



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 37	Subject: Vehicle and Pedestrian Investigations	Effective Date: 12/13/1999
Order of: Maureen S. Rush, Superintendent of Police		Amended Date: 05/26/2021

I. Purpose

It is the purpose of this directive to establish guidelines for the University of Pennsylvania Police Department's (UPPD's) sworn police officers for stopping vehicles and pedestrians while creating a degree of safety for officers and citizens when such stops are conducted.

II. Policy

Although stopping vehicles or pedestrians is often considered a routine function of patrol officers, it is one that has been demonstrated to be potentially dangerous for both officers and citizens even during apparently "routine" situations. Therefore, it is policy of the UPPD that vehicle and pedestrian stops shall be performed professionally and courteously. Vehicle stops should be conducted with a view towards educating the public about proper driving procedures while consistently recognizing and taking the necessary steps to minimize the dangers involved in this activity for the officer, the motorist and other users of the highway.

All investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrests, searches and seizures of property by sworn police officers will be based upon a standard of "reasonable suspicion" or "probable cause" as required by the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution and statutory authority. UPPD Officers shall be guided by Directive 87, "Bias Based Profiling" when conducting vehicle or pedestrian investigations.

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn police officers.

IV. Procedures

A. Authority of Police Officer

1. Whenever a police officer is engaged in a systematic program of checking vehicles or drivers or has "articulable and reasonable grounds" to suspect a violation of the Vehicles Law of Pennsylvania, Title 75 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, he/she may stop a vehicle, upon request or signal, for the purpose of checking:
 - a. the vehicle's registration;
 - b. proof of financial responsibility;
 - c. vehicle identification number or engine number;
 - d. the driver's license; or
 - e. to secure other information as the officer may reasonably believe to be necessary to enforce the provisions of the Vehicles Law of Pennsylvania.

B. Stopping Traffic Violators

1. The following procedures are to be followed whenever possible. It is recognized that varying conditions such as roadway construction, volume of traffic, and the urgency of making vehicle stops may require officers to adjust these procedures to particular conditions.
 - a. Once an initial decision has been made to stop a motorist, the officer shall select an area that provides reasonable safety, avoiding curves, hills, heavily trafficked and poorly lit areas and roads without shoulders. Whenever possible, the officer shall also avoid the

use of private drives, business locations and areas where a large volume of spectators are likely to gather.

- b. When a location has been selected for the stop, the officer shall notify the PennComm Center and provide the dispatcher with the following information:
 - 1) unit number (wait for the dispatcher to acknowledge your unit number before continuing);
 - 2) location of the vehicle stop; and
 - 3) provide information on the vehicle (i.e., state and tag number, color, make, model and number and description of occupants).

- c. At the desired location, the officer should signal the operator to stop at the far right side of the roadway or at the safest shoulder by activating the overhead emergency lights and siren as necessary.
 - 1) On multi-lane roads, the officer may facilitate movement to the right shoulder by gradually changing lanes behind the violator until the right side of the roadway is reached.
 - 2) Should the violator stop abruptly in the wrong lane or location, the officer should instruct him/her to move by using the appropriate hand signals or by activating the vehicle's public address system.

- d. Once properly stopped, the officer should position the police vehicle about one (1) car length behind the violator's vehicle and at a slight angle, with the front approximately two (2) feet to the traffic side of the violator's vehicle.
 - 1) At night, the spotlight should not be used to direct the violator but may be used to illuminate the vehicle's interior once stopped. The patrol vehicle should use its low beams if high beams would blind oncoming motorists.

- e. Vehicle stops by non-uniform personnel will not be made, unless specific circumstances exist, such as, matters of public safety or serious crimes. Preferably, a non-uniform officer should follow and monitor a subject's movements until a uniformed officer arrives.
 - 1) Non-uniformed officers operating unmarked patrol vehicles with concealed emergency lights and siren shall not make vehicle stops for traffic violations. In situations where failure to act would create unreasonable risks of injury, death or significant property damage, such personnel shall contact the PennComm Center to request a marked patrol unit to make the stop and may, depending upon the urgency of the situation, activate emergency lights and siren to make a traffic stop.

- f. Officers operating vehicles not equipped with functional emergency lights and siren, shall NOT make motor vehicle stops unless there is imminent danger of loss of life should they fail to act.
 - 1) In other less urgent cases that demand attention, officers shall contact the PennComm Center, request that a marked patrol vehicle perform the stop, and assist in directing the marked vehicle to the subject vehicle's location.

- g. Upon conclusion of a vehicle investigation, the officer shall immediately notify PennComm of the disposition of the incident and the status of the officer. (i.e., warned and released, number of TVRS issued, cleared, taken into custody; back in service, out of service for paperwork)

- h. Upon conclusion of the stop, Officer will assist motorists reenter the roadway safely

C. Issuing Citations

- 1. When issuing citations, conducting roadside sobriety tests or conversing with the violator, the officer and other parties shall be positioned to the side of the road, clear of the motor vehicles. At no time shall the officer or others stand in front of, between or behind the stopped vehicles.

