

General Order 64.1 - Traffic Direction and Control

PURPOSE: Define and describe traffic direction and control, the criteria for manual direction of traffic, manual traffic direction, use of high-visibility clothing while directing traffic, traffic control devices manual operation, agency use of temporary traffic control devices, traffic control at special events, traffic direction and control at fires, traffic direction and control during adverse road and weather conditions, and provide guidance for the safe escorting of vehicles by the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office, and establish policy and procedure for the use of checkpoints, detour barricades, and roadblocks.

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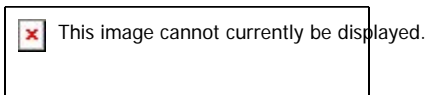
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ISSUED BY : Sheriff Jeffrey T. Easter

REVIEWED BY: Standard Review Committee



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DEFINITIONS:

- A. Checkpoint: A procedure where all vehicles passing through a particular location are stopped and their drivers are briefly examined.
- B. Detour Barricades: Obstacles placed in the roadway used to reroute traffic from a specified area.
- C. Escort Leader: Supervisor assigned responsibility for the escort.
- D. Patrol Unit: Either a marked patrol car or marked patrol motorcycle.
- E. Point of Contact: Individual requesting motor escort.
- F. Roadblock: Any method, restriction, or obstruction used or intended for the purpose of preventing free passage of vehicles on a highway in order to effect the apprehension of an actual or suspected violator in a vehicle.

64.1.1 TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. Traffic direction and control functions are performed by Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office personnel when necessary to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians.
 - A. Personnel will direct and control traffic at traffic accidents, fires, and at any natural or human-induced incident that creates a traffic hazard.
- B. Department personnel shall be assigned to carry out traffic direction and control duties only at the following times and locations:
 - 1. Where law enforcement authority is required to ensure the safety and efficiency of vehicle and pedestrian movement; and
 - 2. Until such time that the traffic problem is resolved or traffic control devices can be installed or repaired.
- C. The sheriff's office will work with the county engineer's office or any other road department of competent jurisdiction when requested to identify and attempt to anticipate resources required to resolve any traffic control problem.
- D. The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office has access, through the county engineer's office, to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, for employee use.

64.1.2 OPEN

64.1.3 CRITERIA FOR MANUAL DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC

- A. Circumstances where manual traffic direction and control may be necessary include, but are not limited to:

1. Special assignments (priority traffic/vehicle movement);
 2. Adverse weather conditions (snow, ice, flooding);
 3. Debris in roadway (lines down, litter, trees);
 4. Utility pole placement;
 5. Roadway construction (temporary until flag personnel arrives);
 6. Special events that result in heavy traffic congestion;
 7. Accident or other emergency; and
 8. Inoperative or missing traffic control devices until repair or replacement occurs.
- B. Circumstances and situations will dictate deputy response about whether or not to manually direct traffic or to permit the traffic to flow without manual assistance. These variables include:
1. Traffic volume and speed;
 2. Number of pedestrians present;
 3. Duration of congestion period; and
 4. Presence or absence of traffic control devices.

64.1.4 MANUAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION

- A. All deputies assigned to direct traffic shall utilize uniform signals and gestures to enhance driver and pedestrian recognition of and response to their directions. Uniform signals and gestures are specified in basic academy training.
- B. Personnel carrying out manual traffic direction and control will ensure that their presence and purpose are well demonstrated to drivers and pedestrians by positioning themselves so that they can be seen clearly by all, usually in the center of an intersection or street.
- C. Some intersections may require two (2) deputies for safe manual traffic control. Communication between deputies in these situations is essential to ensure safe traffic movement.

64.1.5 HIGH-VISIBILITY CLOTHING WHILE DIRECTING TRAFFIC

- A. The use of high-visibility clothing while directing traffic enhances deputy safety, as well as driver recognition and response.
1. **(R)** The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office provides each deputy assigned to patrol with a D.O.T. approved high-visibility vest. The vest will be worn by personnel performing manual traffic direction and control at the following:
 - a. Fire and accident scenes; and
 - b. Any other incident where traffic direction and control are necessary.

- B. The vest will be worn with the full-prescribed uniform when conditions make it practical to wear the high-visibility outerwear prior to initiating manual traffic direction and control.

64.1.6 TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES MANUAL OPERATION

- A. Deputies are not permitted to manually operate a traffic control device, except when the traffic control device is specifically placed for flow in and out of a convention/sporting center (such as the Kansas Coliseum).
- B. In some instances, it may be necessary for the deputy to remain at the scene of an inoperable or malfunctioning traffic control device and maintain manual traffic direction and control. Examples of this would include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Instances where the malfunction is causing a traffic hazard or traffic congestion; or
 - 2. At a traffic accident in an intersection where manual traffic direction and control will assist the movement of traffic at a better, safer, and faster rate.

