	<p style="text-align: center;">Winchester City Sheriff's Office Manual of General Orders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Operations 309</p>	Effective Date: May 1, 2014
		Accreditation Standards: OPR .07.08 OPR .07.09 OPR .07.11
		Original Policy: May 1, 2014 Last Review Date: May 1, 2020 Next Review Date: May 1, 2023
		By Authority of: <hr/> Les R Taylor, Sheriff
Subject: Traffic Control		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures for the provision of traffic direction and control, traffic engineering, and ancillary traffic services.

II. POLICY

The Winchester City Sheriff's Office performs traffic functions such as manual traffic directing, providing motorist information/assistance, identifying and reporting traffic/roadway hazards, checking on disabled vehicles, and providing traffic safety information and recommendations. The general public relies upon the Sheriff's Office for assistance and advice when they are faced with routine and emergency traffic situations. The Sheriff's Office regularly responds to traffic-related incidents where unlawful activity is not involved. Traffic control and services functions aim to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians in Winchester City.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Manual Traffic Control

Based on all recent traffic studies, there are no current requirements in Winchester City for a permanently assigned, manually controlled traffic control point.

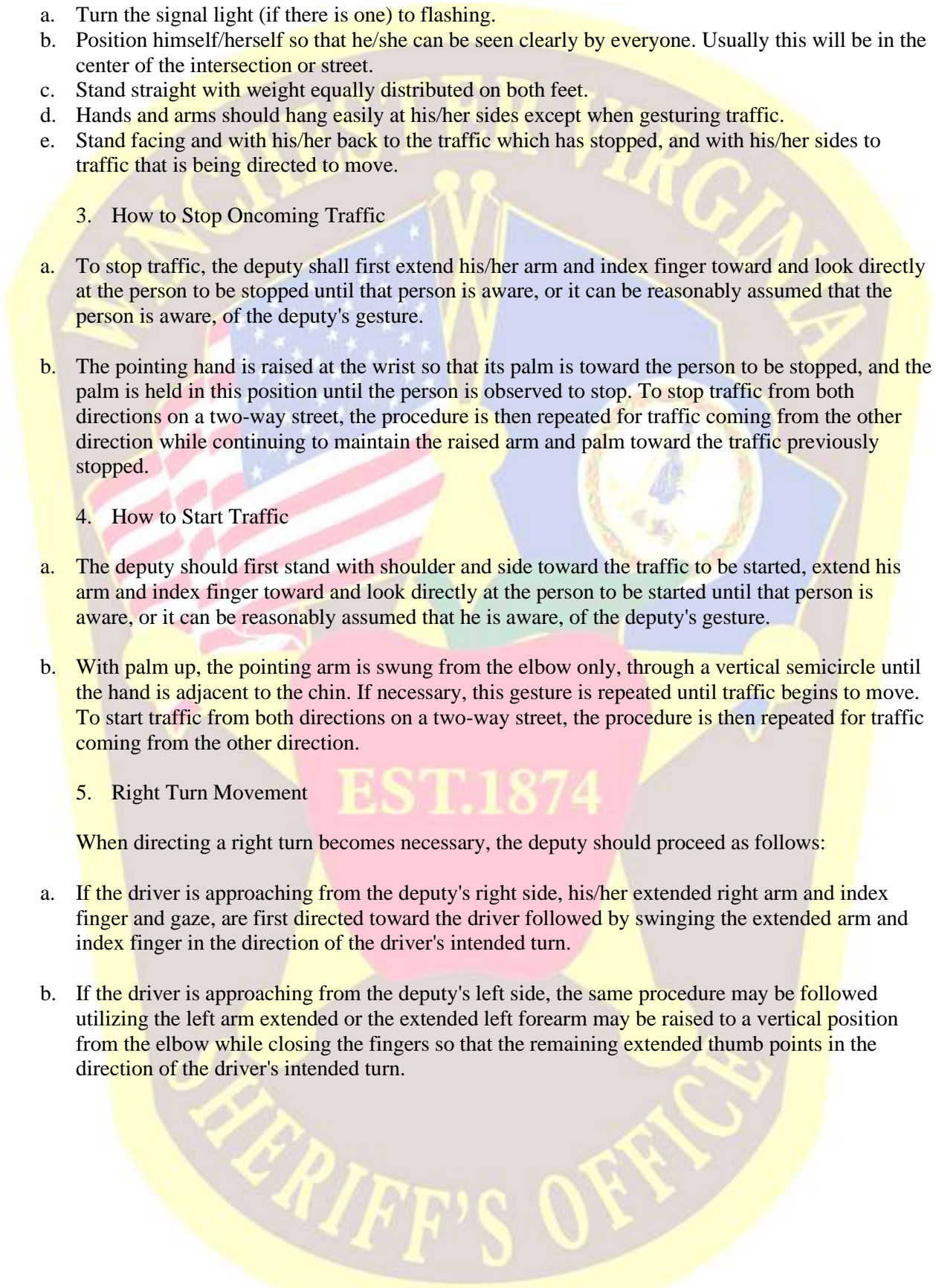
However, there may be traffic points manually controlled at specified areas during specified times. The Sheriff or his designee will approve these control points.

