


**Department of Public Safety
Police Division
Policies and Procedures**

<u>Title</u> Traffic Direction and Control	<u>SOP Number</u> 10.3.100
Approval Signature 	
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Traffic Direction and Control

- I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this directive is to provide guidelines to assist personnel in their duties pertaining to traffic direction and control.
- II. **Policy:** It is imperative that police provide traffic direction and control to ensure the safety of a community and its citizens. The need for such services exists at many locations and at various times and under different circumstances. Many requirements for traffic direction and control are predictable, but often times emergency situations arise requiring contingency plans in order to fulfill these duties and responsibilities. It is the policy of the University of Cincinnati Police Division (UCPD) to provide traffic direction and control in a manner that maintains or restores the safe and efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

III. Information:

Legal Authority: An Officer's Assumed Authority for Traffic Control – O.R.C. 2921.331(A) – no person shall fail to comply with any lawful order or direction of any police officer invested with authority to direct, control, or regulate traffic.

IV. Procedure:

A. Manual Traffic Direction and Control

1. Sworn personnel will at all times give due consideration to their own safety while carrying out manual traffic direction and control.
2. Personnel carrying out manual traffic direction and control will position themselves so that they can clearly be seen by all, usually in the center of an intersection or street.
3. Sworn personnel conducting manual traffic direction and control will wear the full uniform as described by Division policy 4.1.100 Uniforms, Business Attire, Equipment and Grooming Standards.
4. Sworn personnel will also wear the reflective traffic vest as assigned by the Division whenever conducting manual traffic direction and control.
5. Personnel will employ uniform procedures (signals, gestures, etc.) to enhance driver and pedestrian recognition and response to their direction.
 - a) To Stop Traffic: The officer should first extend his arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be stopped until the person is aware or it can be reasonably assumed that he/she is aware of the officer's gesture. Second, the pointing hand is raised at the wrist so that its palm is toward the person to be stopped and the palm is held in this position until the person is observed to stop. To stop traffic from both directions on a two-way street the procedure is then repeated for traffic coming from the other direction while continuing to maintain the raised arm and palm toward the traffic previously stopped.
 - b) To Start Traffic: The officer should first stand with shoulder and side toward the traffic to be started, extend his arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be started until that person is aware or it can be reasonably assumed that he/she is aware of the officer's gesture. Second,

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with palm up, the pointing arm is swung from the elbow only, through a vertical semi-circle until the hand is adjacent to the chin. If necessary, this gesture is repeated until traffic begins to move. To start traffic from both directions on a two-way street, the procedure is then repeated for traffic coming from the other direction.

- c) Right Turns: Drivers usually effect their turns without the necessity of being directed by the officer. When directing a right turn becomes necessary, the officer should proceed as follows: if the driver is approaching from the officer's right side his/her extended right arm and index finger and gaze are first directed toward the driver, followed by swinging the extended arm and index finger in the direction of the driver's intended turn; if the driver is approaching from the officer's left side, either the same procedure may be followed utilizing the left arm extended or the extended left forearm may be raised to a vertical position from elbow while closing the fingers so that the remaining extended thumb points in the direction of the driver's intended turn.
 - d) Left Turns: Drivers should not be directed to effect their movement while the officer is also directing oncoming traffic to proceed; therefore, the officer should either direct opposing vehicles to start while avoiding left turn gestures directed at turning drivers, which will lead them to complete their turn only when there is a gap in the oncoming traffic, or to stop or hold oncoming drivers, after which the left turning driver can be directed into his/her turn. The officer's right side and arm should be toward the oncoming traffic, and the left side and arm should be toward the left turning driver. After stopping oncoming traffic by using the right arm and hand, the right hand should remain in the halt gesture, then the extended left arm and index finger and officer's gaze is directed toward the driver who intends to effect a left turn. When the left turning driver's attention has been gained, the extended left arm and index finger are swung to point in the direction the driver intends to go.
- 7. Officers are not required to use a police whistle but it may be used to get the attention of drivers and pedestrians. The whistle should be used judiciously:
 - a) To Stop: One long blast.
 - b) To Start: Two short blasts.
 - c) To Gain Attention: Several short blasts.
 - 8. Occasionally a driver or pedestrian will not understand the officer's directions. When this happens, the officer should move reasonably close to the person and politely and briefly explain his directions. No officer shall exhibit loss of temper by shouting or otherwise indicate antagonism toward those who do not understand or who do not wish to obey the officer's directions.
 - a. In extreme situations, police officers may exercise their authority to issue a citation under Ohio Revised Code Section 2921.331(A) to drivers or pedestrians who violate this ordinance.
 - 9. A flashlight may be used to halt traffic. To stop traffic, an officer should slowly swing the beam of the light across the path of oncoming traffic so that the beam of the light strikes the pavement as an elongated spot of illumination. After the