64.1.7 AGENCY'S USE OF TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

- A. During certain special events, the department may utilize temporary traffic control devices to include traffic cones, ropes, or other appropriate barriers.
 - 1. Temporary traffic control devices can be requested through the bureau of public services (for county) or various municipal public works (for inside city limits).

64.1.8 OPEN

64.1.9 TRAFFIC CONTROL, SPECIAL EVENTS

- A. Special events are those at which a large volume of vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic is anticipated (and hostile crowds are not expected). Special events may include parades, sporting events, highway construction and maintenance activities, and picketing, among others.
 - A. The primary task of sheriff's office personnel conducting traffic direction and control in support of a special event is to assist motorists and/or pedestrians in getting into or out of the immediate area of the event and those who are passing through that area.
- B. Upon learning of an approaching special event, the following procedure will be used:
 - 1. The time and location of the event will be obtained, as well as an estimate of the number of people expected to attend.
 - 2. A Patrol Division supervisor will be assigned to participate in the planning for the event. Unless circumstances prevent it, the supervisor involved in the planning for the event should also be involved in the operation itself by commanding the operation or assisting the commander of the operation.

3. If the event is a parade, the route will be determined and contact will be made with other public and private agencies that will be affected by the event so that they may adjust their schedules and operations as necessary. These agencies include, but are not limited to the following;
 - a. Railroads;
 - b. U.S. Postal Service;
 - c. Department of public works; and
 - d. Public transportation;
 - e. Other law enforcement agencies.
4. Perimeter streets in the area of the event should be used to maximum advantage by eliminating or increasing normal parking capacity, making temporary one-way streets, and by assigning deputies to key intersections to control the direction and flow of traffic.
5. Adequate access to the immediate area of the special event shall be maintained for emergency vehicles and, if specific routes are provided or desired, this route information will be provided to other emergency services prior to the event.
6. Adequate crowd control will be provided in the form of banners, ropes, barricades and signs, as appropriate. Deputies will be assigned to specific crowd-control points as deemed necessary.
7. The sheriff's office will assist in notifying the news media of any changes or alterations in street utilization, parking availability, public transportation services, and the location of the event or parade route.
8. Alternative routes for through traffic, if needed, will be planned and marked, and information on these routes will be provided to the news media.
9. Provisions will be made for those persons working directly with the event to assist them in gaining access to the event site. This would include event promoters, vendors, workers, news media, etc.
10. Provisions will be made for adequate relief for sheriff's office personnel assigned to work the event.
11. If traffic direction and control services are to be provided in support of the event by private or volunteer services, the sheriff's office will review plans and duty assignments to ensure that adequate services will be provided.

64.1.10 TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL AT FIRES

- A. The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office will continue to maintain its close working relationships with local fire and emergency medical service organizations and will continue to cooperate with them in developing and implementing plans and procedures for providing traffic direction and control at the scene of fires.

B. The task of the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office personnel assigned to traffic direction and control at fire scenes will be to:

1. Maintain access to and egress from the scene by emergency vehicles and protect emergency equipment from theft and vandalism; and
2. Provide a safe environment for the motoring public.

64.1.11 TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL DURING ADVERSE ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

A. Adverse road and weather conditions may include, but not be limited to:

1. Accidental hazards, such as debris that has fallen from another vehicle, downed power lines, etc.;
2. Acts of nature, such as fog, snow, and ice on the road; and
3. Engineering hazards, such as an exposed guardrail and/or other object that might cause damage or injury should a vehicle impact with such object.

B. The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office will continue to maintain its close working relationship with various road departments that share responsibility for coping with adverse road and weather conditions that affect traffic safety and will continue to cooperate with them in developing and carrying out mutual assistance policies, procedures, and programs to serve the public as effectively as possible when such adverse conditions exist.

C. Upon discovering an adverse road or weather condition, deputies and their immediate supervisors shall notify the communications dispatcher of the type and location of the adverse conditions.

1. If the adverse conditions require some sort of corrective action (salt, sand, repair), the deputy shall ensure that the required service company or agency is notified.

D. Department personnel will provide traffic direction and control and scene protection services in the area of adverse road and weather conditions as needed.

64.1.12 LAW ENFORCEMENT ESCORT SERVICES

A. Escort services are provided under the following circumstances:

1. Routine escorts will be provided when authorized by proper authority. A routine escort is one wherein its primary purpose is to ensure the arrival of the escorted unit as a single group to its destination. Examples include, but are not limited to: public officials, dignitaries, and funerals.
2. Emergency escorts will be provided when authorized by proper authority. An emergency escort is one wherein loss of life or great bodily harm will likely result if the escorted unit does not arrive at its destination in a timely manner. Examples include, but are not limited to: bomb disposal, hazardous materials posing an immediate threat, and people needed at hostage or barricaded-suspect situations.

