

Traffic Direction and Control

Index Code: 1907

Effective Date: 11/01/02 (Revised 01/01/10)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to provide deputies with guidelines for manually directing and controlling pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff that a uniformed deputy will manually direct traffic when necessary to ensure the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians and vehicles.

III. Manual Traffic Direction Procedures

A. General Procedures

Deputies must constantly keep in mind their own safety and the safety of others when manually directing traffic. All personnel directing traffic will use uniform signals and gestures to enhance driver and pedestrian recognition of, and response to, directions. The voice commands, signaling aids, hand motions, and gestures displayed should be performed in a polite but firm manner to elicit a reasonable and immediate response from drivers and pedestrians.

B. Stopping Traffic

When stopping traffic the deputy should first extend his or her arm and index finger toward, and look directly at, the driver to be stopped until that person is aware, or it can be reasonably assumed that the person is aware of the deputy's gesture. Second, the pointing hand is raised at the wrist so that the palm is toward the person to be stopped. The palm is then held in this position until the vehicle has stopped. 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. The same procedure applies to stopping vehicles from intersecting roadways.

C. Starting Traffic

When starting traffic the deputy should first stand with shoulder and side toward the traffic to be started, extending arm and index finger toward, while looking directly at the first driver, until that driver is aware of the deputy's gesture.

Second, with the palm toward the deputy, the pointing arm is swung from the elbow 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 traffic coming from the other direction. The same procedure applies to starting vehicles from intersecting roadways.

D. Turns

When directing traffic to turn in a specific direction, the utmost caution must be used to ensure driver compliance. The deputy's extended arm, index finger, and gaze should first be directed toward the driver to gain their attention, followed by swinging the extended arm and index finger in the direction of the turn.

E. Whistles

A whistle may be used in conjunction with arm and hand signals to gain the attention of drivers and pedestrians in the following manner:

1. One long blast coupled with the appropriate hand signal for STOP.
2. Two short blasts coupled with the appropriate hand signal for GO.
3. Several short blasts to get the attention of a driver or pedestrian who does not respond to a given signal.

F. Driver Confusion

When a driver or pedestrian misunderstands or misinterprets a deputy's directions, the deputy will move reasonably close to the person and politely but briefly explain the directions without compromising safety. The deputy will then allow the driver to proceed according to directions when it is safe to do so. This procedure is not intended to abridge a deputy's enforcement responsibilities. In the event of a deliberate and flagrant failure to heed a deputy's directions, the deputy should invoke the necessary enforcement action.