crashes through an aggressive approach to traffic law enforcement, and planned directed patrol.
  - b. Measure the section above by conducting an analysis of all traffic crashes, all injury traffic crashes and all traffic crashes resulting in death.
  - c. Competent investigation and reporting of traffic crashes as prescribed by law.
  - d. Reduction in the effects of drunk driving by a concentrated law enforcement effort and increased public awareness.
- 2. When an officer believes a violation has occurred, it is necessary to take the appropriate actions based on one or more of the following:
  - a. Evidence
  - b. Applicable law

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- c. Witness statement
  - 3. Enforcement actions include:
    - a. Issue citations
    - b. Issue written warning
    - c. Issue verbal warning
    - d. Arrest
  - 4. While not every situation involving enforcement actions can be addressed, the general philosophy of the department is to establish a consistent approach to enforcement by officers, taking into account the degree and severity of the violation committed and the likelihood of voluntary compliance. Warnings should be substituted for arrests or citations when circumstances warrant, especially in the case of inadvertent violations. Emphasis is to be placed on qualitative enforcement and not quantitative.
- C. Methods of Enforcement
- Tactics and strategies for traffic law enforcement should be consistent with the nature of the violation and its potential for interfering with the free and safe flow of traffic. This may involve one or more of the following types of traffic patrol:
- 1. Line Patrol
  - 2. Area Patrol
  - 3. Directed Patrol
  - 4. Stationary traffic observation:
    - a. Visible stationary traffic observation
    - b. Concealed stationary traffic observation
- Note: Officers are not permitted to block a lane or impede the flow of traffic for the purposes of enforcing traffic violations.
- 5. In normal patrol operations, it is the policy of the department to maintain a visible traffic patrol as a deterrent for traffic violators.
  - 6. In order to be effective, selective traffic enforcement directed at high crash areas may warrant the use of a special police vehicle, such as an unmarked or unconventional vehicle.
  - 7. Traffic Enforcement Requests are received by the traffic unit and responded to by the traffic and/or patrol services division personnel. Traffic will maintain a database of all Traffic Enforcement Requests received and actions taken.
- D. Emergency Equipment
- 1. The proper use of emergency equipment is essential to the safety of the officer and other motorists. The use of emergency equipment, such as emergency lights and sirens by the police officer is governed by law and may be found in Texas Transportation Code Chapter 546, the City Code of Ordinances, and Admin Directive 107.002. Officers working traffic assignments are always at risk of being struck by inattentive motorists. To minimize risks, officers working speed enforcement assignments in zones of 45 M.P.H. and greater shall affect the stop by use of squad car or motorcycle with emergency lights and siren. In zones less than 45 M.P.H., officers may flag vehicles to the side for traffic enforcement purposes, provided the officer is wearing an ANSI Level 2 reflective coat or vest.

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2. Emergency equipment such as hazardous warning lights, spotlights, and public address systems are to assist the officer in ensuring public safety for a specific situation and are to be used at their discretion.

**E. Traffic Stop Procedures**

Officers will follow the below listed guidelines when conducting traffic stops. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a procedure that will enhance officer safety, and promote a professional image to the violator.

1. When a violation is observed, the officer should notify Public Safety Communications of the intended location of the traffic stop, and provide the vehicle registration number prior to initiating the stop.
2. Stop the vehicle in such as manner and location so as not to create a hazardous or unsafe situation.
  - a. Certain locations within Plano do not allow sufficient sight distance during traffic stops, and may result in increased risk to both officers and violators. Stops in areas with limited sight distance should be avoided if possible. If it is necessary to initiate a stop in these areas, officers should attempt to have the vehicle move to a safer location, if possible. If the vehicle cannot be safely moved, officers should consider calling for a backup officer to assist with traffic control.
  - b. Whenever possible, officers should avoid stopping vehicles in “unexpected areas” such as inside shoulders, left lane of traffic, etc. If the vehicle stops in such a manner, the officer should attempt to have the vehicle moved to a safer location, if possible.
3. Place the patrol car safely behind the violator's vehicle with emergency lights operating. Positioning of the vehicles should provide protection for the officer from traffic approaching from behind. During hours of darkness, the spotlight should be aimed at the rear window of the suspect vehicle so as not to interfere with the vision of oncoming vehicles.
4. When approaching stopped vehicles, keep close watch on the subjects in the vehicle for any sudden moves.
5. Officers should follow the Seven Point Violator Contact.