Specific criteria (for example, accident scenes, traffic obstructions, special events, when signal devices are malfunctioning, heavy traffic volume) may require temporary manual traffic control.

Any supervisor, on receiving information that a hazardous situation has developed, will direct the establishment of a manual traffic control point, if needed. Normally, contractors or public works crews will be required to provide manual traffic control at road construction sites, etc. For special events the Sheriff or his designee will issue, as needed, directed patrol assignments stating when and where manual control of intersection traffic will be required. Manual control shall not be used when an existing automatic control device will alleviate the problem.

B. Methods of Manual Direction of Traffic

1. When a deputy is directing traffic, it is necessary that the people using the highway know he/she is there for that purpose and the deputy knows and utilizes standardized, appropriate gestures and audible signals to stop, start, and turn traffic.
2. To indicate that the deputy is present for the purpose of directing traffic, he/she should:

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- a. Turn the signal light (if there is one) to flashing.
 - b. Position himself/herself so that he/she can be seen clearly by everyone. Usually this will be in the center of the intersection or street.
 - c. Stand straight with weight equally distributed on both feet.
 - d. Hands and arms should hang easily at his/her sides except when gesturing traffic.
 - e. Stand facing and with his/her back to the traffic which has stopped, and with his/her sides to traffic that is being directed to move.

3. How to Stop Oncoming Traffic

- a. To stop traffic, the deputy shall first extend his/her arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be stopped until that person is aware, or it can be reasonably assumed that the person is aware, of the deputy's gesture.
- b. The pointing hand is raised at the wrist so that its palm is toward the person to be stopped, and the palm is held in this position until the person is observed to stop. 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.

4. How to Start Traffic

- a. The deputy should first stand with shoulder and side toward the traffic to be started, extend his arm and index finger toward and look directly at the person to be started until that person is aware, or it can be reasonably assumed that he is aware, of the deputy's gesture.
- b. With palm up, the pointing arm is swung from the elbow only, through a vertical semicircle 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.

5. Right Turn Movement

When directing a right turn becomes necessary, the deputy should proceed as follows:

- a. If the driver is approaching from the deputy's right side, his/her extended right arm and index finger and gaze, are first directed toward the driver followed by swinging the extended arm and index finger in the direction of the driver's intended turn.
- b. If the driver is approaching from the deputy's left side, the same procedure may be followed utilizing the left arm extended or the extended left forearm may be raised to a vertical position from the elbow while closing the fingers so that the remaining extended thumb points in the direction of the driver's intended turn.

6. Left Turn Movements

- a. Left turning drivers should not be directed to affect their turn while the deputy is also directing oncoming traffic to proceed. The deputy should direct opposing vehicles to proceed, and only allow left turns when there is a natural gap in the oncoming traffic, or in very heavy traffic, stop and hold oncoming vehicles, and allow lefts turns only when the oncoming traffic is stopped. The deputy's right side and arm should be toward the oncoming traffic, and the left side and arm should be toward the left turning driver. After stopping oncoming traffic by using the right arm and hand, the right hand should remain in the halt position, then the extended left arm and index finger and deputy's gaze is directed toward the driver who intends to effect a left turn. When the left turning driver's attention has been gained, the extended left arm and index finger are swung to point the direction the driver intends to go.

C. Signaling Aids

1. A whistle may be used to get the attention of drivers and pedestrians. It is used as follows:
 - a. One long blast with a whistle is a STOP signal
 - b. Two short blasts with a whistle is a GO signal
 - c. Several short blasts are used to get the attention of a driver or pedestrian who does not respond to a given signal
 - d. The whistle should be used judiciously. It should not be used to indicate frustration, and the volume should be just sufficient to be heard by those who attention is required. Therefore, whistle blasts directed at pedestrians should be moderate in volume. The whistle should be used only to indicate stop, go, or to gain attention, and when its purpose had been achieved, the deputy should cease sounding the whistle. If the whistle is utilized continuously, it ceases to hold meaning for drivers and pedestrians.
2. The voice is seldom used in directing traffic. Arm gestures and the whistle are usually sufficient. There are numerous reasons why verbal commands are not used. Verbal orders are not easy to give or understand and often lead to misinterpretations, which are dangerous. An order, which is shouted, can antagonize the motorist. Occasionally a driver or pedestrian will not understand the deputy's directions. When this happens the deputy should move reasonably close to the person and politely and briefly explain his/her directions. A deputy shall not exhibit a loss of temper by shouting or otherwise indicate antagonism toward those who do not understand, or to those who do not instantly obey the deputy's directions.
3. Use of flashlight with an illuminated cone
 - a. To stop a driver with a flashlight with an illuminated cone, the deputy should face the oncoming traffic, hold the baton in the right hand, bend the right elbow, hold the baton vertical, then swing the baton from left to right through an arc of approximately 45 degrees.
 - b. The GO and TURN direction are the same gestures as those previously described except that the flashlight with an illuminated cone acts as an extension of the hand and index fingers. Signals and directions given with the aid of the baton should be exaggerated and often need to be repeated because of the poor visibility existing. The baton light should be turned off when it is not being actively utilized to give directions.

