

FAYETTEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS 72701

GENERAL ORDER # 26

SUBJECT: Traffic Stops

CROSS-REFERENCE: 61.1 Traffic Enforcement, CALEA 61.1.7

DATE APPROVED BY COP: November 10, 2020


Chief Mike Reynolds

PURPOSE: The purpose of this general order is to provide officers with direction in conducting traffic stops.

I. Procedure

A. Traffic Law Violators

1. While on routine patrol, officers should be alert to their surroundings while monitoring traffic violations:
 - a. Officers in the performance of their duties are provided discretion with their overall traffic enforcement.
 - b. Officers assigned to patrol should use sound judgment and appropriate discretion when encountering traffic violations.
 - c. A violator witnessed engaging in behavior that is dangerous to the immediate safety and welfare of the public should be stopped by that officer unless the officer is assigned to a call of greater priority.
2. Prior to making a motorist stop, officers shall have reasonable suspicion or probable cause.

B. Traffic Stops (Unknown Risk) [CALEA 61.1.7 a.]

1. Officers of the Fayetteville Police Department shall follow the below listed procedures for motorist stops:
 - a. Officers must consider a number of issues concerning the location for making a vehicle stop for a traffic violation. Officers may delay a stop until such time a more suitable location is found. Officers should consider the following when making a stop:
 - (1) Traffic congestion;
 - (2) The availability of a backup officer;
 - (3) The roadway configuration to include hills, curves, width, shoulder size, and any other circumstances that may prove to be a benefit or hazard when conducting the

- stop.
- b. The following information should be radioed to Central Dispatch Center during a traffic stop:
 - (1) Location;
 - (2) License plate information including state;
 - (3) Description of vehicle;
 - (4) Occupancy;
 - (5) Any other pertinent information.
 - c. Officers should use the police vehicle's emergency lights, and if necessary, the vehicle's horn and or siren to alert the driver to stop.
 - d. Officers should position their vehicle behind and in relation to the violator's vehicle in such a manner that affords the greatest amount of safety for the officer and the violator.
 - e. Officers conducting traffic stops should not rush their approach to contact the violator. Prior to approaching the violator's vehicle, the following precautions should be taken:
 - (1) Watch for furtive or sudden movements within the violator's vehicle;
 - (2) Watch for objects being thrown from the violator's vehicle;
 - (3) Be alert to surrounding traffic;
 - (4) Update Central Dispatch Center personnel with any additional information.
 - f. Officers shall develop safe habits for approach to violator vehicles. The following recommendations should be considered:
 - (1) When officers exit their patrol vehicle, they should keep their primary vision on the violator vehicle and use peripheral vision and hearing to monitor traffic and surroundings.
 - (2) Officers should keep their portable radio on when outside their patrol vehicle.
 - (3) Officers should not carry items in their gun hand when it can be prevented.
 - (4) Upon approach of the violator vehicle, officers should observe the rear section of the violator vehicle, being alert to unsecured trunks and the rear passenger area.
 - (5) Officers should avoid going beyond the rear edge of the driver's door.
 - (6) Officers may use their discretion when deciding the safest approach to the violator vehicle. A passenger side approach is recommended for stops on roadways with a high volume of traffic and where traffic is moving at a high rate of speed.
 - g. When reaching the violator, the following steps shall be employed by officers:
 - (1) The officer will greet the violator, identify themselves, and their employing agency;
 - (2) State the reason(s) for the stop;
 - (3) Identify the driver by requesting identification. Request documentation for the vehicle. Check the condition of the driver and vehicle;
 - (4) Determine course of action (arrest, citation, or warning); if no physical arrest, provide documentation to the violator in the form of a citation, warning, or contact card;
 - (5) Provide appropriate information to the violator;
 - (6) Terminate the stop.

C. High Risk Stops [CALEA 61.1.7 b.]

- 1. Traffic stops can become high-risk stops for a variety of reasons.

- a. An impaired driver or vehicle occupants wanted for the commission of a crime may impose an elevated safety threat to the officer:
 - (1) Officers should position the police vehicle farther back than unknown risk traffic stops;
 - (2) Officers should watch for signs that may predict sudden movements of the violator's vehicle;
 - (3) Officers may wish to use the police vehicle's public address (PA) system in an attempt to direct the actions of the violator and occupants. The officer may request or direct:
 - (a) The violator to turn off the engine;
 - (b) The vehicle's occupants to place their hands in view of the officers.
 - (c) The occupants out of the vehicle.
 - (4) Officers may request a backup prior to approaching the violator vehicle.
- b. Officers who have reason to believe a suspect is armed, has committed a violent felony, or possesses a significant threat to the officer shall conduct a felony vehicle stop:
 - (1) The officer shall provide Central Dispatch Center with the direction of travel, suspect and vehicle description, as well as any other pertinent information;
 - (2) When possible, suspects should not be stopped until a backup unit has arrived. If suspects stop prior to the arrival of a backup, all suspects will be held in the vehicle until a backup arrives;
 - (3) Officers should direct the suspect to turn the engine off and throw the keys out the window. Occupants should be ordered out of the vehicle one at a time. Each suspect should be ordered to walk backwards to the handcuffing officer, or the officer may choose to direct the suspects to the ground. If the latter method is used, the suspect vehicle should be visually cleared prior to approaching the suspects for handcuffing.