B. Requests for escort services will be handled as follows:

1. A request for escort of a routine nature will be directed to the Patrol Division office during business hours. During those times when the Patrol Division office is closed, the request for escort will be directed to the on-duty patrol lieutenant.
2. A request for an emergency escort will be brought to the attention of the patrol supervisor on duty.

C. Personnel authorized to approve requests for escort:

1. An escort of a routine nature must be authorized by the Patrol Division commander.
2. An escort of an emergency nature must be authorized by a deputy of the rank of sergeant or greater.

D. A routine escort will use the following procedures:

1. A request for routine escort should be received at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the time of the escort, at a minimum, to allow for planning and resource allocation.
2. Once authorized, responsibility for the escort may be delegated to any supervisor.
3. A name and phone number for a point of contact with the people requesting escort will be supplied to the supervisor responsible for the escort (escort leader).
4. The escort leader will coordinate with the point of contact on the route to be taken, number of vehicles involved, etc. The final route will be approved by the Patrol Division commander, based on the safety of the public, people being escorted, and the deputies involved.
5. Based on starting point, destination, or any other special circumstances, the escort leader will coordinate with other agencies for assistance or information as warranted.
6. The escort leader and at least one (1) other deputy involved in the escort should drive the route to be taken prior to the actual escort in order to ensure smoothness of operation by locating any problems or special circumstances that would require the route to be modified.
7. The escort leader will hold a squad meeting to brief all members of the escort as to the route and other pertinent details.
8. The speed limit on any escort will always be ten (10) to fifteen (15) miles per hour less than the posted speed limit and in no case may exceed fifty (50) miles per hour.
9. Sufficient patrol cars and motorcycles will be allocated based on the length of the escort and number of intersections to be blocked.
10. When blocking intersections, at least one (1) patrol unit will remain on the intersection until the entire escort has passed, whenever possible.

- a. When patrol units are accelerating to catch up to the front of the escort for reassignment, only the inside (driver's side) lane will be used. At no time will a patrol unit attempting to catch up use the outside (passenger side) lane for driving.
- 11. One (1) or more patrol cars (as needed) will maintain station at the end of the escort to ensure that no other traffic attempts to join with or pass the escort. In addition, this unit will provide information to the escort leader on any problems observed with the escort.
 - 12. One (1) marked car will lead the escort. Units used for blocking intersections will be in front of this lead car. The escort leader will be in this car to make assignments as required to block intersections.
 - 13. If motorcycles are used as part of the escort, they will travel in front of the lead car in wedge formation. The lead motorcycle would then make assignments for the blocking of intersections.
 - 14. The lead motorcycle will set the speed for the escort. The lead car will maintain a minimum of a six (6) second gap between itself and the lead motorcycle.
 - 15. All patrol units that are a part of the escort will utilize all emergency lighting on the patrol units during the time of the escort.
 - 16. Sirens will be utilized by those patrol units proceeding up to block an intersection.
 - 17. The escort leader will inform the point of contact of these procedures.
 - 18. The point of contact will be informed that if any escorted vehicles break out of the escort or go into the left hand lane used by deputies, this will result in the immediate termination of the escort based on safety to the deputies.

E. Emergency escorts shall use these guidelines:

- 1. Safety of the general public and deputies involved are paramount.
- 2. The safest, most direct route to the destination based on the totality of the circumstances shall be used.
- 3. The number of units to be escorted should be kept to a minimum.
- 4. The supervisor authorizing the emergency escort will be the escort leader. If the supervisor authorizing the emergency escort is unable to act as escort leader, a deputy may be assigned as escort leader.

F. Procedure for ensuring the adequacy of private escort services for oversized vehicles and hazardous cargo carriers:

- 1. Private escort services are licensed and regulated by the State of Kansas, Department of Transportation.

