

COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Subject: USE OF ROADCHECKS / ROADBLOCKS

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I. Purpose

To establish procedures governing the use and implementation of road checks, fixed and moving roadblocks and forcible stopping.

II. Statement of Policy

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department that the authority to establish or cancel a roadblock shall rest with a supervisor. All road checks used as traffic checkpoints must have a supervisory officer present.

III. Road Check Deployment

- A. Fixed roadblock - traffic checkpoint: Supervisor who wishes to establish a traffic checkpoint shall submit a memorandum to the Chief of Police stating the location(s), date(s) and time(s) of the traffic check. This memorandum must be submitted at least one day before establishing the traffic check.
- B. A fixed roadblock may be set up only in locations where visibility is clear and where it is possible to maintain an orderly flow of traffic without causing undue congestion.
- C. A minimum of three officers and one supervisor is required at all traffic checks.
- D. Two officers will stop the traffic flow from both directions and check license, insurance and for D.U.I. violations. Violators will be directed off the roadway and will be issued citations or warnings. Where a physical arrest is made, one officer shall transport the person to the proper facility.
- E. Two (2) police vehicles shall have blue lights on to warn oncoming traffic.

IV. Roadblocks and Forcible Stopping

- A. **Fixed Roadblock/Fleeing Felons:** Roadblocks may be set up by the patrol supervisor in an effort to apprehend a fleeing felon. If there is probable cause to believe that a felon is trying to escape from a particular area a roadblock may be set up and a check of vehicle occupants may be made.

Only two officers are necessary at a roadblock of this kind. Officers shall not issue any citations for violations of traffic law except D.U.I. during a road check for a fleeing felon.

- B. **Fixed Roadblock/Pursuit:** Under no circumstances will a fixed roadblock be utilized to stop a vehicle that is being pursued by a police officer where all charges are misdemeanors. A fixed roadblock may be utilized upon the direction of the patrol supervisor only as a last resort in felony cases. Roadblocks of this type must offer an alternative path of travel around the blockade. No roadblock will be erected unless the road and weather conditions allow visibility in both directions for a minimum of 500 ft. This type of roadblock will not be employed when it is apparent that innocent persons will be endangered.

Once a roadblock has been established, the dispatcher shall notify on all frequencies the location of the roadblock to the pursuing police vehicles and shall ensure acknowledgement.

Officers will not remain in any police vehicle that is used to block off the roadway

- C. **Moving Roadblock:** Under certain circumstances, the use of rolling roadblocks is effective and the chance of injury and vehicle damage is greatly reduced. A moving roadblock should be considered before resorting to a stationary roadblock.

1. Training on forcible stopping and the use of roadblocks will be conducted periodically through roll call training.

V. **Methods of Deployment**

- A. **Creating slow moving traffic:** Reducing the movement of the wanted vehicle may be accomplished by slowing the normal flow of traffic. This is accomplished by patrol units not involved in the pursuit entering the roadway sufficiently ahead of the violator. By slowing the flow of normal traffic, the violator and the pursuit vehicle are forced to reduce their speed.
- B. **Blocking:** In pursuit at moderate speeds, blocking may be accomplished by positioning a patrol vehicle in front of the violator and another patrol vehicle beside the violator. (Other vehicles may be authorized as necessary by the watch commander). Speed should be reduced gradually until the violator is stopped. Every effort should be made to maximize officer safety and avoid actual contact with the violator's vehicle.

VI. Administrative Review of Incidents

Incidents involving the use of a roadblock or forcible stopping will require a written report to be generated by the officer(s) involved, approved by the supervisor. In addition, an Administrative Review team designated by the Chief of Police will conduct an administrative review of each incident to determine if proper procedures were followed.

This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

Philip Bradford

Philip Bradford
Chief of Police