2. During the stop, the violator should remain in his/her motor vehicle while the officer writes the citation or conducts other business. Violators shall not be permitted to sit in patrol vehicles while citations are being prepared or other police business is being conducted.
3. Officers shall return to their patrol vehicle to prepare citations. The officer should position paperwork and related materials in a manner that allows him/her to maintain vantage over actions of the violator and other occupants.
4. Officers who decide to issue a violator a traffic citation shall do so in accordance with Directive 42, "Traffic Enforcement."

D. Stopping an Approaching Motorist

1. In cases where a motorist must be stopped from oncoming traffic, the following actions may be taken:
 - a. Drive the police vehicle to the extreme right portion of the roadway and, as the violator approaches; signal him/her to stop by using hand signals and emergency lights and siren if necessary.
 - b. Because of the potential hazard involved, an officer shall not leave his/her vehicle when attempting to stop oncoming motorists.
 - c. If the subject motorist complies with the instructions, the police vehicle may then be turned around and appropriately positioned to the rear of the violator's vehicle.

E. Stopping a Following Violator

1. When stopping a motorist to the rear of the police vehicle, the following procedures may be followed:
 - a. The officer should drive to the right shoulder of the road and, as the violator approaches, signal him/her to stop.

- b. The officer should not exit his/her vehicle in order to signal the subject motorist.

F. Stopping Oversize Vehicles

1. In the event an officer needs to stop commercial and similar oversize or overweight vehicles, the following procedures should be followed:
 - a. Select a location for the stop that provides enough room for the vehicle and sufficient stability to support the vehicle's weight, and allow the operator sufficient time and distance to make the stop.
 - b. Approach the cab from the rear, using the driver's outside mirror to observe the driver and activity in the cab.
 - c. Never climb onto the vehicle to make contact with the operator. Maintain a position to the rear of the driver's door and ask him/her to exit the vehicle, if and when necessary.

G. Bicycle Investigations

1. Officers will take the same precautions during the course of a bicycle investigation as they would for a motor vehicle investigation in accordance with this directive.
2. After stopping a bicycle, but before approaching the operator, police personnel will supply dispatch personnel with the following information:
 - a. Location of investigation;
 - b. Color/description of bicycle;

- c. Description of operator; and
 - d. Whether or not the officer is solo.
3. Officers shall request the operator to produce identification (driver's license, Social Security card, library card, student identification, etc.). Officers will be guided by Sections 6308(a) and 6311 of the Vehicle Code when there is any question as to the validity of the information being supplied to the officer by the operator.
 4. Officers who decide to issue a violator a traffic citation shall do so in accordance with Directive 42, "Traffic Enforcement."
 5. Upon conclusion all bicycle investigations, the officer shall immediately notify PennComm of the disposition of the incident and the status of the officer. (i.e., warned and released, number of TVRS issued, cleared, taken into custody; back in service, out of service for paperwork)
 6. Officers shall not forcibly stop bicyclists unless exigent circumstances exist.

H. Pedestrian Investigations

1. When a location has been selected for the stop, the officer shall notify the PennComm Center and provide the dispatcher with the following information prior to or immediately upon stopping a pedestrian:
 - a. unit number (wait for the dispatcher to acknowledge your unit number before continuing);
 - b. location of the pedestrian stop; and
 - c. provide information on the pedestrian (i.e., name, date of birth, state identification numbers),

2. Upon stopping a pedestrian, an officer shall give clear verbal directions and commands to the pedestrian; back-up officers should act as a support officer and should refrain from or give minimal directions or commands.
3. Officers are forbidden from using language, or displaying symbols and gestures that are commonly viewed as offensive to, or are indicative of bias towards any group.
4. All persons stopped by an officer shall be provided with an explanation for why they were stopped, unless disclosure of such information would undermine an investigation or jeopardize the officer's safety. If the officer determines that his or her initial reasonable suspicion did not permit a rise to further police interaction, the officer will apologize for inconveniencing the individual who was stopped.
 - a. Providing citizens with an explanation for why they were stopped fosters better relations with the community and reduces the perception of bias on the part of the police.
 - b. Nothing in this directive shall limit the officer's ability to interview witnesses or discourage routine conversations with citizens not suspected of an offense.
5. Upon conclusion of a pedestrian investigation, the officer shall immediately notify PennComm of the disposition of the incident and the status of the officer. (i.e., cleared, cited, released, taken into custody; back in service, out of service for paperwork)

I. PennComm Center Responsibilities

1. ALL vehicle stops will require an additional backup officer. The PennComm Center dispatcher will immediately assign a backup officer to all vehicle stops in accordance with Directive 8, "Responsibility and Functions of the PennComm Center."
2. The PennComm Center Police Supervisor shall initiate all requested NCIC/CLEAN/PCIC checks (i.e., vehicle registration, VIN, wanted persons checks, etc.) via the CLEAN and PCIC terminals.

J. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

K. Officers Assigned to Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

L. Application

This directive constitutes departmental policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.