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- driver has stopped, arm signals may be given in the usual manner with the headlights on the vehicle providing illumination.
10. Flares and cones may also be used to assist in directing and managing traffic as appropriate for conditions.
- B. Temporary traffic control devices include movable barriers, portable signs, and other apparatus intended for temporary deployment to assist the safe and efficient movement and control of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
1. Temporary traffic control devices may be deployed in support of traffic direction and control activities only with specific prior approval of shift or detail supervisor.
 2. As soon as practical following termination of the need for the temporary traffic control device, the supervisor or officer in charge authorizing deployment of the device will ensure it is properly removed/deactivated.
 3. Portable or part-time stop signs should not be used as temporary traffic control devices, except in an emergency.
- C. Traffic Control at Accidents and Emergency Situations
1. Officers responding to the scene of a traffic accident or an emergency situation will immediately assess the need for emergency medical assistance.
 2. As soon as practical, the responding officer will notify Communications of existing conditions and request assistance from other agencies or other personnel as needed, including but not limited to:
 - a) Fire Department
 - b) Facilities
 - c) Other Police personnel
 - d) Towing or Wrecker services
 - e) Emergency Medical Services
 3. The responding officer will assume responsibility of traffic direction and control until relief personnel are available.
 4. Personnel will utilize uniform hand signals and gestures as described in section A.5 above.
- D. Traffic Control at Fire Scenes
1. The responding officer will attempt to determine if a fire hazard exists or if there is a potential hazard and will notify UCPD Communications Center who will notify responding fire department units.
 2. The responding officer will attempt to determine the existence of hazardous or potentially hazardous material and request Communications to notify appropriate agencies and personnel who are responding.
 3. The responding officer will establish crowd and vehicle control at the scene to prevent injuries.
 4. Back-up support will be called, if needed, to assist in traffic and crowd control.
 5. Divisional personnel will maintain access to and from the scene by fire and other emergency vehicles.
 6. Emergency vehicles will be given priority in movement and parking of motor vehicles.

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- E. Traffic Control for Adverse Road and Weather Conditions
 - 1. Upon discovering an adverse road or weather condition, Division personnel shall contact Communications and have the Work Control or Emergency Maintenance notified for the purpose of correcting the condition.
 - 2. Division personnel will provide traffic direction and control services and scene protection in the vicinity of adverse road and weather conditions, as appropriate.
 - 3. Temporary traffic control devices may be deployed in support of traffic direction and control services with the approval of the on-duty supervisor.
- F. Any officer sensing a need to manually operate traffic control devices shall first obtain permission from the shift or detail supervisor. This manual operation should be as brief as possible. Some circumstances warranting manual operation may include but not be limited to the following:
 - 1. Special Events;
 - 2. Malfunctioning of the signal;
 - 3. Facilitating movement of traffic at accidents or other emergencies;
 - 4. Providing a thoroughfare for motorcades.

References

4.1.100 Uniforms, Business Attire, Equipment and Grooming Standards
Ohio Revised Code 2921.331 Failure to comply with order or signal of police officer.