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Effective Date	January 1, 2010		



Wilkesboro Police Department

Electronic Written Directives Document

I. PURPOSE

To provide officers of the Wilkesboro Police Department with guidelines when performing traffic direction and escorts.

II. POLICY

The Wilkesboro Police Department will provide traffic direction and control at locations or events where available signs and signals do not provide adequate protection and control of the situation. Should the number of locations or events requiring traffic direction and control exceed the available manpower the on-duty supervisor will prioritize such locations/event based on traffic density and traffic volume, and hazards to the motoring public and assign available manpower to those areas.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. Officers, supervisors, and traffic control officers will be required to perform traffic direction and control duties at a variety of locations, including collision scenes, fires, parades, concerts, special events, road closings, funeral processions, and signal malfunctions.
- B. All officers and civilian traffic control personnel will wear traffic vests with reflective material when directing traffic during the day and at night.
- C. Officers will follow these procedures when directing traffic:
 1. Officers shall wear reflective vests and may wear hats;
 2. Officers should be conscious that conditions at the location of control might affect other areas. Whenever possible, officers will use traffic on adjoining streets to serve as a guide to the needs for control;
 3. Officers will consider a variety of criteria when determining the need and type of traffic control necessary. Criteria may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. traffic volume and speed;
 - b. number of pedestrians;

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- c. expected duration of the condition;
 - d. and presence and types of traffic control devices.
4. Officers should select a position in the roadway that allows a full view of the location and allows approaching motorists and pedestrians the best opportunity to see the officer directing traffic.
- D. A position in the center of the intersection or roadway will afford the greatest visibility and is usually used when signals are malfunctioning. This location places the officer in a very hazardous position; therefore great care should be taken to ensure that the officer is visible and has sufficient lighting. Streetlights, supplemental lighting, headlamps, flashlights, and orange wands may be used.
- E. A position on or near a corner may be used in areas of heavy pedestrian activity where greater pedestrian control is needed.

IV. SIGNALS AND GESTURES

- A. Officer should assume a posture that reflects a position of authority and command. An erect posture should be assumed, facing traffic with weight evenly distributed on both feet. When not directing traffic, arms should be at the employee's side.
- B. Officers should use standard, uniform, and understandable gestures. Unnecessary movements and unorthodox hand signals may cause confusion and lead to hesitation or accidents. Officers and civilian traffic control personnel will:
- 1. Stand with their bodies parallel to the traffic being allowed to move, with their front and back to the traffic that is stopped;
 - 2. Make eye contact with drivers and pedestrians in order to assess the level of their attention;
 - 3. To stop traffic, first point with the arm and extend hand toward the vehicle being stopped. Give the driver sufficient time and distance to stop. After gaining the driver's attention, raise the extended hand exposing the palm and hold that position until the driver stops. Use one continuous blast of the whistle to stop vehicles.

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4. Stop traffic in one direction, then the other before allowing traffic on a cross-street to proceed. After halting traffic in one direction, hold the extended palm while repeating the procedure until the traffic has stopped in both directions. Do not drop the arms until traffic has stopped in both directions.
 5. To start traffic, be positioned so that the side is toward the traffic to be started. Look directly at the driver who is to proceed. Point the arm and hand directly toward that driver then, bending the arm only at the elbow with the palm up, swing the arm up toward the chin. The whistle may be used to assist by blowing two short blasts to start the drive. If the driver does not move, repeat the procedure. The same procedure should be used to start traffic from the other side. Often a nod of the head while looking directly toward the driver will assist slow or timid drivers.
 6. When it is necessary to signal a driver to make a right turn, point the arm and extended hand toward the driver to gain his/her attention. Then swing the arm toward the desired direction. Keep pointing in that direction until the driver proceeds to turn.
 7. When it is necessary to signal a driver to make a left turn, it may be necessary to first stop and hold the opposing traffic. If the turning vehicle is approaching from the officer's left, the stop signal should be given out of the path of the turning vehicle. Then with the left hand, point to the driver with an extended arm and hand and clearly swing the arm toward the desired direction. Be sure to clearly indicate to the driver to turn left and pass in front, not behind. If the turning vehicle is approaching from the right, turn around and face the direction in which the vehicle making the left turn is to go. Point the arm and extended hand toward the driver to gain his/her attention. Then swing the arm toward the desired direction. Keep pointing in that direction until the driver proceeds to turn.
- C. If opposing traffic from both directions is to make left turns, indicate so by swinging the other arm in the direction of the turn. Such turns are dangerous and must be watched carefully by the officer to ensure that no conflict arises from the straight-through traffic or pedestrians.

V. OPERATION OF TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

- A. In case of special events or signal malfunctions, Department employees may use a traffic box key to open a signal control box and place the traffic signal on FLASH. No other alterations or adjustments to traffic signals are authorized. Supervisors and officers are authorized to possess traffic signal box keys.

