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Approval: Chief of Police	Manual: Policy and Procedure			

I. PURPOSE


The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for officers to follow when performing Traffic Control operations.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Traffic controller: A person who directs traffic through a construction site or other temporary traffic control zone past an area using gestures. The person directing traffic is responsible for maintaining the safety and efficiency of traffic, as well as the safety of road workers, while allowing construction, accident recovery or other tasks to proceed.


III. POLICY

- A. Kinston Police Department personnel shall perform traffic direction and control functions as necessary to provide for the safe, efficient, and effective flow of traffic throughout the City of Kinston. Manual traffic direction and control functions are performed by sworn Department personnel and Sentinels. Parking control functions are performed by Kinston Police Department personnel, and Sentinels and other authorized and trained personnel as designated by the Chief of Police.
- B. Officers assigned to investigate traffic collisions shall ensure that traffic approaching a collision scene is routed around the collision by using manual direction, flares, traffic cones, and the position of the patrol vehicle to direct and control the traffic flow as necessary. Officers requiring assistance with traffic control should request that the Communications Center dispatch additional officers to the collision scene.
1. The position selected to direct traffic must be suited to the particular intersection and traffic patterns. It must command a full view of the intersection and the approaches; the officer must be visible to the motorists and to the pedestrians. Usually, officers assigned to traffic control will select a position in the center of the intersection or at one of the corners.
 2. This position gives greatest visibility and is the most hazardous. It is usually selected when the signals are not working or the flow of traffic is slow and should be avoided if it places the officer in the flow of traffic or leaves little clearance between the vehicles.
 3. This position should be used where there is heavy pedestrian crossing or where the flow of traffic can be regulated by an officer standing a few feet off the curb line. The position affords the officer greater personal safety and better pedestrian control.
 4. Prompt compliance to hand signals is dependent upon the officer's ability to use uniform, traffic vest and clearly defined and understandable gestures. Control of intersections does not call for complicated choreography or wild arm movements.

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Improper hand signal may cause confusion, hesitation, and traffic collisions. Unusual movements undermine the purpose of traffic control and direction. Officers should follow traffic control guidelines as instructed in North Carolina Basic Law Enforcement Training.

6. Signaling Aids
 - a. The officer may use the whistle to get the attention of drivers and pedestrians. The officer should be sensible in the use of the whistle at all times. Whistle blasts directed to pedestrians usually need not be as shrill as those to command attention of motorists.
 - b. Verbal commands are seldom used in directing traffic. Arm gestures and the whistle usually are sufficient. There are many reasons why verbal commands are not used. They are not easy to give or understand, and often lead to misinterpretations that are dangerous. An order shouted can antagonize a motorist. Occasionally a driver or pedestrian will not understand arm signals. When this happens, move close to the person and politely and briefly explain the command. In all instances, address such people properly as “sir,” “madam,” or “miss.” Do not shout or exhibit a loss of temper, even if or when provoked.
 - c. The flashlight can be used to halt traffic in an emergency. To stop traffic, slowly swing the flashlight at arm’s length across the path of the approaching car. The beam from the flashlight strikes the pavement as an elongated spot of moving light seen by the motorist. Do not stand directly in front of the approaching car. After the motorist has stopped, give arm signals in the usual manner. Illumination of headlights will make them visible.
 - d. Improper use of highway flares at a disaster scene can cause vehicles to become involved in collisions. The primary objective is to provide oncoming traffic with ample warning of danger ahead so that defensive tactics may be employed to negotiate the scene safely. By giving approaching traffic ample warning and allowing sufficient distance in which to start taking defensive measures, hazards can be reduced at a collision scene. In any speed zone where flares are used to CHANNEL traffic from one lane to another, place them 20 feet apart. This eliminates any doubt in the mind of the motorist about what is expected, and it will lessen the possibility of any motorist driving between flares into the wrong traffic lanes.
7. Sometimes there is a need for more than one officer at a busy intersection. One officer must originate all signals and gestures. One officer is the leader and makes all the decisions while the other officer assists by coordinating with extending signals.
- C. North Carolina General Statutes authorize uniformed regular and volunteer fire and rescue personnel to perform traffic direction and control duties at the scene of fires, collisions or other hazards in connection with their duties. In most instances within the jurisdiction of the Department, traffic direction and control at fire scenes will be the responsibility of Kinston Police Department personnel. Kinston Police Department personnel assigned traffic control duties at a fire scene shall coordinate their efforts with fire units. Law Enforcement shall, however, maintain control over traffic direction. Traffic direction and control at fire scenes should be conducted so that: Unauthorized traffic is prohibited from entering the fire area;

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Vehicles behind the established traffic control points are assisted in leaving the fire area; Fire and rescue vehicles and other authorized vehicles are provided access to and from the fire scenes.

