

FLORENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

Subject: TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL	Procedure: General Order 29.3.1 CALEA 61.3	Total Pages: 9
Authorizing Signature: Original with Authorizing Signature on File	Effective: 1/23/19	
	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amended <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds	

I. POLICY

It is the policy of this Department to provide traffic direction, control, and scene protection services; and, when necessary to assist state and local traffic engineering efforts by contributing relevant data in support of traffic safety.

II. PURPOSE

This written order establishes guidelines for providing traffic direction and control needed during routine and emergency situations; and to establish procedures in support of traffic engineering efforts.

III. SCOPE

This written order is applicable to all personnel.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the responsibility of all employees to comply with this directive.

V. DEFINITIONS

- A. ACCIDENTAL HAZARDS: Items that have fallen onto the roadway such as cargo, tree limbs, power lines, etc.
- B. ACTS OF NATURE: Floods, fog, snow, ice, tornadoes etc.
- C. CRASH DIAGRAM: A drawing of an intersection or section of roadway on which reported crashes are depicted. This will be located on the Alabama Uniform Traffic Accident Report, which is submitted via eCrash, or the Supplement form for the crash report.
- D. DAMAGE HAZARD: Any item damaged by an accidental or deliberate act that might cause additional risk of injury, should a vehicle strike it upon leaving the roadway, such as exposed guardrail ends.
- E. SPECIAL EVENT: Any activity that results in the need for traffic control, such as crowds, parades, athletic contests, or demonstrations.

TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

- F. TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES: Devices intended for temporary deployment to assist in the safe and efficient direction of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. These consist of moveable barriers, cones, portable signs, etc.
- G. TRAFFIC CONTROL: The control of vehicular and pedestrian movement at a particular location.

VI. TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL PROCEDURES

A. SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- 1. REFLECTIVE VESTS: Officers will wear reflective clothing (vests or other suitable attire) at all times while directing traffic or in the road controlling traffic.
 - a. In cases of inclement weather, the vest is to be worn over any other clothing.
 - b. Vests will be available to all personnel normally required to direct traffic. Should the vest become damaged, lost, stolen or require replacement, officers will notify their supervisor as soon as possible.
- 2. FLASHLIGHTS: Officers must use flashlights when directing traffic after sunset or at any time visibility is reduced to the point that drivers are likely to have difficulty seeing the officer or his/her hand signals.
- 3. WHISTLES: It is recommended that officers use whistles as needed to gain a driver's attention and to assist in directing traffic flow.

B. HAND SIGNALS: All personnel engaged in manual traffic direction will use the uniform hand signals and gestures taught by Alabama police academies.

C. TRAFFIC CRASHES

- 1. Officers will perform traffic control at the scene of auto crashes when the crash interferes with the normal flow of traffic.
- 2. Officers will make every reasonable effort to reroute the flow of traffic around the crash scene, until the vehicles can be removed and the road reopened.
- 3. Officers may, as described in this directive, use both temporary devices and manual hand signals.
- 4. Officers will make every reasonable effort to remove vehicles from the roadway that have not been damaged to an extent that would

TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

render them completely incapable of being moved, to reduce traffic congestion and other crashes caused by traffic congestion.

D. TEMPORARY DEVICES

1. Temporary traffic control devices may be deployed in support of traffic direction and control activities. Circumstances which may justify their use include special events, adverse road and weather conditions, rerouting traffic, etc.
2. All temporary traffic control devices must adhere to and be used in accordance with standards set forth in the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices as adopted by the State of Alabama.

E. CRITICAL INCIDENTS

A Critical Incident is an occurrence or event, natural or human-caused, which requires an emergency response to protect life or property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, wild land and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response, such as major planned events and law enforcement incidents.

1. When responding to a Critical Incident, the first officer on the scene will immediately notify Dispatch and request any additional help as needed, for example; Florence Fire and Rescue, ambulances, or additional Police units.
2. If possible, the first officer on the scene will render any first aid needed to injured persons, consistent with the officer's training.
3. As soon as possible, officers will establish a safe perimeter to keep unauthorized personnel out of the immediate area. Officer's will then assist in crowd control and maintain a safe perimeter as needed. This may be accomplished by either maneuvering a patrol vehicle to block unauthorized access to the area, setting up crime scene tape, lighting flares, setting up cones, coordinating the arrangement of barricades, or by manually directing traffic.
4. Dispatch will notify a field supervisor of the situation as soon as possible.
5. Perimeter officers will restrict access to only those persons whose services are immediately needed in the Critical Incident area. Patrol cars should be parked in such a manner as to restrict unauthorized access. Officers having traffic control duties will

General Order 29.3.1
TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

direct traffic in a manner that most protects the scene, restricts access, and maintains a flow of traffic.

