

**CHAPTER 2**  
**GENERAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION**  
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**CHAPTER 2**  
**GENERAL TRAFFIC DIRECTION**

1. EQUIPMENT AND APPEARANCE.

a. General. In directing traffic, it is the officer's duty to provide guidance to drivers and pedestrians on how, when, and where they may move.

b. Effective Communication. In order for an officer to effectively manage traffic, the public must understand the directions given by that officer. To accomplish this, the public needs to know the officer is in charge. This starts with the proper demeanor and the proper equipment.

- (1) Neat and clean uniform.
- (2) High-visibility reflective safety vest.
- (3) Campaign hat.
- (4) Yellow rain gear, if necessary.
- (5) Flashlight for night operation.
- (6) Flares and traffic cones.

2. COMMAND PRESENCE. The manner in which officers conduct themselves is an important part of establishing authority.

a. Stance.

- (1) Stand where visible to the public.
- (2) Stand straight with the weight on each foot.

b. Demeanor.

- (1) Keep an even disposition. Do not get excited or angry.
- (2) Do not argue with a driver. Politely, but firmly, direct drivers where to go.
- (3) The public has to know the officer is in charge; however, professionalism should always be uppermost in the officer's mind. Officers must conduct

themselves according to the best interests of the community and in a manner that will bring credit upon them and the Department.

3. PROCEDURE, SIGNAL STEPS, AND POSITION.

a. General. A firm, polite, even-toned voice is a very effective tool. However, most drivers cannot hear verbal directions, so signals are used. Many officers choose to use their own brand of signals, which tend to confuse drivers. Most drivers will ignore a signal they do not understand. Clear, concise uniform signals are essential to effective traffic control.

b. Stopping Traffic.



ILLUSTRATION 1

- (1) Point with arm and index finger and look straight at the driver.
- (2) Raise pointing hand so that palm is toward the driver. Hold this position until they stop.

- (3) Do not lower arm until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.
- (4) With traffic coming from both directions, stop each direction individually.

c. Starting Traffic.



ILLUSTRATION 2

- (1) Stand to the side of traffic to be started.
- (2) Point with arm and finger toward the vehicle that will be first to start.
- (3) Point other arm in the direction traffic must go.
- (4) With palm up, swing hand up and over shoulder.
- (5) Bend arm only at the elbow with wrist straight.
- (6) Start traffic from the opposite direction in the same manner.

d. Left Turns.



ILLUSTRATION 3

- (1) Left turns create the most difficult problem for officers directing traffic. Officers have to be alert at all times for conflicts.
- (2) Left turns require stopping traffic in lanes through which the turning traffic must cross.
- (3) Stop cross traffic with right hand. Facing the traffic to turn left, point and swing left arm from shoulder in the direction of the turn.
- (4) Permit left turns during breaks in oncoming traffic if possible.
- (5) Do not allow a turn from the wrong lane.

e. Right Turns.



ILLUSTRATION 4

- (1) Signals are not usually required.
- (2) Signals are determined by the vehicle's direction.
- (3) Point toward the driver with arm nearest to the driver.
- (4) Swing arm from the shoulder and point in the direction of the turn.

f. Two Officers Signaling.

- (1) Use this technique at scenes such as large intersections and divided highways.
- (2) One officer is always in charge. They will make all decisions as to changes in the traffic flow.

g. Directing Cross Traffic.



ILLUSTRATION 5

- (1) Where conditions need no control, let traffic regulate itself. Officers should regulate traffic only to the degree that affects reasonable control. If left alone, traffic may adjust on its own.
- (2) Keep the interruptions simple:
  - (a) Stop traffic where a natural break in traffic flow occurs.
  - (b) Consider permitting trucks or other large vehicles to continue passing by the location rather than stopping.
- (3) Anticipate congestion. Do not let any vehicle enter the intersection unless it can completely clear the intersection on the other side.
- (4) Watch the exit and right turn lanes.