

NEW CANAAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

GENERAL ORDER NUMBER: 90-12-88

FILE: OPS 8

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

I PURPOSE/POLICY

The purpose of this general order is to provide the guidelines for the Traffic Direction and Control Function of the New Canaan Police Department. These functions may include traffic control, parking control, school crossing supervision and other activities as they relate to the design and implementation of plans and programs that expedite the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

II RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all departmental personnel to adhere to this general order. It is the additional responsibility of the supervisory and command staff to ensure compliance.

III PROCEDURES (TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL)

A Traffic direction and control within the Town of New Canaan shall be a joint function between the Police Department, Town of New Canaan Highway Department and Engineering Departments and The Connecticut Department of Transportation (D.O.T.). The purpose shall be to ensure safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

1. The primary source of traffic direction and control shall be through the use of unmanned mechanical devices, signals, roadway markings and signs.
2. Uniformed officers shall be assigned to carry out traffic direction and control function where law enforcement authority and/or human intervention is required to ensure safety and efficiency, and until such time as the problem is resolved or traffic control devices can be installed or repaired.

B The Commander of the Staff Services Division shall be responsible for the implementation of any special enforcement measures or approved traffic engineering changes to public roadways and/or parking areas where collision data indicates an engineering deficiency or traffic safety problem.

1. The Commander of Staff Services shall analyze all traffic collision data on an annual basis to determine if any roadways or intersections indicate the need for increased traffic law enforcement, additional roadway signage or recommended engineering changes.
 - a. If evidence exists to show a need for such enforcement or engineering changes, a report shall be completed and forwarded to the Chief of Police and the Police Commission.

- b. If it is determined by the Police Commission that engineering changes are warranted, suggestions shall be forwarded and discussed with the Town's Highway and Engineering departments and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT)
 - 2. The Commander of Staff Services shall also be responsible for receiving and investigating the need for traffic engineering changes based upon complaints and/or suggestions received by or forwarded to the Department.
 - a. The Commander of Staff services shall investigate each suggestion and complaint to determine if there is a bona-fide need to take corrective action.
 - b. All complaints and suggestions shall be forwarded to the Police Commission along with the findings of the Staff Services Commander's findings and recommendations.
 - c. If it is determined by the Police Commission that engineering changes are warranted, suggestions shall be forwarded and discussed with the Town's Highway and Engineering departments and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT)
- C The Patrol Section will be responsible for the manual traffic direction function of the police department. Manual traffic direction will be utilized when traffic control signals or devices are not present, inoperable, inadequate or during emergency situations.
 - 1. Such emergency situations may include, but shall not be limited to:
 - a. Traffic Accidents
 - b. When illegally parked or disabled vehicles are obstructing the flow of traffic.
 - c. Special functions
 - d. Road construction
 - e. When other activities occur which force a change to or halt the normal flow of traffic.
- D All officers assigned/authorized to direct traffic shall have received sufficient instruction through the POSTC Basic Training Program, Departmental or Field Training Program to ensure that they direct motorists and/or pedestrians with the proper verbal commands and hand signals.
 - 1. The proper procedures used when performing manual traffic direction are as follows:
 - a. **TO STOP TRAFFIC** - An officer extends his arm outward with the palm of his/her hand extended toward the vehicle to be stopped. The officer may use verbal and/or whistle commands to enhance the physical gesture.
 - b. **TO START TRAFFIC** - Starting from the stopped position, the arm will be moved at the elbow in a manner to indicate that traffic may now proceed. This is accomplished by swinging the arm upwards (from the elbow down) toward the direction in which traffic is to flow.

