

CHAPTER 4
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PUBLIC APPEARANCES AND PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS
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CHAPTER 4

PUBLIC APPEARANCES AND PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS

1. PURPOSE. This section establishes policy and procedures for participation by California Highway Patrol (CHP) employees, on and off duty, in community events.

2. GENERAL.
 - a. California's diverse population consists of many races, dialects, religious and political beliefs, and social persuasions. Its residents hold a variety of opinions and beliefs. To serve this population, CHP administers a variety of programs, including Bilingual Services, Community Outreach, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Persons with Disabilities. Additionally, CHP employees receive training in cultural awareness to enhance their understanding of, and responsibilities to, the public served by the Department. California Highway Patrol employees reflect this diversity in composition and opinions.

 - b. Public appearances and participation in community events, which further the goals and traffic safety mission of the CHP and are consistent with established organizational values, are supported by the Department. Participation may include activities such as traffic safety presentations, public relations presentations at community events, and formal programs to enhance partnerships with the communities served by the Department or to further its recruitment efforts. Traffic control responsibilities will always be maintained as needed, regardless of the event.

3. POLICY.
 - a. Policy regarding wearing of the uniform set forth in Highway Patrol Manual (HPM) 73.5, Uniform Grooming and Equipment Standards, Chapter 2, General Requirements, states, "Uniformed employees, while on duty, are subject to public scrutiny. The mere presence of uniformed employees at a location or establishment which is perceived as inconsistent with law enforcement activities can bring censure to the employee and embarrassment to the Department, unless the employee is obviously conducting business in the scope and course of their law enforcement duties." This policy is applicable to participation by CHP employees wearing the uniform while participating in community events. It is presumed a CHP employee in uniform at such events is acting within the scope and course of employment and with Department approval.

b. The CHP employees shall not participate in parades, community or organization celebrations, or advocacy events while on duty without prior approval of their commander. It is the responsibility of the commander to ensure participation is consistent with the organizational values established and supported by the Department. Participation will normally be approved only for events with a direct relationship to the mission of the CHP. Employees participating in an approved event while on duty shall:

(1) Support and promote the mission and goals of the Department consistent with its organizational values.

(2) Adhere to Department policy on attire, equipment, and grooming as set forth in HPM 73.5.

(3) Not endorse a political or social cause which is not directly related to the mission of the Department or approved by the commander.

(4) Not display an impression the CHP supports, advocates, or disapproves of a particular political or social belief.

c. Departmental employees shall not wear an approved CHP uniform, equipment, or recognizable portion thereof to any event while off duty without the permission of the Office of the Commissioner (refer to HPM 73.5, Chapter 8, Wearing of the Uniform—Program of Entertainment). Employees participating in an event while off duty shall not:

(1) Make public statements or speak on behalf, or as a representative, of CHP indicating support or affiliation by the Department with the event, its message, or cause.

(2) Display or carry banners or signs with the CHP name or logo, or in any way indicate advocacy or support by the Department of the event or cause.

d. Questions regarding the participation by departmental personnel while on duty are to be resolved through channels by the commander, with final approval resting with the appropriate Commissioner.

4. PRESENTATIONS.

a. Preparation. Preparation is the key to any successful program. Usually, the subject of a talk is left to the discretion of the speaker, but occasionally a specific topic is requested. When the former is the case, the speaker should learn as much

about the group as possible and select a topic in line with its interests, and which reflects the CHP's traffic safety priorities.

b. Subject Knowledge. To attain the respect of public groups, the Department must put forth the best effort possible for each presentation. Take the time to research and know the subject. Think through the presentation, making sure it includes sound ideas and conclusions. Be prepared to answer questions from the audience.

c. Speech Organization. A speaker should write the speech completely, or at least an outline of it, and then check and evaluate it to determine if the material is organized properly, that it accomplishes its purpose, and that it will be of interest to the audience. Then the speaker should review the speech in order to present it with ease and fluency and without fumbling for words or omitting key points. It is best to speak on the subject extemporaneously.

d. Digital Recorder. A digital recorder is of great value in checking a speech for organization, speed of delivery, voice modulation, grammar, and content. If one is available, it should be used during the preparation of any speech.

e. Visual Aids. In many instances, some form of visual aid will be helpful in making a speech. Visual aids include photographs, flip charts, single card charts, and PowerPoint presentations. PowerPoint presentations should not rely on large blocks of text. The best visual aid is the speaker and the speaker's demeanor.

f. Handouts. Pamphlets, brochures, and other literature prepared by the Department are available. Often, copies can be distributed to an audience as an effective means of emphasizing the subject of a speech. For many audiences, literature should be distributed **after** the speech. Distributing it before or during the speech may distract the audience. The current handouts are available through Supply Services by completing a CHP 41, Supply Requisition.