F. ADVERSE ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

1. In the event of severe or adverse road and weather conditions, the Shift Commander or designee will be responsible for ensuring traffic safety in the area or areas involved in the hazard.
2. Upon discovering an adverse road or weather condition, the Shift Commander or designee shall ensure that appropriate agencies (Fire and Rescue, Emergency Medical, Emergency Management Agency, Transportation, Public Works, etc.) are notified of the situation. The Shift Commander will work directly with the agencies to correct the problem.
3. The Department will maintain a close working relationship with those agencies and departments that share responsibility for coping with adverse road and weather conditions affecting public safety. The Department will also cooperate with them to develop and carry out mutual assistance policies, procedures, and programs to serve the public as effectively as possible when these type situations arise.
4. The Shift Commander or his designee shall close roads and streets, if existing conditions pose a hazard to the safety of persons traveling on them. If closings are to be for an extended period of time, the Shift Commander or his/her designee may request that the news media make announcements of closings, to advise the public. If roads are to be closed, the 911 Communications Center will be notified.

G. MANUAL OPERATION OF TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES: Manual operation of traffic control devices may be warranted to prevent or resolve traffic flow problems associated with special events. Whenever practical, the manual or “flash” operation of traffic signals will be coordinated through Florence Utilities. Manual operation requires the approval of the supervisor responsible for coordinating traffic control for an event, or a Shift Commander.

VII. POLICE ESCORT SERVICES

A. APPROVAL

1. SCHEDULED ESCORTS: All routine requests for escorts will be coordinated by the Administrative/Logistics Lieutenant or his/her designee. Each request will include time, date, location, number of officers needed and any other pertinent details.

General Order 29.3.1
TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

2. EMERGENCY ESCORTS: Officers will not initiate emergency escorts without obtaining authorization from a supervisor.

B. SCHEDULED ESCORT SERVICES:

1. Legitimate requests for scheduled escort services include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Motorcades and other transport of public officials or dignitaries;
 - b. Oversized vehicles, highway construction and maintenance vehicles;
 - c. Vehicles with hazardous or unusual cargo;

All such requests must have command level review and approval before they will be honored.

2. When the Department approves a request for a scheduled escort service, the trip route will be established in advance, as will the maximum speed to be maintained along each segment of the route.
3. Traffic direction and control will be established, as appropriate, at locations along the scheduled route, sufficient to ensure safe passage through intersections.
4. Oversize/overweight load permits may be necessary to properly move some loads. In the event a permit is required, the permit will be reviewed before the escort takes place. The Alabama Dept. of Transportation requires that an oversize/overweight permit be obtained for the load to be transported on state roads; normally, any load exceeding 82,000 lbs. Any such permit must be verified before an escort can be scheduled.

C. EMERGENCY (UNSCHEDULED) ESCORT SERVICES

1. OTHER EMERGENCY VEHICLES: Emergency vehicles from other agencies will be escorted under limited circumstances and only after supervisory approval. Such circumstances may include the escort of an emergency vehicle from our city limits to a hospital if the driver is not familiar with the location.
2. PRIVATE VEHICLES: Emergency escort of private vehicles is to be avoided when possible. Officers will escort civilian vehicles to a medical facility ONLY as a last resort, and only if it appears the patient's life is in immediate danger.
 - a. The preferred alternative is transfer of the patient to an ambulance.

TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

- b. If it appears impossible or impractical to transfer the patient to the ambulance, and the patient's life appears to be in immediate danger, the officer may escort the private vehicle with specific approval from a supervisor.
- c. Regardless of the threat to the patient, the escort of a private vehicle will not exceed a speed reasonable for the conditions present. Officers conducting the escort will activate the patrol vehicle's emergency equipment. However, officers will not proceed through traffic control devices without stopping and ensuring that both vehicles can safely proceed through the intersection.
- d. An officer will terminate an emergency escort and resume normal vehicular operation when, in his/her opinion, continuation of the escort would constitute an unacceptable risk to the public. If possible, the person being escorted will be advised of this requirement before the escort is started.
- e. Escorting an individual requiring medical treatment in a patrol vehicle will occur only in extreme, life threatening situations, and only with the approval of a supervisor. Officers conducting the escort will activate the patrol vehicle's emergency equipment. However, officers will not proceed through traffic control devices without stopping and ensuring that their vehicle can safely proceed through the intersection.

D. FUNERAL ESCORTS

The Florence Police Department provides funeral escorts at the expense of the funeral home and hiring of off-duty officers. The following procedures ensure that all requests for funeral escorts are handled in a proper and expedient manner:

- 1. Funeral homes located within the city limits of Florence will contact Florence Police at least one day in advance to schedule the escort with the Lieutenant assigned to the Administration and Logistics Division, or his designee.
- 2. Only one (1) funeral escort per hour will be provided. The family/funeral home will hire off-duty officers to provide the escort for a fee of \$60/officer (2 hours at \$30/hour), with a three (3) officer minimum.
- 3. Only fifteen (15) vehicles will be allowed in the funeral procession, UNLESS prior arrangements are made with the Lieutenant assigned to the Administration and Logistics Division. If additional vehicles are requested, additional off-duty officers, more than the three (3)

TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

officer minimum, may be hired for a fee of \$60/officer (2 hours at \$30/hour)

4. Funeral escorts are not “guaranteed” and will only be provided as the availability of off-duty officers. No escorts will be scheduled after 1600 hours on weekdays due to heavy traffic and a normal escalation in call volume.
5. Police vehicles escorting funeral processions shall have the emergency lights flashing at all times and will use the siren as needed such as when passing through intersections.
6. The procession will be led at an appropriate speed below the speed limit to allow the procession to stay together.
7. Funeral homes are encouraged to be punctual.

