

# HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT

## POLICY LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

October 22, 2015

Policy Number 4.62

### TRAFFIC STOPS

#### POLICY

Departmental personnel shall use the procedures set forth in this policy when conducting traffic stops to ensure the safety of the officer, the violator, other occupants, and the general public.

#### PROCEDURE

While making traffic stops, officers shall take necessary precautions to ensure their own safety as well as that of other motorists and the general public while at the same time performing this task in a professional manner.

#### I. DEFINITIONS

High-risk motor vehicle stop: A traffic stop when an officer has a reasonable belief that a motor vehicle contains an operator or passenger who is suspected of having committed a felony.

Motor vehicle stop: A traffic stop based on an objectively reasonable suspicion by the officer that the individual violated a statute or ordinance.

#### II. GENERAL PROCEDURES

##### A. Prestop Conditions for Traffic Stops

All traffic stops have unknown risks, and the potential for violent encounters with motor vehicle occupant(s) may occur. Officer safety should be considered at all times.

1. In preparing to stop a violator, the officer should consider the existing conditions, including (but not limited to) the roadway design and conditions, weather, lighting, and the traffic flow in order to minimize the hazards of the traffic stop.
2. To initiate the traffic stop, the officer shall use the police vehicle's flashing blue light and siren and other necessary equipment to effect the traffic stop.
3. Upon stopping, the police vehicle should be positioned in a way to afford maximum protection to the officer and the violator's vehicle during the stop.
4. In most instances, the operator should be directed to move their motor vehicle to the far right side of the roadway (i.e., utilizing turn signals, arm signals, or the public address system). However, officers should be prepared to handle an operator who stops elsewhere, possibly creating a hazard.
5. Upon initiating the traffic stop, officers shall use their police radio to notify dispatch and provide them with their location and the vehicle's license plate number. When practicable, a description of the vehicle and the number of occupants should be given.


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B. Approach and Contact for Traffic Stops

1. When approaching the motor vehicle, officers should approach with caution and position themselves in a safe location to communicate effectively with the operator and still view any other occupants in the motor vehicle. This could include the passenger's side of the vehicle.

Officers should be aware that any traffic stop may escalate into a high-risk traffic stop at any time.

2. Officers shall take reasonable measures to avoid placing themselves in the path or potential path of a motor vehicle.

3. In instances where the occupants exit a motor vehicle, the officer should request for the occupants to remain in the vehicle for safety reasons. The officer should also be prepared to take the necessary precautions should the occupant(s) fail to respond to repeated orders.
4. 
5. In greeting the violator, officers should present a professional image and treat the individual with respect and courtesy. This should include giving a greeting; identifying themselves by rank and name; providing the reason for the stop; and requesting the individual's driver's license, motor vehicle's registration, proof of insurance, and any other documents (if applicable).
6. Officers should not accept any wallet containing a driver's license. The officer should have the individual remove their driver's license from the wallet.
7. During the course of the traffic stop, officers should remain cognizant that criminal activity unrelated to the traffic stop may be present. As a result, this may warrant additional law enforcement actions (e.g., arrest).
8. If the violator is asked to exit the motor vehicle for further investigation, the individual should be directed to a safe location off to the side of the roadway and away from possible hazards.

C. High-Risk Traffic Stops

1. Officers should take additional precautions to update other officers of the situation via radio and take tactical measures to ensure the officers' and the public's safety.

2. The officer should create a safe distance between his or her police vehicle and the violator's vehicle. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The position should also provide other motorists a visual warning of the stop location.
3. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
4. The patrol supervisor should respond to the scene of a high-risk traffic stop.
5. Officers should follow high-risk tactics associated with vehicle stops by properly positioning their vehicles to maximize safe cover and give other motorists visual warnings of the stop location.
6. One officer shall be established as the contact officer. The contact officer should utilize the public address system, if available, to instruct the occupant(s) of the vehicle to follow verbal commands.
7. The operator of the vehicle should be ordered to turn off the engine [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
8. The occupants of the vehicle should be ordered to exit the vehicle one at a time. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
9. As occupants are ordered to exit the motor vehicle, they should be ordered to raise their arms and turn around slowly [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
10. The contact officer may have the occupants [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

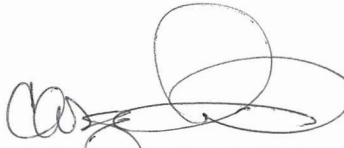
11. If neither technique is appropriate for the situation, officers should utilize techniques to minimize risks to the officers and occupants.
12. [REDACTED]

D. Enforcement Action

If a citation is issued, the officer should be aware of the flow of roadway traffic and the actions of the violator while completing the citation.

E. Issuance of Citation and Conclusion of Contact

1. The officer should approach the motor vehicle and be cognizant of the flow of roadway traffic and the occupants in the vehicle.
2. The officer should explain the reason(s) for giving the citation(s) to the violator and answer any questions the individual might have.
3. When the citation is completed, officers should allow the violator's vehicle safe reentry into the roadway. Once contact with the motor vehicle is concluded, officers may turn off their emergency equipment.

  
LOUIS M. KEALOHA  
Chief of Police

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Policy first issued  
as Procedure 9.16  
on June 19, 2012