The officer will always ensure that their conduct and appearance are reflective of a professional police image. If the driver has complaints about the way the contact was handled, refer him/her to the Professional Standards Unit during normal working hours, or to an on-duty supervisor if an immediate contact is requested.

**F. Special Enforcement Consideration**

1. Out of state violators will be handled in accordance with the Non-Resident Violator Compact of 1977 as found in the Texas Transportation code Chapter 703, and Section 521.030 (Reciprocal License). This statute describes those provisions which apply to residents from those states which are members of the "Non-resident Violation Compact." Plano officers are to assume that the non-resident offender is from a "Compact" member state unless current lists of those member states specifically indicate otherwise.
2. Juvenile Offenders
  - a. Departmental guidelines directing the arrests of juveniles are found in Administrative Directive 112.005 - Juvenile Operations.
  - b. Texas Transportation Code Chapter 729 describes the procedures involving traffic law violations committed by juveniles.
3. Legislators

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- a. With respect to State Legislators, the Texas Code of Criminal Procedures states that Senators and Representatives shall be privileged from arrest during the session of the legislature, and in going to and returning from the same. This privilege applies except in cases of treason, felony, or breach of the peace.
  - b. Additional procedures for dealing with Members of Congress may be found in the administrative directives.
4. Military Personnel
- Military personnel are to be treated as residents of this state in matters of traffic enforcement. It should be noted that any person on active duty in the armed forces who has in their possession a valid license, issued in a foreign country by the United States may operate a motor vehicle in this state for a period of not more than ninety (90) days from the date of their return to the United States.
5. Diplomatic Immunity
- a. Diplomatic and consular officers should be accorded their respective privileges, rights, and immunities as directed by international law and federal statute. These officials should be treated with courtesy and respect befitting their positions. However, it is the duty of all persons who exercise these privileges and immunities to respect local laws and regulations.
  - b. Diplomatic immunity is granted by the United States Government under provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Generally, these provisions apply to two classes of immunity:
    - (1) Diplomats have full immunity.
    - (2) Employees of diplomatic missions and their families enjoy immunity with respect to acts performed in the course of their official duties.
  - c. The diplomat is responsible for providing valid credentials to support his claim to immunity; however, it is possible to verify this status through the State Department Consular Offices. Contact information such as phone numbers and addresses of Consular Offices can be obtained from Jail personnel.
  - d. If stopped for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the officer should do one of the following:
    - (1) Take the consular officer to the station or a location where he/she can recover to the point that he/she is able to safely drive.
    - (2) Take the consular to a telephone and assist him/her in arranging for someone to take custody of him/her.
    - (3) Take the consular home or call a taxi and instruct the driver to take their home.
  - e. If the consular officer is not considered a serious danger to their selves or others, he/she shall not be physically restrained or subjected to a sobriety test. The primary responsibility of the department is to care for the safety of the Consular Officer and others, and the Police Officer shall act accordingly.
  - f. Family members of consular officers cannot claim immunity, but they should receive appropriate courtesy and respect. In the event a law is broken by a family member, a complaint should be filed at large. If the family member is a juvenile, he/she should be released to their parents.
  - g. Report all serious incidents involving diplomatic and consular officers and their families to the U.S. Department of State, Office of Protocol.

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6. Members of Congress
  - a. Members of Congress may not be detained for the issuance of a summons while they are in transit to or from the Congress.
  - b. If a member of Congress is stopped for a traffic infraction, they should be identified and immediately released. If the officer so chooses, he/she may make arrangements to serve the summons at a time when the member of Congress is not in transit to or from Congress, or on official business.
  - c. If the violation involves a member of the family of a member of Congress, they should be treated with appropriate courtesy and respect as befits any citizen that may be stopped for traffic violations. If the violation involves a juvenile who is a member of the household of a member of Congress, they should be treated as is the case with all juvenile offenders, and released to their parents.
- G. Consistency and Uniformity
  1. Optional levels of enforcement may be used in incidents of:
    - a. Moving violations
    - b. Hazardous violations other than speed
    - c. Non-moving violations
    - d. Public carrier/commercial vehicle violations
    - e. Multiple violations
    - f. Newly enacted laws and ordinances
    - g. Other non-hazardous violations
- H. Off-road Vehicle, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Traffic Enforcement
  1. Off-road vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists are expected to obey all state and local laws/ordinances designed to govern the safe movement and interaction of such means of transport. Officers are expected to take whatever legal enforcement action is deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the violator and the public.
  2. The department promotes off-road vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety through various prevention presentations.
- I. Driving While License Suspended or Revoked
  1. A person who drives a motor vehicle on the highways of this state while their license is suspended is guilty of a misdemeanor.
  2. Upon confirmation that a subject is driving with a suspended or revoked license the officer may:
    - a. Arrest the violator, or
    - b. Issue the violator a citation if applicable.
- J. Parking Enforcement
  1. The department will actively enforce the following parking violations:
    - a. Handicapped Parking
    - b. Fire Lane
    - c. Posted No Parking Zones