VIII. TRAFFIC ASSISTANCE PROCEDURES

- A. **GENERAL ASSISTANCE:** When officers are dispatched to or discover a disabled vehicle that presents a traffic hazard they will:
 1. Take every reasonable precaution to ensure the situation does not worsen. Officers’ vehicles will be placed so as to block traffic from striking a disabled vehicle and provide for a safe zone to remove the vehicle from the roadway if necessary.
 2. If available, use the directional lighting atop the patrol car to divert traffic into other lanes and give as much advance notice as possible.
 3. Attempt to contact the driver or owner if vehicle is unoccupied.
 4. When vehicles can be removed from the road under their own power, this will be done. Officers will not attempt to push or pull vehicles with a patrol car unless human life is in danger.
 5. If the responsible party can be contacted, officers will notify dispatch of the party’s wishes as to type of assistance needed. If a responsible person can’t be contacted within 15 minutes, impoundment procedures will be initiated.
 6. If road or wrecker service is requested, officers will follow current procedures governing road or wrecker services.
 7. Personnel will not recommend any service provider to any person.
- B. **STRANDED MOTORISTS:** Officers will not leave motorists stranded; standing by the roadside after the vehicle is removed. Officers will make every reasonable effort to assist the motorist in obtaining further transportation. Officers may transport citizens to the nearest point where further assistance may be obtained.

TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

- C. **REQUESTED ASSISTANCE:** Calls for anticipated traffic control and assistance needs, such as at construction sites, will be routed through the Administrative Division. If the need is immediate, requests will be directed to dispatch for on-duty personnel.
- D. **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:** Officers will attempt to provide all practical assistance to calls of emergency situations on the roadways.
 - 1. **VEHICLE FIRES:** Unless dispatched, Officers will immediately notify dispatch. The dispatcher will notify 911 to request Florence Fire & Rescue and relay any pertinent information.
 - a. Pending arrival of the Fire Department, officers may use the fire extinguisher in their vehicle to control the fire or minimize damage. However, the officer's first responsibility is to protect human life.
 - b. Upon the Fire Department's arrival, the Officer will assist by providing traffic and crowd control until the hazard has been resolved and the roadway has been cleared.
 - 2. **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:** Upon discovering a medical emergency, Officers will advise dispatch of the nature of the emergency and request medical personnel if needed. The dispatcher will notify 911 to request emergency medical service and relay any pertinent information.
 - a. **FIRST AID:** Officers will render as much assistance as is practical, keeping in mind their limitations based on training and experience. Caution must be exercised not to attempt a level of assistance that is beyond the Officer's capabilities.
 - b. **EMERGENCY ESCORTS:** All emergency escorts will be handled in accordance with current procedures governing escort services.
- E. **HAZARDOUS STREET CONDITIONS:** Roadway and roadside hazards are contributing factors in many traffic accidents. When such hazards come to the attention of an officer, or employee of the police department, the officer will take steps to eliminate it if possible, and if not, to report it to Dispatch who will contact the proper agencies for corrective action. Such hazards may include:
 - 1. Debris in the roadway;
 - 2. Defects in the roadway;
 - 3. Lack of, or broken highway safety devices;
 - 4. Lack of, broken, or malfunctioning traffic control devices;

TRAFFIC DIRECTION & CONTROL

5. Lack of, or broken roadway lighting systems; and/or
 6. Other roadside hazards such as abandoned vehicles.
- F. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE: Hazardous materials responses will be handled in accordance with current procedures governing hazardous materials incidents.

IX. TRAFFIC ENGINEERING PROCEDURES

- A. DATA COLLECTION AT CRASHES: Officers will collect data relevant to traffic engineering as part of the process of investigating traffic crashes. In keeping with all directives concerning traffic crash reporting and investigation, crash diagrams will be prepared and maintained to provide a base of information for traffic engineering decisions or recommendations.
- B. RECOMMENDATIONS: If officers see a recurring pattern and have suggestions as to how to correct the problem, they may forward their concerns via chain of command to Florence Utilities or Alabama Department of Transportation for further study. Citizens wishing to make suggestions or voice complaints in reference to traffic engineering will be instructed to contact Florence Utilities or the Alabama Department of Transportation.
- C. RELAYING COLLISION AND ENFORCEMENT DATA: In support of the traffic engineering function, traffic data including but not limited to collision and citation data, may be forwarded to Florence Utilities, the Alabama Department of Transportation, and/or NACOLG. The Florence Police Department will support these agencies during traffic engineering studies.

X. LOCAL/REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEES

Generally, NACOLG (North Alabama Council of Local Governments) coordinates regional transportation system management including traffic safety programs. When necessary, members of the Florence Police Department, at the direction of the Chief of Police, will participate in committees and other planning initiatives in conjunction with NACOLG.