4. A flashlight without the cone can also be used to halt traffic. To stop traffic, slowly swing the beam of the light across the path of oncoming traffic. The beam from the flashlight strikes the pavement as an elongated spot of light. After the driver has stopped, arm signals may be given in the usual manner, the vehicle's headlight proving illumination.

D. Uniform/Equipment for Traffic Direction and Control

1. All Sheriff's Office patrol personnel are issued high visibility reflective safety vests. The vest shall be worn anytime a deputy performs traffic control duty.

E. Manual Operation of traffic control devices

1. On occasion deputies have to manually operate traffic control signal lights. Normally this is either to attempt to recycle a signal light, or to place the signal light in the flash pattern. Deputies shall manually control traffic control signal lights only in the following situations:

- a. When the traffic control signal light malfunctions;
- b. To facilitate traffic movement at traffic accidents or other emergencies;
- c. To provide a thoroughfare for a motorcade, funeral procession, etc.
- d. To alleviate congestion resulting from use of the automatic controls, during planned special events etc.

F. Temporary Traffic Control Devices

1. Temporary traffic control devices may be used for the control of traffic during special events or in the event a traffic control signal light malfunctions. Traffic control devices should be requested from the City of Winchester Public Works. The on duty supervisor and the oncoming shift will be notified of the traffic control situation so that it can be monitored.
2. If the traffic control signal light can be placed on four-way flash, this is preferred over using a temporary stop sign.

G. Parking Control

1. The Sheriff's Office normally does not provide parking control/traffic control within parking lots, unless the Sheriff approves it.

H. Special Event Traffic Control

1. For special events, the Sheriff or his designee will ensure the preparation/implementation of a special traffic plan which addresses; ingress and egress of vehicles and pedestrians; provisions for parking, spectator control; public transportation; assignment of point control duties and relief's; alternate traffic routing; temporary traffic controls and parking prohibitions; emergency vehicle access; and appropriate media coverage of such events.

I. Traffic Control at Fire Scenes

1. A deputy responding to the scene of a fire call will ensure observance of the following rules with regard to traffic control:
 - a. Only authorized vehicles, (Emergency vehicles), will be allowed to drive into the area where fire apparatus is parked and operating.

- b. No vehicles will be allowed to cross fire hoses without the approval of the Fire Chief or his designee.
- c. In cases of large fires, or fires at facilities, no personal vehicles, including those of volunteer firemen, will be allowed to enter the fire scene.
- d. Parked vehicles that interfere with fire operations may be towed as needed. However, it is recommended that an attempt be made to locate the owner of the vehicle so he/she may move it, time permitting.

J. Traffic Control during Adverse Road and Weather Conditions

- 1. Any deputy discovering any adverse road conditions that will affect vehicular traffic will contact ECC and advise them of the situation. VDOT's assistance will be requested to correct the situation. Local radio stations and Fire and Rescue should be notified of any adverse road conditions and road closures.
- 2. Any supervisor may close a street/road if, in his/her opinion, the surface conditions and terrain creates an unusually hazardous condition. The supervisor will notify VDOT and request their assistance.
- 3. Any supervisor may request dispatchers to notify the proper utility company and assign deputies to direct traffic and safeguard movement at the scene of all downed power lines, broken gas or water mains, or construction sites, when the situation unnecessarily endangers the safe movement of traffic through the area.