- D. Kinston Police Department personnel may be required to perform traffic direction and control duties when adverse or hazardous road or weather conditions exist. Examples of such conditions include: Bad weather occurrences such as fog, snow or ice on the roadway, flooding, etc.; Accidental hazards such as downed trees, debris in the roadway, etc.; Engineering hazards such as road construction, traffic light repair, downed power lines, etc.
1. When adverse conditions exist, the on-duty shift supervisor shall determine what traffic control measures should be taken, to include manual control or the use of temporary traffic control devices, and implement those measures and ensure that appropriate agencies (NCDOT, Kinston Public Services) are notified.
 2. Department personnel are neither trained nor authorized to operate, repair or adjust traffic signals, and are prohibited from doing so. In the event manual traffic control is needed at an intersection having a traffic signal, the traffic lights may be switched to a flashing mode in conjunction with an officer directing traffic by contacting the NCSHP. The on-duty supervisor should be notified that the traffic signal has been switched to a flashing mode.
 3. If it is determined that a traffic signal is malfunctioning in the automatic mode, and traffic conditions do not warrant manual traffic control, the traffic lights may be switched to a flashing mode. The Communications Center and the on-duty supervisor shall be notified of the malfunction and that the traffic lights are in the flashing mode. Communications Center personnel shall attempt to contact the appropriate maintenance personnel.
- E. The on duty Shift supervisor or other designated Patrol Division personnel shall be responsible for ensuring that temporary traffic control devices are placed into service or removed as necessary. The Department may use temporary traffic control devices to assist in the safe and efficient movement of vehicular or pedestrian traffic in some situations to include: special events; sustained power outages; traffic collision scenes; other situations as deemed appropriate by supervisory personnel.
- F. The Department shall issue high visibility vests to all law enforcement personnel. When directing traffic, Department personnel shall wear their issued high visibility vest or other OSHA/DOT approved high visibility clothing as the outer most garment.
- G. Prior to a special event, the Patrol Major shall ensure that a contingency plan for traffic direction and control is developed and in place. Traffic direction and control plans should address the following problems and special circumstances: ingress and egress of vehicles and pedestrians; provisions for parking; spectator control; public transportation; provisions for relief of officers assigned to point control duties; provisions for news media; alternate routes for through traffic; temporary traffic controls and parking prohibitions; emergency vehicle access.
- H. Uniformed officers shall be assigned to carry out manual traffic direction and control functions only at those times and places where law enforcement authority and/or human intervention is required to ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic. Manual traffic direction may be used where traffic control signals or devices are inadequate, not present, or not working. Emergency conditions may necessitate manual traffic control and directions.

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- I. The North Carolina Department of Transportation and the City of Kinston Public Services share responsibility for maintaining traffic control signals, devices, signs, and markers in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration's manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, and supplements prepared by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Highways.

- K. School crossing guards are not agents or employees of the Department. North Carolina General Statutes govern civilian traffic control personnel including school crossing guards. The Department shall honor those responsibilities outlined in General Statutes as they relate to the Department.
 1. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes, the Lenoir County School Board establishes the following provisions for school crossing guards: Selection Criteria; Control and Supervision; Appropriate Distinguishing Attire; Locations.
 2. The Department does not supply the Lenoir County School System with school crossing guards. The Lenoir County School System is responsible for their school crossing guards.

- L. Upon request or invitation, the Department shall participate in local and regional transportation system management planning.
 1. The Department recognizes that enforcement is not the sole factor to consider in traffic safety concerns. Traffic engineering and education also play key roles in the overall effort to reduce injury and damage on the public roadways.
 2. The Patrol Major or designee will attend meetings with the appropriate agencies to determine any traffic safety concerns, such as the North Carolina Department of Transportation or the City of Kinston Engineering Division. Information obtained from officers regarding highway safety is forwarded to the North Carolina Department of Transportation through incident Base Reporting.