64.1.13 CHECKPOINTS, DETOUR BARRICADES, AND ROADBLOCKS

- A. The purpose of a checkpoint is to stop all vehicular traffic for interrogatory purposes, such as a sobriety check lane or to attempt to locate witnesses to a crime, etc.
 - 1. In the case of a sobriety check lane, a specific operational order shall be written for the specific situation.
 - 2. When utilized to locate potential witnesses, a supervisor of the rank of sergeant or above must authorize the checkpoint.
 - 3. A location should be chosen that provides protection to the deputy and also provides a sufficiently clear view ahead so that oncoming traffic will be able to stop.
 - a. The location chosen should avoid possible turn-off avenues after the checkpoint comes into view by oncoming traffic.
 - b. The patrol vehicle, with overhead lights activated, should be placed at an angle across the roadway, and flares should be placed to help identify the checkpoint.
 - c. Deputies shall not remain inside of their vehicles while maintaining a checkpoint.
 - d. Checkpoint deputies must be aware that some vehicles may approach the checkpoint and fail to stop due to confusion or being guilty of some offense known only to themselves.
 - 4. Deputies assigned to checkpoint duty should courteously identify themselves and the reason for the checkpoint.
 - a. Ask any questions necessary and request identification of occupants.
 - b. Record time, names, vehicle information and responses to the questions.
- B. Detour barricades are established to stop and/or re-route traffic for a temporary period of time.
 - 1. Examples would include, but not be limited to: traffic accidents, disaster areas, and special events.
 - 2. If the detour is going to be for an extended time, the possibility of securing stand-alone barricades from the bureau of public service should be considered.
- C. Roadblocks are necessary at certain times to apprehend persons fleeing from the scene of a crime or attempting to evade arrest.
 - 1. When the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office utilizes a roadblock, it must be done in an effective and well-disciplined manner.
 - 2. Upon notification of a situation that may necessitate the use of a roadblock, the patrol watch supervisor shall evaluate all available information and determine if the circumstances would justify a roadblock.

- a. Should a roadblock be authorized by the patrol watch supervisor, the supervisor shall monitor and/or directly supervise the operation until its completion.
 - b. The supervisor can cancel the roadblock at any time for the safety of the public or the deputies.
3. The following factors must be considered by the supervisor in activating a roadblock:
 - a. The seriousness of the crime for which the suspect is wanted. A minor traffic offense or mere failure to stop is a minor misdemeanor and shall not be grounds for a roadblock.
 - Parking a patrol vehicle on the roadway in front of the pursued vehicle with overhead lights activated, where the obstruction does not significantly limit the free passage of vehicles on the roadway, shall not be construed as a roadblock pursuant to this section.
 - b. The number of deputies available for assignment to the roadblock.
 - c. Whether other alternatives are reasonably available to accomplish the detention of the suspect.
 - d. Whether there is sufficient information and descriptions of the wanted persons and vehicles.
 - e. The amount of time that has elapsed between the criminal act and its discovery.
4. Most roadblocks encountered are the result of another deputy or agency pursuing a wanted vehicle.
 - a. Requests by other agencies for sheriff's office assistance will be relayed to the supervisor for evaluation and consideration.
 - b. When a deputy learns of a roadblock action by another agency, the deputy shall notify the communications dispatcher immediately. The communications dispatcher will notify the appropriate personnel by radio as a matter of information. However, deputies shall not become involved in the roadblock action unless specifically authorized by a supervisor.
 - c. The supervisor may authorize the assistance if all provisions of this roadblock policy are met, if it is clear that an emergency exists which dictates immediate intervention and assistance, and the other agency has made a specific request for assistance.
 - d. Informal notification by another jurisdiction of a roadblock action in progress shall not be construed as a request for assistance.
5. A supervisor shall consider the following factors in determining the location for a roadblock:

- a. Whether the location provides reasonable protection to the deputy;
 - b. Whether the location provides a sufficiently clear view ahead so that the pursued vehicle will be able to stop and allows for placement of adequate warning to approaching traffic;
 - c. Whether the location chosen limits and avoids possible turn-off avenues of escape after the roadblock comes into view by the pursued vehicle; and
 - d. Whether the location would offer additional areas of safety, such as bridge abutments, embankments, poles, and buildings.
6. Miscellaneous guidelines for the use of a roadblock:
 - a. The patrol vehicle, with red lights activated, should be placed at an angle across the roadway; if time permits, flares should be placed to help identify the roadblock.
 - b. Deputies shall not remain inside their vehicles while maintaining a roadblock. Deputies should take a position off the roadway and away from any likely path of the fleeing vehicle, utilizing the most protection available.
 - c. All deputies at the scene of a roadblock shall locate themselves on the same side of the roadway to prevent a possible crossfire situation. Roadblock units must consider their lines of fire so as to avoid and/or prevent damage or injury to the pursuing vehicles and/or law enforcement personnel.
 - d. Roadblock deputies must consider that other vehicles may approach the roadblock and fail to stop due to confusion or being guilty of some offense known only to themselves (e.g., operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated or drug possession).
 - e. In no instance will a deputy use a roadblock and completely block a roadway unless deadly force would be justifiable.
7. When, based upon all the facts and circumstances known to the supervisor, it is no longer reasonable to maintain a roadblock, the roadblock action shall be terminated.
8. During a roadblock action, deputies must always consider the safety of the public and their own personal safety.
9. A deputy must always weigh the possible outcome of a roadblock situation against the known or reasonably believed circumstances that exist before making a determination to employ a roadblock.
10. Refer to general order [41.2.8](#) for additional guidelines on roadblock and pursuit policy.

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