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I. Purpose

The purpose of this order is to establish uniform enforcement policies and procedures for contact with potential traffic law violators.

II. Policy

The enforcement of traffic laws is an important function of the Police Department. Citizen safety and voluntary compliance by the public with traffic laws is the goal of traffic enforcement.

It is recognized that officers will encounter traffic violations of varying types and degrees of severity. Unless specific enforcement action is mandated by departmental directive or by a supervisor, the appropriate enforcement action will be left to the discretion of the individual officer.


III. Procedure

A. All officers contacting traffic violators shall do so in a fair, and professional manner. Correcting unsafe driving habits of violators can best be achieved by officers taking the necessary enforcement action and communicating with traffic violators in a courteous and professional manner.


Professional image, dress, grooming, language and emotional intelligence are qualities expected from officers conducting traffic stops.

B. Unknown Risk Stops:

1. Traffic stops shall be conducted in a manner to provide for the safety of the officer(s) involved, the stopped motorist, and the general public. Factors to consider when conducting unknown risk traffic stops should include:
2. Select a safe location to stop the vehicle:
 - a. an area that does not create a traffic hazard;
 - b. an area open to the view of other motorists;



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- c. an area which enhances personal safety.
 3. Stop the vehicle considering the following procedures:
 - a. notify dispatch of location of stop, and license number, color, make, model of violator vehicle.
 - b. activate emergency lights and/or siren to signal motorist to stop;
 - c. position patrol vehicle properly, i.e., behind and offset from violator vehicle;
 4. Approach the vehicle using proper safety precautions:
 - a. observe occupants before exiting patrol vehicle;
 - b. illuminate vehicle with headlights, spotlight and/or flashlight when needed;
 - c. continue observing occupants while approaching vehicle and throughout the stop;
 - d. maintain a position that affords the officer safety;
 - e. maintain a position that does not expose the officer to undue risk should the vehicle suddenly move;
 - f. officers shall not stand in the path of a vehicle to prevent its unexpected movement:
 - i. as doing so places the officer in a position of extreme physical vulnerability and reduces the reaction time necessary to avoid being struck by a sudden or intentional movement;
 - ii. and minimizes an officer's belief it is necessary to take a use of force action.
 - g. Officers should address the occupant(s) accordingly while remaining alert for unexpected occurrences.
- C. High-Risk Stops:
1. A high-risk traffic stop may be conducted when the officer can articulate they reasonably believe the occupant(s) of the vehicle has committed a violent crime that poses danger to the


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public or circumstances that would justify increased safety measures. All actions taken must comply with Use of Force directives. While individuals sought to be stopped for violent crimes may stop or act in unexpected places, it is our intended goal to consider the following when conducting high risk traffic stops:



2. Select location for vehicle stop:
 - a. when possible, ensure appropriate back up officers are available prior to taking action;
 - b. notifies dispatch of location of stop, and license number, color, make, model of violator vehicle, and information regarding number of known occupants and that a high-risk stop is being conducted.
 - i. Supervisors should respond to high risk stops.
 - c. an area that does not create a traffic hazard;
 - d. an area open to the view of other motorists;
 - e. an area which enhances safety;
3. Stop the vehicle using appropriate procedures:
 - a. activate emergency lights and/or siren to signal motorist to stop;
 - b. positions patrol vehicle properly:
 - i. primary unit behind and offset to the right of suspect vehicle;
 - ii. backup unit behind and offset to the left of suspect vehicle;
 - iii. where no backup unit is available, position vehicle behind offset to the left, angled such that the engine block is between the officer and suspect.
4. Take command of the vehicle occupant(s) at the stop:
 - a. driver of primary patrol unit assumes command of the high risk stop;
 - b. officer(s) should position themselves using patrol vehicles for cover;

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- c. advise occupant(s) they are under arrest;
- d. order occupant(s) to:
 - i. place hands in view and remain in the vehicle; and
 - ii. turn off engine and throw keys from car.
- 5. Remove occupant(s) from stopped vehicle:
 - a. occupant(s) are ordered out of the stopped vehicle on the left side beginning with the driver;
 - b. occupant(s) are ordered to walk backward to a position between the patrol units;
 - c. handcuffs and searches occupant(s).
- 6. Secure occupant(s) vehicle:
 - a. approaches vehicle in; safe manner using available cover or concealment;
 - b. determines all occupant(s) have been removed from the vehicle;
 - c. search vehicle for weapons, contraband and evidence as allowed by law and policy;
- D. All traffic stops shall be reported to Metro Dispatch, including Location, Stopped Vehicle License Plate, Color, Make, Model.
- E. Officers shall greet the motorist in a professional and courteous manner, including identifying oneself by rank, name and the nature of the stop. An exception is if the circumstance of the stop is impractical, such as a felony stop.
 - 1. An example of such greeting is as follows:
 - a. ***“Hello, my name is (rank; last name) and the reason I stopped you is...”***
 - 2. Some factors an officer may consider upon making a legal traffic stop:
 - a. Signs of emotional distress.

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- b. The presence of alcohol or drug impairment.
 - c. Physical or mental disability which may be affecting their driving.
 - d. Seatbelt use.
 - e. Evidence of a crime.
 - f. Records/warrant check.
3. Officers shall not prolong a traffic stop by contacting a driver's parole/probation officer or otherwise investigate whether the driver is in violation of their conditions unless the officer has independent reasonable suspicion that the driver is violating one or more parole/probation conditions.
4. If a citation is issued, officers are encouraged to communicate the following to violators prior to the conclusion of a traffic stop:
- a. Type of Citation
 - b. The court of jurisdiction.
 - c. Whether a court appearance is optional or mandatory.
 - d. The date and time to appear or timeframe in which they must respond to the citation.
 - e. Information on how they can pay the citation if an appearance is not necessary.
 - f. The Instructions on the violator's citation copy; and
 - g. Any other necessary information.
 - h. Officers should refrain from advising the motorist as to the cost of a citation. Costs are set by the courts and fluctuate.
 - i. Officers should make every effort to ensure that violators understand when and where to appear.
- F. Data Collection:
- 1. Officers will document all traffic stops including warnings in the following ways.
 - 1) Perceived ethnicity and gender of the driver
 - 2) Date, time, duration and location of the stop
 - 3) Reason for stop (based on categories currently available via the Records Management System)

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- 4) Actions taken such as warnings, citations, arrest, assist, search of the violator.
 - 5) Reason for any search
- G. Foreign Diplomat: Refer to [P&P 062-005](#) Traffic Enforcement and Administration.
- H. Active Military Personnel: Officers may enforce traffic laws and ordinances with active-duty military personnel; however, active-duty military personnel are exempt from carrying a driver's license in certain situations under [MCL 257.302](#).
- I. United States Senators and Representatives are exempt from arrest during sessions and while traveling to and from sessions. Officers may issue citations and notices to appear, but will not make a custodial arrest, except for cases of treason, a felony, or breaches of the peace (such as assault or OWI).