- c. **RIGHT TURN** - The officer shall gesture to the driver of a vehicle turning right to perform the turn by extending the arm toward the direction in which the turn is to be made.
 - d. **LEFT TURN** - These turns are to be made only when there is a gap in traffic or oncoming traffic is completely stopped. The officer will point in the direction of the turn when such movement can be made safely.
 - 2. In order to improve visibility, officers may utilize flashlights, traffic wands and/or flares when manually directing traffic.
 - 3. There are instances when a motorist or pedestrian may not understand or refuse to obey an officer's directions. Officers will resolve such problems in a calm and professional manner.
- E** The use of reflective vests or reflective high-visibility clothing when manually directing traffic will enhance officer safety and draw recognition and response. This type of clothing shall be worn when an officer is assigned to a manual-direction traffic post or in the roadway directing or controlling traffic.
- 1. Reflective vests will be provided to all officers per General Order 88-3-47 Uniforms.
- F** Certain circumstances may require that officers manually operate a traffic control signal. Each officer shall receive familiarization training on the use of manual controls during their Field Training Program.
- 1. Such circumstances may include:
 - a. When traffic control signals malfunction:
 - 1) An officer may place the traffic signal in the "flash" mode if this will not create a hazardous condition. The desk officer/dispatcher should be immediately notified so that the State D.O.T. or police maintenance personnel may be contacted and remedy the problem.
 - b. When intersections are grid locked or clogged.
 - c. When illegally parked or disabled vehicles are obstructing the flow of traffic.
 - d. When other activities occur which force a change to or halt the normal flow of traffic.
 - 2. Personnel assigned to a traffic post shall remain at that post until relieved or until such time as the problem is resolved.
- G** In cases of natural disasters, power failures, accidents, special events or other emergency situations, it may be necessary for an officer to utilize temporary traffic control devices. Those devices not immediately available to an officer in the field will be supplied by Police Maintenance or Public Works personnel. The following temporary devices may be utilized:
- 1. Flares
 - 2. Portable Barricades

3. Detour Signs
4. Traffic Cones
5. Portable Stop Signs
6. Police vehicles, i.e. emergency situations

H Special events are activities which may potentially involve an unusually large amount of vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic. Examples might include parades, fairs, holiday celebrations and road maintenance. Therefore, it may be necessary in some cases to develop contingency plans to aid the flow of traffic. The development of such contingency plans shall be the responsibility of the Commander of the Operations Division on an "as needed" basis.

1. The formulation of such contingency plans should include event officials and other agencies/departments as necessary.
2. Topics addressed should include:
 - a. The coordination of ingress and egress of vehicles and pedestrians based upon anticipated attendance, location and time.
 - b. The number of personnel needed to handle traffic control, security and other police functions.
 - c. Provisions for alternate routes, temporary traffic controls, parking prohibitions and emergency vehicle access.
 - d. Applicable legal issues, if any
 - e. Disseminating information to the media/press at the earliest possible time.
3. In many cases, special events such as a sporting event or road maintenance do not require the development of a contingency plan. Generally parking and/or security will be provided by the organization/business in charge of the event. The Shift Supervisor on duty at the time of the event may temporarily assign officers to the event, if necessary.

I Police Officers who respond to the scene of a fire shall assist and support the fire/rescue operations. This responsibility shall include:

1. When practical, consulting with the ranking fire official at the scene to determine specific needs.
2. Setting up perimeter traffic control points to allow for the ingress and egress of fire and rescue equipment and personnel authorized to be at the scene.
 - a. Such personnel shall include all persons who can identify themselves as firemen/rescue personnel, either regular or volunteer, by badge or possession of regularly used equipment.

- 1) It shall be the responsibility of the ranking fire officials of the Fire Department to correct any problems resulting from authorized personnel blocking fire lanes or retarding the efficiency of persons at the scene.

3. Directing traffic by the scene or providing alternate routes.

J Adverse weather often creates hazardous driving conditions for the motoring public. Such conditions may be the result of natural events including snow, ice, fog and rain or special problems which may involve downed power lines, emergency road repairs or other unplanned occurrences. Police officers will provide traffic direction and control as necessary to ensure the safety of the public.

1. Officers in the field should be cognizant of changing weather conditions and other public hazards and will notify the desk officer/dispatcher of any hazardous conditions that may exist so that the appropriate support services may be alerted.

2. Traffic direction and control alternatives include:

- a. Rerouting traffic - This is generally used when a section of the roadway is blocked by an object (limb, downed wires, etc.) and it is possible to safely direct traffic around the hazard. Officers will be utilized to provide on-scene traffic direction and control as needed, dependent upon the hazards that are present.
- b. Closing off a roadway - This should be used only when there are no other practical alternatives available. When this occurs, the use of temporary traffic control devices (overhead lights, barricades, cones, signs, etc.) are essential so that motorists have sufficient warning of a road closure. Officers will provide on scene traffic direction and control, if warranted.

K The police department recognizes that there are legitimate instances where it should, in the interest of public safety, provide escort services. These escort services shall, whenever possible, be scheduled in advance with the Commander of the Operations Division.

