

Traffic Function and Responsibility

500.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The ultimate goal of traffic law enforcement is to reduce traffic collisions. This may be achieved through, education programs, coordinating with traffic engineers, and the application of such techniques as geographic/temporal assignment of personnel and equipment and the establishment of preventive patrols to deal with specific categories of unlawful driving behavior. Traffic enforcement techniques are based on collision data, enforcement activity records, traffic volume and traffic conditions. This Department provides enforcement efforts toward violations, not only in proportion to the frequency of their occurrence in collision situations, but also in terms of traffic-related needs.

500.2 TRAFFIC OFFICER DEPLOYMENT

Several factors are considered in the development of deployment schedules for officers of the Vancouver Police Department. Information provided by the Electronic Traffic Information Processing (eTRIP and SECTOR) data retrieval system is a valuable resource for traffic collision occurrences and officer deployment. Some of the factors for analysis include:

- Location
- Time
- Day
- Violation factors

All officers assigned to patrol or traffic enforcement functions will emphasize enforcement of collision causing violations during high collision hours and at locations of occurrence. All officers will take directed enforcement action on request of a supervisor, and random enforcement action when appropriate against violators as a matter of routine. All officers shall maintain high visibility while working general enforcement, especially at high collision locations.

Other factors to be considered for deployment are citizen requests, construction zones or special events.

500.3 ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement actions are commensurate with applicable laws and take into account the degree and severity of the violation committed. This Department does not establish ticket quotas and the number of arrests or citations issued by any officer shall not be used as the sole criterion for evaluating officer overall performance. The visibility and quality of an officer's work effort will be commensurate with the philosophy of this policy. Several methods are effective in the reduction of collisions.

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500.3.1 WARNINGS

Warnings or other non-punitive enforcement actions should be considered in each situation and substituted for arrests or citations when circumstances warrant, especially in the case of inadvertent violations.

500.3.2 CITATIONS

Citations may be issued when an officer believes it is appropriate. It is essential that officers fully explain the rights and requirements imposed on motorists upon issuance of a citation for a traffic violation. Officers should provide the following information at a minimum:

- a. Explanation of the violation or charge.
- b. Read directly from the citation the three options on how to address a notice of infraction and the 15 days to respond to the citation.
- c. Provide a court date and time for the offender to appear on criminal traffic citations.

500.3.3 ARRESTS FOR TRAFFIC OFFENSES

Officers may issue a traffic citation for any criminal traffic offense or infraction when such violations are committed in an officer's presence or as allowed pursuant to RCW 10.31.100. With limited exceptions, the detention in such cases may not be for a period of time longer than is reasonably necessary to issue and serve a citation for the violator.

A traffic-related detention may expand to a physical arrest under the following circumstances:

- (a) When the officer has probable cause to believe that a felony has been committed, whether or not it was in the officer's presence.
- (b) When the offense is one or more criminal traffic violations listed in RCW 10.31.100
- (c) When a driver has been detained for a traffic offense listed in RCW 46.63.020 and fails to provide adequate identification or when the officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person to be cited will not respond to a written citation. It will be the officer's discretion to make a custodial arrest.

500.4 SUSPENDED OR REVOKED DRIVERS LICENSES

If an officer contacts a traffic violator who is also driving on a suspended or revoked license, the officer should issue a traffic citation or make an arrest as appropriate.

500.4.1 SUSPENDED, REVOKED OR CANCELED LICENSE PLATES

If an officer contacts a traffic violator who is operating any vehicle that a computer check confirms to be revoked, suspended or canceled, the officer shall confiscate the license plates. The Department may either recycle or destroy the plates (RCW 46.32.100).

500.5 HIGH-VISIBILITY VESTS

The Department has provided American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Class II high-visibility vests to increase the visibility of Department members who may be exposed to hazards

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presented by passing traffic, maneuvering or operating vehicles, machinery and equipment (23 CFR 655.601).

Although intended primarily for use while performing traffic related assignments, high-visibility vests should be worn at all times when increased visibility would improve the safety or efficiency of the member and when at a collision scene or directing traffic.

500.5.1 REQUIRED USE

Except when working in a potentially adversarial or confrontational role, such as during vehicle stops, high-visibility vests should be worn at any time it is anticipated that an employee will be exposed to the hazards of approaching traffic or construction and recovery equipment. Examples of when high-visibility vests should be worn include traffic control duties, collision investigations, lane closures and while at disaster scenes, or anytime high visibility is desirable. When emergency conditions preclude the immediate donning of the vest, officers should retrieve and wear the vest as soon as conditions reasonably permit. Use of the vests shall also be mandatory when directed by a supervisor.

500.5.2 CARE AND STORAGE OF HIGH-VISIBILITY VESTS

High-visibility vests shall be issued to every Department member and kept with them in their vehicle while on-duty. Each vest should be stored inside the resealable plastic bag provided to protect and maintain the vest in a serviceable condition. Before going into service each employee shall ensure a serviceable high-visibility vest is properly stored.

A supply of high-visibility vests will be maintained in Logistics for replacement or issuance.

500.6 HAZARDOUS ROAD CONDITIONS

The Vancouver Police Department will make all reasonable efforts to address all reported hazardous road conditions in a timely manner to dispatch or City Operations as circumstances and resources permit.

500.7 SCHOOL BUS SAFETY CAMERAS

Any school district with buses properly equipped with cameras that capture stop-arm violations may report such violations to the Vancouver Police Department whenever they occur within the Department's jurisdiction.

The Traffic Sergeant should establish a report form and procedure for school districts to report school bus stop-arm violations (RCW 46.63.180).

500.7.1 NOTIFICATION OF INFRACTION

The Traffic Sergeant or the authorized designee should initiate an investigation of the reported violation after receiving a stop-arm violation report from a school district.

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Issuance of a citation shall conform to state requirements (RCW 46.63.180). The notice of infraction or warning letter shall be mailed to the registered owner or renter, if applicable, of the vehicle within 14 days of the violation.