

Hamden Police Department General Orders

Policy Number: 012-005

Effective Date: TBD

Section: General Operating

Rescinds: None

Procedures

Approved By: Hamden Police Commission

Title: Crossing Guards

Approval Date: TBD

PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to set forth the policies and procedures of the Hamden Police Department's School Crossing Guards.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Hamden Police Department to ensure that the Town of Hamden's school attending children are afforded safe crossings at designated locations while traveling to and from school. It is imperative that crossing guards, at approved locations, properly and regularly fulfill their duties and that they remain on their assignments until scheduled completion times. This allows police officers to perform other law enforcement duties during school crossing times.

School crossing guards are hired by the Hamden Police Department in conjunction with the Town of Hamden and have stipulated agreements governed by their contract.

Employment requirements for a crossing guard position will include a background investigation conducted by the Hamden Police Department in addition to Town of Hamden requirements.

School crossing guards are not sworn officers but are afforded certain authorities under CT law, CGS 14-300f. A crossing guards authority and responsibility is limited to crossing guard duties as outlined herein and does not extend to enforcement and / or regulatory action.

School crossing guards are authorized to stop traffic and subsequently allow pedestrians to cross the street. School crossing guards are expected to utilize good judgement as it relates to stopping and starting traffic to effect smooth flow when possible.

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PROCEDURES

A. Supervision

1. Crossing Guards will be supervised by a supervisor in the Police Department's Traffic Division.
2. In the event a crossing guard is unavailable for their daily post(s), a Traffic Division supervisor will arrange for a Spare Crossing Guard to cover the post(s). If unavailable, a patrol supervisor will arrange coverage. Said supervisors will check the department's scheduling application prior to the start of school each day for crossing guard vacancies.
3. Police Officers when available will be required to cover school crossings at approved locations when crossing guards are unavailable.
4. A Traffic Division supervisor will periodically inspect crossing guards and spares to ensure compliance with applicable directives, guidelines and document finds as applicable. They should subsequently and proactively address any conditions or deficiencies.

B. Duties and Responsibilities

1. This position requires serious commitment to be at the assigned post for school hours as designated.
2. A crossing guard shall observe vehicle and pedestrian traffic, work effectively with children and assist pedestrians by recognizing natural gaps in motor vehicle traffic patterns thereby utilizing them when stopping vehicular traffic. This comes with the ability to recognize and communicate potentially dangerous traffic situations and hazards. As such crossing guards will have to work in all weather conditions including rain, snow, fog, sleet, heat, cold, humid and windy conditions.
3. Crossing guards shall maintain a neat and clean appearance while on duty and wear HPD approved clothing appropriate for weather conditions.
4. Crossing guards will enter time off including a sick day request into the police department's scheduling application and follow up with a phone call to the police department's Traffic Supervisor and / or the main desk notifying a supervisor of their day(s) off requests.

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C. Equipment

1. Each full time and spare crossing guard upon new employment will be issued a handheld stop sign / paddle, an ANSI approved reflective vest and a reflective rain coat.
2. In addition, a uniform allowance per their contract allows for the purchase of additional approved crossing guard clothing and items from the police department's uniform vendor.
3. The Hamden Police Department Training Officer will coordinate with crossing guards and the department's uniform vendor regarding the annual clothing allowance and the purchasing of items as applicable.
4. Only HPD issued and / or approved equipment will be worn by crossing guards and spares while on duty. The Chief of Police or designee will approve uniforms and equipment. Uniforms, markings, patches, badges and lettering will be clearly distinguishable from those of sworn police officers.

D. Work Hours

1. Crossing guard posts will consist of a morning post and an afternoon post each school day, Monday through Friday, as applicable. Contractual obligations will be followed regarding scheduling and holidays, etc.
2. The morning post will be a one (1) hour post with hours ranging between 6am and 9am as applicable depending on the post's requirements.
3. The afternoon post will be a one (1) hour post with hours ranging between 1:30pm and 4:30pm as applicable depending on the post's requirements.
4. The listed hours shall be the maximum hours crossing guards work unless their contract and / or special circumstances / orders specify otherwise.

