

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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Safety Hazards and Aid to Citizens		



I. Policy Statements

A. Sworn personnel observing situations that reasonably could jeopardize the safety of citizens using the roadways shall take action to alleviate any danger. These conditions include missing or malfunctioning traffic control devices, downed electrical lines, and motorists requiring assistance.

B. Safety Hazards

1. Sworn personnel encountering or advised of a hazard potentially jeopardizing the safety of motorists or pedestrians and requiring immediate attention shall contact Communications **personnel** to request immediate action and should remain with the hazard until it is corrected, repaired, otherwise made safe, or relieved by a police supervisor or other responsible agency.

Note: Non-uniformed sworn personnel shall notify Communications personnel of the nature and location of the hazard and request a marked cruiser respond to the location of the hazard.

2. Sworn personnel encountering a hazard on public property that does not require immediate attention shall either complete and forward a Street Maintenance Repair Request, form U-20.110, when appropriate, or contact Communications **personnel** to request action by the appropriate City agency.

C. Encountering Citizens Requiring Assistance

1. General

- a. Sworn personnel driving marked cruisers who encounter a motorist who is lost or stranded or whose vehicle is disabled shall stop and provide assistance unless responding to an emergency or Priority 1 or 2 run.
- b. Sworn personnel driving unmarked cars or responding to an emergency or Priority 1 or 2 run shall contact Communications personnel and request a marked cruiser **to** respond. Requesting personnel shall relay the location, type of problem, and vehicle description.
- c. Sworn personnel encountering a sick or injured person or other emergency situation shall provide appropriate assistance **or render aid consistent with Division policy**, training, and available equipment.

2. Disabled Vehicle

- a. Sworn personnel shall not allow a disabled vehicle to remain in a moving lane of traffic or in any other location creating a traffic hazard.
- b. When necessary, or at the request of the operator of the disabled vehicle, sworn personnel shall request Communications personnel contact a private towing service off the appropriate list.

c. Sworn personnel driving vehicles equipped with push bumpers may use them to move a disabled vehicle as provided below:

- (1) Obtain consent from the operator of the disabled vehicle.
- (2) To prevent damage to either vehicle:
 - (a) The push bumper must align with the bumper of the disabled vehicle.
 - (b) The disabled vehicle's ignition must be turned to the "on" position and the transmission must be in neutral.
- (3) Direct the operator of a disabled vehicle to steer the vehicle to a predetermined location and inform the operator that steering and braking abilities may be diminished.
- (4) Push bumpers shall not be used to move disabled vehicles on private property with the following exceptions:
 - (a) A safety hazard exists,
 - (b) There is a documented owner request, and the officer believes it to be appropriate to move the disabled vehicle, or
 - (c) The vehicle is creating a traffic hazard.
- (5) Sworn personnel shall notify a Division supervisor if damage occurs to either vehicle.

3. Protection of Stranded Motorists/Pedestrians

- a. Sworn personnel shall remain with a stranded motorist or pedestrian until assistance is summoned or the person is transported to a safe location.
- b. Sworn personnel transporting a stranded person shall notify Communications personnel of:
 - (1) The description and location of the involved vehicle(s),
 - (2) The destination of the transport, **and**
 - (3) The cruiser mileage at the beginning and end of the transport.
- c. Sworn personnel shall not respond to calls for service while transporting a stranded citizen.

4. Vehicle Lockouts

- a. Sworn personnel shall be dispatched to a vehicle lockout only when emergency or extenuating circumstances exist, for example, vehicles with children, disabled persons, or animals locked inside. Communications personnel receiving a request for lockout assistance that does not meet the criteria for a cruiser response should refer the caller to the contracted towing vendor.
- b. Sworn personnel encountering a locked-out, stranded motorist should provide appropriate assistance.

D. Roadside Safety Checks

Division personnel shall not conduct or participate in any operation in which law enforcement or other authorized personnel stop some or all traffic to inspect individual vehicles **or** their contents or to interview drivers **when** not based upon probable cause or reasonable suspicion, unless otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police.

Note: This does not apply to the inspection of vehicles entering secured areas.