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- B. In the event of signal malfunctions, officers will advise Communications Center. The Communications Center will notify the North Carolina Department of Transportation that the signal needs repair. If the signal is at a major intersection, is completely non-functioning, and cannot be replaced on FLASH, the officer should attempt to control traffic at the location until the signal can be repaired.
- C. Barricades, cones, portable signs, and other temporary traffic control devices may be used to provide safe and efficient control of traffic. These devices may be acquired from the Officer's patrol vehicle, the Town of Wilkesboro Public Works Department, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, or the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. These devices may be used for, but are not limited to, the following circumstances:
 - 1. Sustained power outages;
 - 2. Special Events;
 - 3. Traffic Signal malfunctions; and
 - 4. Other situations where supervisors deem necessary.

VI. SPECIAL EVENTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

- A. Special events include any scheduled activities involving large amounts of vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic for short periods. Officers will assist in traffic control and direction at special events.
- B. The Deputy Chief of Police, Patrol Captain or Lieutenants will be responsible for assigning personnel and planning traffic control for special events, depending on the size of the event.
- C. The following will be addressed in the planning of traffic control and direction for special events:
 - 1. Planning of routes to allow for normal and emergency activities to continue with minimal disruption.
 - 2. Provision of unrestricted access from at least one direction for emergency services (fire, rescue, police);
 - 3. Need for traffic control devices;
 - 4. Need for adequate crown control;

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5. Provisions for media coverage;
6. Identification of civilian persons working the event;
7. Public transportation needs;
8. Consideration of the capabilities and responsibilities of volunteers and private/security personnel;
9. Parking needs;
10. Police Officers' assignments and scheduling;
11. Interagency assistance needs; and
12. Ingress and egress of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

D. Crash Scenes

1. Officers must consider a number of factors when controlling traffic collision scenes including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Road width, traffic volume, and surrounding environment;
 - b. Hazards such as oil, fuels, hazardous materials, and debris; the use of flares should be avoided near spills;
 - c. Motorists ability to see officers; Multiple officers may be needed and control should be coordinated between them. This situation should occur when routing traffic on the wrong side of highways, during for, at night, and near collisions in curves or over hill crests. Officers should use appropriate warning equipment.
 - d. Coordination with other emergency vehicle crews and tow trucks;
 - e. An analysis of the need to create detours since traffic should not be allowed to enter an area that it cannot leave.
2. Officers should always attempt to keep traffic flowing without presenting further dangers. Traffic backups may create other collisions. Special attention should be given to prevent backups of traffic near intersections, hill crest, and curves.

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3. Officers should never route into the opposite side of a highway unless there is adequate personnel to ensure safety.

E. FIRE SCENES

Because fires attract a significant number of pedestrian and vehicular onlookers, officers must take precautions to keep these persons out of the area where fire personnel are working. Officers should not coordinate their direction efforts with the Incident Commander of the fire scene to ensure that the traffic does not interfere with their ability to fight fire. Traffic should be routed so vehicles are not allowed to drive over fire hoses unless they are protected with the appropriate devices.

F. ADVERSE ROAD OR WEATHER CONDITIONS

During periods of adverse weather such as snow, hail, fog, flooding, or ice storms, or upon locating road hazards such as downed lines, ruts, holes, etc., officers should notify the Communications Center of the existing conditions and request that the Communications Center notify the appropriate agency to assist in repairing or changing the conditions. Traffic control at the location should be provided as appropriate.

VII. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND ESCORTS

- A. Officers will render emergency assistance to stranded motorists. Officers should promptly notify the Communications Center as to the nature of the emergency and request additional fire or rescue services as needed. The officer will serve as liaison for the motorist to ensure an appropriate and rapid response.
- B. Funeral escort requests should be submitted to the on-duty Supervisor. Other requests for non-emergency escorts, such as large equipment, houses, bank escorts, etc., should be authorized by the on-duty Supervisor.
- C. Emergency escorts for other vehicles are ***not*** allowed except in the case of escorting other emergency vehicles. This type of escort may be necessary if an emergency vehicle has lost the use of emergency equipment or if personnel are unfamiliar with directions.
- D. If an officer encounters a motorist requesting an emergency escort to an emergency medical treatment facility, the officer will offer to summon an ambulance. If ambulance services are refused, the officer will offer to escort the vehicle. If the offer is accepted, all traffic laws must be obeyed. If the offer is rejected, the officer will allow the vehicle to proceed with instructions to

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obey all traffic laws. If officer encounters a situation that he/she determines to be life threatening and the above provisions are not adequate to meet the need, the officer may transport the victim to the nearest emergency medical facility.

VIII. REFERENCES

CALEA 61.3.2, 61.3.3 and 61.4.1(d)