



Duties of School Crossing Guards

Frequently Asked Question

October 2010

Under 40A:9-154.1 Adult School Crossing Guards are under the supervision of the Chief of Police or chief law enforcement officer of the municipality. It is incumbent for the Police Department to develop and enforce written policies for the selection, training, operations, and conduct of School Crossing Guards. Your Safety Consultant can provide a sample policy and procedure manual.

In January 2010, New Jersey adopted the 2009 edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Part 7 covers Traffic Control for School Areas. Section 7D provides the relevant standards for Crossing Guards. Some of procedures set forth by the MUTCD Sect. 7D.04 and 7D.05 are:

- Law enforcement officers performing the supervision (and duties of the Crossing Guard) and School Crossing Guards shall wear ANSI 107-2004 Class 2 (or higher) high visibility safety apparel.
 - *Municipalities should consider the five-point breakaway vests as an additional measure of safety. These vests would rip from the guard if caught on a passing vehicle, such as rear-view mirror.*
- Adult crossing guards shall not direct traffic in the usual law enforcement sense. They shall pick gaps in the traffic flow and shall stand in the roadway to indicate pedestrians are about to cross.
- Crossing guards **shall** use a STOP paddle.
 - *Towns should consider additional tools such as whistles, high visibility hats or gloves.*

Section 7D.01 of the MUTCD references the *AAA School Safety Patrol Operations Manual* for the operation of a school safety patrol, which includes sections on Adult School Crossing Guards. In addition, the MEL and the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) published a Community Safety Leadership booklet on School Crossing Guards. Best practices from the two documents include:

- Guards should be on post well ahead of the first anticipated walking student. They shall visually inspect their post for hazards such as improper parking, poor sight lines, potholes, etc. Half of injuries to guards are caused by slips and trips. Be alert, especially around snow, rain, and puddles.
- Guards should stand approximately one step back from the curb.
- Guards should educate children and parents they are expected to remain behind the curb until given the verbal okay to cross.
- Guards should use natural breaks in traffic entering the street with the STOP paddle held at approximately shoulder height with their other hand also held at shoulder height with the palm facing oncoming traffic. Crossing guards are not permitted to over-ride traffic signals.
- Guards should gain eye contact with drivers. Drivers are often distracted. New Jersey has the most congested roads in the nation. Guards must be alert for drivers who are preoccupied.
- Guards should use hand signals to communicate with motorists and voice commands to children.

This bulletin is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization's policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, please contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.