
LAURENS COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SOP# P-220

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SUBJECT: TRAFFIC DIRECTION

INDEX AS: TRAFFIC DIRECTION: DIRECTING TRAFFIC:

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/30/2005

REVISED DATE:

I. PURPOSE:

To establish the procedures for directing pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

II. SCOPE:

This procedure shall be utilized when it becomes necessary for a Deputy to direct traffic at accident scenes or special events.

III. OBJECTIVES:

The major objectives of the Deputy directing traffic are to minimize traffic congestion problems and maintain the safe flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Specifically, the Deputy is responsible for the following:

1. Regulating the flow of traffic;
2. Control of turning movements;
3. Coordinating vehicle movements with the flow of adjacent intersections;
4. Detouring traffic as necessary;
5. Controlling pedestrian movements;
6. Arranging for the removal of obstructions to traffic flow;
7. Providing for emergency vehicle movements;
8. Rendering aid and assistance to motorists and pedestrians.

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Traffic direction will be performed at any accident or fire scene where it is necessary to route traffic in another direction. Traffic direction will also be performed during adverse weather conditions where such conditions have caused downed trees, power lines or in areas where there are existing road hazards.

IV. MANUAL DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC:

- A. Visibility- Deputies shall wear reflective jacket or vest when directing traffic unless it is an emergency situation where time does not permit the putting on of the jacket or vest. During adverse weather conditions, officers shall wear reflective or high visibility rain coats when directing traffic. To indicate that the Deputy is present for the purpose of directing traffic, he should:
1. Position himself/herself so that they can be seen clearly by all, usually in the center of an intersection or street;
 2. Stand straight with weight equally distributed on both feet;
 3. Allow hands and arms to hang easily at their sides except when gesturing;
 4. Stand facing or with his/her back to traffic which they have stopped and with their side toward traffic they have directed to move.
- B. Stopping Traffic- To stop traffic, the Deputy should first extend his/her arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be stopped until that person is aware or it can be reasonably assumed that they are aware of the Deputy's gesture. Second, the pointing hand is raised at the wrist so that its palm is toward the person to be stopped, and is observed to stop.

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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.

- C. Starting Traffic- To start traffic, the Deputy should first stand with shoulder and side toward the traffic to be started, extend his/her 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 they are aware of the Officer's gesture.

Second, 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 a traffic coming from the other direction.

- D. Right Turns- Right turning drivers usually effect their turns without the necessity of being directed by the Deputy. When directing a right turn becomes necessary, the Deputy should proceed as follows:

If the driver is approaching from the Deputy's right side, his 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 Deputy'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 the elbow while closing the fingers so that the remaining extended thumb points in the direction of the driver's intended turn.

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- E. Left Turn- Left turning drivers should not be directed to effect their movement while the Deputy is also directing oncoming traffic to proceed. Therefore, the Deputy 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 their turn.

The Deputy'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 Deputy'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.

In order to clear the lane occupied by a driver who intends to make a left turn, but cannot because of oncoming traffic, they can be directed into the intersection and stopped adjacent to the Deputy's position until the left turn can be directed into the intersection by pointing toward him/her with the extended arm and index finger, which is then swung to point at the position at which the Deputy wishes the driver to stop and wait for clearing traffic. In the alternative, the driver may be directed to move with one arm and hand gesture while the other arm and hand utilized to point to the position at which the driver is to stop.

After the driver is positioned within the intersection, the Deputy may either halt oncoming traffic and direct the completion of the turn during a natural break in the oncoming traffic.

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V. SIGNALING AIDS:

- A. The voice is seldom used in directing traffic. Arm gestures are usually sufficient. There are numerous reasons why verbal commands are not used. Verbal orders are not easy to give or understand and often lead to misinterpretations which are dangerous. An order which is shouted can antagonize motorist.

Occasionally a driver or pedestrian will not understand the Deputy's directions. When this happens the Deputy should move reasonably close to the person and politely and briefly explain his/her directions. No Deputy 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 Deputy's directions.

- B. The flashlight can be used to halt traffic. To stop traffic slowly swing the beam of the light across the path of oncoming traffic. The beam from the flashlight strikes the pavement as an extended spot of light. After the driver has stopped, arm signals may be given in the usual manner, the vehicle's headlights providing illumination.

This procedure is to be used in conjunction with all relevant existing departmental policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

VI. TRAFFIC DIRECTION AT ACCIDENT SCENES:

- A. Minor traffic accidents requiring an accident report do not present a major problem relative to traffic direction. In these cases, the Deputy should note the position of each vehicle and other relevant physical evidence and have the vehicles moved to a safe location, restoring traffic flow, and then complete the report.

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- B. In serious accidents requiring a thorough investigation, the scene may need protection for an extended period. In these cases, investigating Deputies shall follow these procedures:
1. Summon sufficient personnel to handle traffic direction responsibilities;
 2. Utilize sufficient equipment to protect the scene: barricades, traffic cones, etc.;
 3. Detour traffic as necessary;
 4. Give priority attention to collecting the information necessary at the scene and to assist in restoring normal flow of traffic;
 5. Restore the scene to a safe condition (replace signs, etc.);
 6. Continue traffic direction duties until traffic flow is normal.

VII. TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL AT FIRE SCENES:

- A. Deputies directing traffic at fire and emergency scenes will ensure that all private vehicles, are well clear of the emergency scene and are not obstructing emergency vehicles or other traffic.
- B. Deputies shall follow these procedures when directing traffic at a fire scene:
1. Summon sufficient personnel to handle traffic direction and pedestrian control responsibilities;
 2. Utilize sufficient equipment to protect the scene (barricades, cones, etc.);
 3. Detour traffic as necessary;

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4. Restore traffic flow;
5. Continue traffic direction duties until fire scene is cleared.

VIII. TRAFFIC DIRECTION AT SPECIAL EVENTS:

Upon learning of a special event, the Sheriff or Chief Deputy shall plan the need for traffic direction personnel. The following procedures will be utilized:

1. The time, location and anticipated attendance shall be determined;
2. The perimeter streets of the special events shall be used to maximum advantage by eliminating or increasing parking space, making temporary one-way streets, and assigning officers to key intersections for control;
3. Provide for adequate emergency service access to the scene of the event, including fire and ambulance services;
4. Provide for adequate crowd control. If the event is a parade, ropes may be used along the parade route with officers stationed at intervals as needed.
5. Insure adequate publicity for any changes or all alterations in street utilization, parking availability, public transportation services, and the location of the event of parade route.
6. Provisions should be made for identifying those persons working directly with the event to assist them in crossing police lines, this includes promoters of the event, vendors and press personnel.

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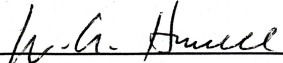
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IX. TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES:

Temporary traffic control devices such as cones, temporary stop signs, etc., may be obtained from the Laurens County Public Works Department. These devices shall be utilized when necessary at a special event or an emergency scene. The Sheriff, Chief Deputy, or other Command Officer on duty shall have the authority to request these devices and determine the location for using them.

Temporary devices will be removed by Law Enforcement Personnel when the event or emergency situation is over and will be returned to the Laurens County Public Works Department.


W. A. HARRELL
SHERIFF

09/30/2005

EFFECTIVE DATE