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- d. Road and street hazard
  - e. Others as reported by complaint or on a recurring basis
  - 2. Officers are authorized to remove illegally stopped or parked vehicles by state law or city ordinance. City of Plano Code of Ordinances Part II, Chapter 12, Article 5 (Stopping, Standing, and Parking) sections 12-96 – 12-120.
- K. Referral of Driver for Re-examination by Licensing Authority
- Routine enforcement, crash reporting, and investigation activities frequently lead to the discovery of drivers who have suspected incompetence, physical or mental disability, disease, or other conditions that might prevent the person from exercising reasonable and ordinary care over a motor vehicle. When an officer becomes aware of such persons he/she should:
- 1. Complete the Department of Public Safety form entitled "Medical Evaluation Request" and submit it to Records, or
  - 2. Check the block "Medical Advisory Board" on the CR-3, Texas Peace Officer's Crash Report.
- L. Alcohol/Drug Enforcement Countermeasures
- One of the primary objectives of traffic enforcement is to reduce alcohol and/or drug related traffic crashes. This is accomplished through strict and aggressive enforcement of DWI/DUI laws. In all cases, the department encourages a custodial arrest of any driver the officer determines is impaired from the use of alcohol or drugs.
- The department encourages the apprehension and processing of alcohol and drug-impaired drivers through the following:
- 1. Training to assist field officers in developing skills to detect and recognize those persons under the influence of alcohol and drugs.
  - 2. Selective assignments of personnel at the time of and to locations where analyses have shown a significant number of violations and/or crashes have occurred involving impaired drivers.
- M. Traffic Citation Accountability
- 1. The Municipal Court must maintain an audit trail that allows for the tracking and location of citations issued by individual officers through final adjudication by the court. The following process will be used to provide for traffic citation accountability:
    - a. Citation Books will be stored at the City warehouse and in the Patrol Services supply room. Each officer will sign for citations, upon receipt of a twenty-five (25) count booklet, by means of the receipt form included at the front of each ticket book. Receipts will be maintained by the court and filed numerically.
    - b. Officers will issue citations in consecutive numerical sequence. The citation will then be filed by disposition by the Municipal Court. Citations can be cross-referenced by defendant driver's license number.
    - c. Lost, stolen, voided, or otherwise invalid citations will be explained in writing, by the officer holding that citation number, and forwarded to the Watch Commander. All citations shall be forwarded, at the end of each shift to the Municipal Court. The Municipal Court will maintain computer records regarding the final disposition of each citation issued for a period of five (5) years. The hard copy will be stored in the city warehouse.
- N. Maintenance and Use of Speed Measuring Devices
- To ensure traffic safety and objectives are met, the department will use speed-measuring devices in traffic law enforcement.