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E. Conduct

1. Crossing guards and spares will conduct themselves at all times in a professional and courteous manner. They represent the Town of Hamden and the Hamden Police Department and shall not engage in unbecoming conduct.
2. While on duty, crossing guards shall not:
 - a. Smoke (including tobacco and vaping products)
 - b. Eat breakfast or lunch during their one hour post
 - c. Be impaired in any way that may affect their ability to perform their duties (i.e. alcoholic beverages, drugs, medication, etc.)
 - d. Be late for their assigned post
 - e. Disobey laws
3. The main goal is the safety and welfare of children at the crossing location and the crossing guards main focus and attention should be concentrated on that goal.
4. Children should be instructed in the safest way to cross the street and should walk, not run, in an orderly manner while crossing.
5. When stopping vehicular traffic, make signals and gestures that are distinct, decisive and understandable to all. If the crossing location has a traffic signal, synchronize crossing guard movements with signal phasing and it is suggested to use the crosswalk and it's signal if available.
6. The handheld stop sign will be held in an upright, high position anytime the crossing guard is in the roadway, including while in crosswalks.
7. Crossing guards must be reputable citizens; violations of this policy and / or the law may result in discipline and / or termination as applicable. Crossing guards and spares may be subject to annual job performance evaluation as determined by the Chief of Police.
8. Personal vehicles shall be legally parked. While performing their duties and crossing pedestrians, guards will refrain from sitting in their vehicles, talking on a phone, texting, reading books and other such distractions.

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E. Crossing Guard and Spare Crossing Guard Selection

1. As stated, crossing guards shall be reputable citizens and must be at least 18 years of age. Prior to employment, the Hamden Police Department will conduct a background investigation that shall include a CT State Police criminal history record check (SPRC), an interstate criminal history record check (III) and an identity verification including confirmation that the applicant has at least graduated from a recognized high school or GED equivalent. The background investigation may include further requirements as dictated by the Chief of Police and their contract.
2. Crossing guards need to be able to fulfill the physical requirements necessitated by their job description such as crossing pedestrians in the roadway, holding signs, motioning to traffic and communicating with the pedestrians they cross.
3. Locations chosen for crossing guards will be determined by various factors, some may be the proximity to a school with student foot traffic, the amount of vehicular traffic at the various locations, the number of motor vehicle crashes at those locations, etc. The Town of Hamden in conjunction with the Board of Education and Hamden Police Department will help to determine locations based on analysis of available data and if applicable, a study into such factors. Said factors and current locations should be contemplated on an annual basis.

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F. Training

1. All crossing guards and spares shall be CPR certified. The Hamden Police Training Officer will be responsible for arranging CPR training for crossing guards.
2. The Hamden Police Department Training Officer will coordinate with the Traffic Division supervisor in arranging annual crossing guard training every August prior to the start of the school year. All crossing guards and spares must attend training every year in accordance with their contract. New crossing guards and spares shall receive said training in August or if employment occurs after the school year starts, upon employment and prior to taking any post. Said training should consist of classroom training as well as field training.
3. The Hamden Police Traffic Division will be responsible for conducting the applicable traffic training. Training will also consist of a review of this policy.
4. The training that crossing guards and spare crossing guards receive shall be recorded and filed by the HPD Training Officer and housed in the Training Division.
5. Its important that crossing guards understand the principles behind the use of traffic control devices such as stop signs, signalization, street markings, etc. Crossing guards should not be expected to become experts on signal timing or traffic engineering however their understanding of how these aids are used will enable them to recognize patterns and irregularities in the devices that could result in poor conditions for crossing students.
6. As such, inclement or extreme weather conditions have a direct effect on safe crossing. Vehicle traction, stopping distance and motorists' ability to see are adversely affected by bad weather. In these situations, increased alertness and caution are necessary. Crossing guards cannot use umbrellas or other devices that would impede their ability to use their hands, impede hearing or impede vision. They must focus on a safe environment for crossing pedestrians.