K. Traffic Engineering

- 1. The primary responsibility for traffic engineering rests with the City of Winchester Public Works. The Sheriff's Office may assist these agencies in the following manner:
 - a. Collecting and compiling selected traffic data;
 - b. Conducting special traffic surveys and studies;
 - c. Analyzing accident and enforcement data;
 - d. Preparing special reports and making recommendations concerning the efficient use of traffic control devices, new and revised laws or ordinances, and engineering improvements;
 - e. Participating in local and regional transportation system management planning.
- 2. All complaints received by the Sheriff's Office concerning engineering deficiencies will be forwarded to the City of Winchester Public Works, as appropriate, for evaluation and/or corrective action, and the complainant advised of action taken.
- 3. At the request of the City of Winchester Public Works, the Sheriff will have prepared accident collision and condition diagrams and/or other requested reports or information to provide a factual base for traffic safety/engineering decision. These reports may include:
 - a. All accident reports pertaining to the location requested;
 - b. Sketch of location (not to scale);
 - c. Sketch of intended movement of each vehicle, noting the severity by use of approved symbols;
 - d. Show all non-involved vehicles or pedestrians that contributed to the accident;
 - e. Note the date, time, and day of week of each accident;
 - f. Weather or pavement conditions;

- g. Lighting conditions;
- h. Number of injuries or fatalities;
- i. Note any unusual conditions.

L. Traffic Ancillary Services

1. Stranded or disabled motorists

- a. Deputies of the Sheriff's Office will provide reasonable assistance to stranded/disabled motorists. This may include requesting the dispatcher to call a wrecker or obtaining other services as may be needed. Time permitting, a deputy may assist stranded/disabled motorists with obtaining fuel/repairs, but deputies are not required to perform repairs personally.
- b. Sheriff's Office vehicles will not be used to push other vehicles.
- c. Deputies should be aware of possible dangers to motorists, who are stranded in isolated areas and hazardous locations on the highway, and should take steps to reduce these threats by transporting motorists to safer locations and/or setting out flares to warn other motorists.
- d. If the deputy must leave the scene prior to the arrival of requested assistance, he/she should request that another unit check by the area and provide assistance and/or protection.
- e. Deputies will be familiar with the area and be able to provide directions to various locations within the city.
- f. Under normal circumstances Sheriff's Office vehicles shall not be used to jump start non-government vehicles.
- g. Deputies may be dispatched to unlock vehicles in emergency situations, i.e. a child locked in a vehicle. The vehicle owner must assume responsibility for any damage done to the vehicle during the unlocking process.

2. Highway Emergencies: Deputies arriving upon the scene of any emergency shall notify the dispatcher to obtain necessary services and then provide emergency first aid, fire suppression, and obtain additional assistance as the situation may call for, pending arrival of appropriate emergency services.

3. Procedures for reporting hazards and debris

- a. Any deputy locating debris on the highway that may be hazardous shall remove it or request the ECC to notify the City of Winchester Public Works to have the debris removed from the highway. The deputy may have to remain at the scene to provide traffic control until the debris is removed from the highway;
- b. All highway defects will be reported to the ECC, who in turn will notify the City of Winchester Public Works as soon as the situation dictates;
- c. Requests or suggestions for additional or new highway safety features will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Sheriff or his designee who will forward the request to the appropriate department or agency, if the situation warrants. These requests will specify the services/actions requested and the location;

4. Traffic safety educational materials: The Sheriff's Office may distribute to motorists and potential motorists materials that will encourage their assistance and compliance with traffic rules and regulations. Such materials may be made available at the Sheriff's Office and at talks, speeches, or visits to schools, community groups, etc.
5. Deputies shall not provide an emergency escort to other emergency vehicles. Deputies may provide traffic control at intersections to expedite the movement of other emergency vehicles.
6. Emergency escorts for private vehicles are not recommended, but may be provided to private vehicles using the following guidelines:
 - a. The patient's life would be endangered in moving the patient from the private vehicle to an emergency vehicle;
 - b. The escorted vehicle will have its headlights and four-way flashers on and the Sheriff's Office vehicle will have all of its emergency equipment operating;
 - c. The deputy should drive at a reasonable speed understanding that the driver of the escorted vehicle may be less skillful and emotionally upset;
 - d. Notify the supervisor of the escort;
 - e. Notify ECC to contact the hospital emergency room so that they can be prepared for the patient upon arrival;
 - f. Obey all traffic signals, proceeding through the intersection only after it is safe for both vehicles to proceed.

7. Funeral Escorts

- a. The Sheriff or his designee shall approve all funeral procession escorts;
- b. Funeral homes are responsible for coordinating with other jurisdictions if the procession goes into another jurisdiction;
- c. Deputies shall have the authority to refuse to start an escort, which presents a hazard to the safety of either the deputy or the public. The deputy will notify the on duty supervisor of the situation, if the approve should occur.
- d. In the event the procession is larger than anticipated, the deputy may consider requesting additional assistance from the supervisor;
- e. Sheriff's Office vehicles escorting funeral processions shall have their emergency lights operating at all times. Marked vehicles should be used for funeral escorts;
- f. The siren should be used as appropriate to warn other drivers when the procession is proceeding through an intersection;
- g. All private vehicles participating in a funeral procession shall have their headlights illuminated.

NOTE: FLARES ARE TO BE USED AS STATIONARY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES ONLY