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1. Equipment used as speed measuring devices include:
  - a. Radar/Laser speed measuring devices that are determined to be in full compliance with standards of performance tested and established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
  - b. Patrol vehicle speedometers that are certified as being calibrated and are checked by a moving radar test following the pace.
2. Officers utilizing speed measuring devices are required to be familiar with the operator's manual for each manufacturer of radar used within the Department. The manuals will be maintained in the Traffic Division Office.
3. Officers will provide the proper care and upkeep for each radar unit as specified by the manufacturer.
4. Radar units shall be scheduled for maintenance and certification annually. The Quartermaster Unit is responsible for documenting the annual maintenance and certification, in addition to any other required maintenance.
5. Each officer shall receive training in the use of speed measuring devices. This training is required before an officer is authorized to use radar detection devices for traffic law enforcement.
  - a. Each police recruit shall receive instruction in the use of radar, laser, and other speed measuring devices utilized by the department. The Traffic Unit will conduct the training during the mini academy. During this training the recruit will be certified as a radar and laser operator.
6. Procedures For Use of Radar Devices
  - a. Prior to enforcement activity, the officer shall ensure the radar unit is in proper working order, including that it is kept clean and free of obstructions, properly installed, and secured to prevent injury to the officer or damage to the radar unit in case of a crash.
  - b. Determine whether moving or stationary enforcement is appropriate.
  - c. Ensure the device is working properly by conducting the appropriate full system check to include an internal calibration check at the beginning of their shift. In the event the operational check reveals the radar unit is not operating properly, the officer will discontinue use and notify the Quartermaster Unit who is responsible to arrange for any necessary repairs.
  - d. Identify the possible violator
  - e. Estimate the speed and range
  - f. Observe the audio constant tone if available
  - g. Obtain a stable radar reading
  - h. Visually reconfirm target identity
  - i. Take enforcement action as appropriate
7. Procedures For Use of LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging/Laser Speed Measurement)
  - a. Officers will complete an operational check of a LIDAR/Laser unit both prior to and after its use to ensure the unit is operating properly. The operational check includes:
    - (1) Power up
    - (2) Internal function test (usually automatically done during power up)

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- (3) Display test
- (4) Sight alignment test
- (5) External function test – Delta distance test

- b. In the event the operational check reveals the LIDAR/Laser unit is not operating properly prior to its use, the officer will not use the unit and will notify the Quartermaster Unit who is responsible to arrange for any necessary repairs.

**O. Use of Tire Deflation Devices**

The Plano Police Department has provided Stop Stick tire deflation devices for officer use to stop vehicles posing a significant hazard to the public.

- 1. Stop Sticks may be deployed in certain circumstances when a pursuit is not occurring. These include persons traveling against the flow of traffic, incompetent drivers (e.g. as children who are unable to stop, drivers experiencing seizures), and in certain tactical situations. Each deployment in such circumstances must be authorized by the on duty Sergeant who will take into consideration the threat posed to the public by allowing the vehicle to continue.
- 2. See Administrative Directive 107.002 for the deployment of tire deflation devices in vehicle pursuits.

**P. Special Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant**

**1. Eligibility and Selection**

- a. Officers must sign-up for approval to work STEP.
- b. STEP sign-ups for officers will be posted through the department's Extra Duty Solutions portal. Sign-ups will list the slots available and maximum number of hours which can be worked. Officers will be provided with all necessary information for grant operations.
- c. Officers may be removed from the STEP program for one or more of the following: lack of motivation, failure to submit necessary paperwork in a timely manner, failure to comply with department policies and procedures, or any other unacceptable behavior.

**2. Assignment and Documentation**

- a. Officers will notify dispatch when beginning STEP enforcement.
- b. At the end of an officer's shift, he/she shall complete a STEP activity sheet and submit it to the STEP Grant Manager.
- c. Officers will follow the TxDOT criteria as set forth in the most recent version of the Texas Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Program manual when working STEP enforcement including the STEP indicator as set forth in the Grant.
- d. Overtime shall be documented by entering the time through the current payroll system and using the STEP grant account code approved by the Finance department.
- e. Officers working STEP shall comply with the same overtime regulations as indicated in Administrative Directive 113.005.
- f. Officers must be Radar and Laser certified to work Speed enforcement. Officer must re-certify every two (2) years.

**3. Limitations**

- a. Officers may only work the allotted hours posted at sign-up.

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- b. If STEP activities result in working beyond the allotted hours due to an arrest, additional paperwork, or other necessary responsibilities, no prior approval/authorization is required, but reason(s) shall be documented on an officer's STEP activity sheet.
  - c. Officers shall not work STEP enforcement during inclement weather.
  - d. While working STEP, officers shall not be used to assist patrol or traffic on other assignments, except in emergency situations. If any prolonged absence from STEP enforcement activities occur, officers will then be working for the City and will be on paid city overtime for the period they are not working STEP enforcement.
  - e. Officers are not authorized to take a lunch or coffee break.
4. Supervision

While an officer is working STEP enforcement, the on-duty traffic supervisor shall be that officer's direct supervisor. If a traffic supervisor is not available, the on-duty patrol supervisor in the sector where the STEP officer is working shall be that officer's direct supervisor.