1. Generally escort services shall consist of non-emergency functions including:

- a. Funerals
- b. Oversized vehicles
- c. Highway construction/maintenance vehicles
- d. Motorcades of dignitaries, public officials
- e. Vehicles with hazardous or unused cargo
- f. Other situations as necessary

2. In the event that a request is made on short notice and the Commander of the Operations Division is unavailable, approval will be determined by the shift supervisor.

3. When approval is granted and if appropriate, steps should be taken to ensure that the route is secure and/or free of hazards.

4. Additional personnel will be assigned to the escort as necessary in order to ensure safe passage through the town.

L Due to the dangers inherent in the use of a roadblock, it shall only be used when appropriate and with supervisory approval. As a general policy, roadblocks, moving or stationary, shall only be used to apprehend fleeing felons and it is apparent that innocent people will not be endangered. When a roadblock is established in order to apprehend criminal suspects it will be conducted in accordance with General Order 89-2-55: Pursuit Policy.

1. Exceptions to this policy include:
 - a. Sobriety, Roadside Safety and Investigative Checkpoints - These uses shall only be permissible when authorized by the Commander of the Operations Division. When utilized, officers must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 1) Traffic cones will be set out to designate the area to be used. Signs, barricades or other warning devices may also be used.
 - 2) Officers must wear reflective vests or other high visibility clothing
 - 3) Safe areas must be available to direct vehicles into (i.e. parking lots, curb areas, etc.)
 - 4) It will not be set up on the crest of a hill, or on a curve of the roadway. The location will be chosen so that the safety of officers is maximized and there is a clear view of the roadblock so vehicles will ample time to slow and stop.
 - 5) Police vehicles involved in the roadblock shall have their emergency lights activated.
 - b. The Shift Supervisor shall be in charge of the overall operation of these checkpoints and shall insure that they are properly staffed.

M School Crossing Guards are primarily responsible for the school crossing function of the department and shall be supervised by the day shift supervisor. Their sole role is to safely expedite the movement of children to and from school at specific locations. Crossing Guards shall have no regulatory or enforcement powers.

1. The duties and responsibilities of School Crossing Guards shall include:
 - a. Full authority and responsibility for directing pedestrian traffic at an intersection or crossing. This may best be accomplished by:
 - 1) Utilizing natural gaps that normally occur in moving traffic. Traffic shall be stopped and pedestrians crossed when such gaps occur.
 - 2) Grouping pedestrians prior to an actual crossing in order to avoid unnecessary delays for motorists.
 - 3) Not releasing halted traffic until the last pedestrian is safely on the opposite side of the crossing.

- b. Utilizing traffic control signals, signs or other temporary traffic control devices as necessary.
 - c. Manually directing traffic in accordance with prescribed departmental procedures.
 - d. Reporting to the police department, when appropriate, motorists or pedestrians who fail to obey the orders and/or directions given.
 - e. Conducting themselves in a courteous and professional manner.
 - f. Reporting to duty as required. When unable to report to duty as scheduled, give sufficient notice so that the crossings are not left unattended.
 - g. All Adult crossing guards shall be issued a reflective traffic vest that clearly identifies them as a "Crossing Guard"
 - 1) The vest will be worn at all times while at the traffic post
 - 2) During inclement weather the vest shall be worn outside ant outer garments.
2. Uniformed officers are often called upon to assist at school crossings and are therefore, equally responsible when performing such functions.

N The Commander of the Staff Services Division shall be responsible for administering the selection process for school crossing guards. Applicants are required to have obtained the age of eighteen years and must submit to an interview with said Commander. The interview will focus on the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform the task.

O An annual analysis to identify locations requiring school crossing guards shall be conducted by the Commander of the Staff Services Division or designee. The analysis will form the basis for establishing school crossing points and/or routes.

1. Variables which should be considered include:
- a. Proximity of schools
 - b. Number/age of children utilizing crossing
 - c. Traffic Volume/Speed
 - d. Width of intersection
 - e. Physical terrain/obstruction
 - f. Existence/absence of traffic control devices
2. This analysis shall be conducted in cooperation with the appropriate school administrative personnel.

IV DISTRIBUTION

This general order will be reproduced in electronic and traditional media. All sworn personnel shall have access to Department general orders through a read-only file on their individual domain of the Department's computer network. Printed copies and/or CD's will also be placed in locations throughout headquarters so that they are easily accessible to all personnel.

V EFFECTIVE DATE

This general order approved by the Police Commission on January 16, 1991 and is effective January 28, 1991.

Reviewed April 2000

Revised July 2009

Revised December 20, 2017

Per Order,

Leon M. Krolikowski
Chief of Police