5. SPECIAL TARGET AUDIENCES.

a. It is beneficial to meet with specific groups of people who have a particular impact on traffic safety issues. The CHP has traditionally partnered with the following community groups.

b. Military Programs. The CHP has provided educational presentations for all branches of the U.S. military to bring safety issues to their employees. Since many

military employees transfer into California from other states, it is important that this audience be given a complete understanding of California traffic laws. This is especially true regarding laws that vary from state to state.

(1) The majority of military members are under age 25. They are the main group contributing to more traffic crashes than any other age group. A viable, active, military-oriented traffic safety program can make a significant impact in reducing a command's crash totals.

(2) The public information officers who want to start programs should make contact with the base safety office, ground safety officer, or the base commander's office, whichever may be appropriate for the installation.

(3) On occasion, base officials will request special programs, such as driving under the influence clinics, safety belt clinics, vehicle equipment checks, etc.

c. Fleet Operators. Traffic safety programs for fleet operators may be conducted as needed by a command as part of the Department's public information program. These programs should stress the necessity for compliance with all traffic laws, reduction of traffic crashes, and proper equipment maintenance.

(1) Participation could include, with the concurrence of the commander, meetings or related activities of any such group.

(2) Participation may also involve encouraging such groups to establish traffic safety programs directed toward their own specific type of vehicle.

(3) Public relations activities may include assistance in staging safety contests, safety exhibits, reliability runs, exhibitions of driving skills (rodeos), and similar activities not based on speed.

(4) Traffic safety programs may be presented when requested or as needed.

d. Other Department Resources.

(1) Mobile Road Enforcement Officers. May be used for their specialized knowledge and expertise.

(2) Motor Carrier Safety Specialists and Commercial Vehicle Inspection Specialists. May be used for their specialized knowledge and expertise.

6. SCHOOL TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS.

a. Importance. Another important element of the Area public relations program is traffic and pedestrian safety programs for students at all levels.

(1) Elementary Schools. Elementary school programs are designed to provide basic safety rules for pedestrians, bicycle riders, and skateboarders. Occupant restraint systems are also a timely topic for this age group. The objectives of these programs are to safeguard school children and to help them become safety-conscious teenagers and adult drivers. In addition, positive attitudes toward the CHP can be formed by this age group through effective public relations programs. Two effective tools for this audience are the Right Turn Program (Chapter 7, Right Return Program, of this manual) and the use of the CHP mascot, CHiPper, as discussed in Chapter 5, Chipper.

(2) Junior High School. Students between the bicycle-riding and automobile-driving ages can benefit from programs that deal with traffic safety and law enforcement.

(a) Programs addressing the "rules of the road." Junior High School students are the target demographic for the Right Turn Program (refer to Chapter 7 of this manual).

(b) Programs explaining CHP, what it does, and what it stands for.

(3) Senior High School. Secondary school programs are designed to enhance the students' knowledge of traffic laws, their sense of individual responsibility as drivers, and their respect for traffic law enforcement. An example is the Start Smart Program (refer to Chapter 8, Start Smart Program, of this manual) which provides an opportunity for students to interact directly with uniformed CHP personnel and the Every 15 Minutes Program, which dramatically demonstrates the devastating effects of driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol, and traffic crashes.

(4) Colleges. Community colleges and state universities frequently request CHP to lecture on traffic safety and the duties and responsibilities of the Department. Driving under the influence crashes are a concern among college-aged students.

7. STATE EMPLOYEES. Officers are often called upon to teach at various state agencies on topics such as workplace violence, bomb threats, evacuations, etc. For further information, refer to HPM 100.70, Safety Services Program Manual.

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