Maryland-National Capital Park Police
Prince George's County Division

DIVISION DIRECTIVE

TITLE **TRAFFIC STOP PROCEDURES**			PROCEDURE NUMBER **PG452.0**
SECTION **Operational Procedures**	DISTRIBUTION **A**	EFFECTIVE DATE **01/21/22**	REVIEW DATE **05/01/24**
REPLACES **PG452.0 "Traffic Stop Procedures", issued 06/01/17**			
RELATED DIRECTIVES **PG304.0, 450.0, 450.1**	REFERENCES **CALEA 61**	AUTHORITY *S.R. Johnson* **Chief Stanley R. Johnson**	

I.   PURPOSE

This directive provides a clear and concise procedure to be utilized whenever an officer stops or approaches any traffic law violator.

II.   PROCEDURES

Officers initiating traffic stops for violations should utilize the following procedures:

A.   When initiating traffic stops for MILES/NCIC hits, officers should trail vehicles until appropriate backup arrives.

B.   It is necessary for the officer to control the stop, **not the violator**. In most cases, it is possible for the officer to select the best location for the stop.

C.   After the decision to stop a traffic violator has been made, the officer will activate their emergency equipment to include lights and siren as appropriate to stop the vehicle. The Officer will than call out with a traffic stop, pause briefly to enable Communications to acknowledge, and give the location of the stop, the tag number and state of registration, color, make and model of vehicle, and number of occupants, if known. After the vehicle is stopped, the officer will give Communications other necessary information and, if possible, for the officer's safety, he/she should wait for the information to be acknowledged by Communications prior to leaving his/her cruiser.

D.   All Officers should:

1.   Maximize their ability to light up the area at night, or at other times of low light, and request the violator to turn on his/her interior light.

2.   Protect themselves by placing the cruiser in a position which affords the best protection from other traffic.

3.   Maintain a safe distance from the cruiser to the violator's vehicle.

4.   Maintain constant visual attention.

5.   Form an evasion plan as the approach is made.

6.   Consider approaching the vehicle from the passenger side on some stops. As the approach is made, stop at the rear of the vehicle, check the trunk and rear seat, and evaluate the situation inside of the violator's vehicle.

7.   If the situation does not "feel right", do not hesitate to retreat and await sufficient backup before proceeding further.

8.   Not stand directly opposite the driver's window. Stand slightly behind the door so that adequate vision of the vehicle's interior is available.

At the commencement of a traffic stop or other stop, absent exigent circumstances:

9.   *Display proper identification to stopped individual;*

10.   *Provide the following information to the stopped individual:*

   a. *The officer's name;*
   b. *The officers' badge number and/or identification number issued by the law enforcement agency the Officer is representing;*
   c. *The name of the law enforcement agency the police officer is representing; and*
   d. *The reason for the stop.*

11.   Return to the cruiser to write the citation or request information from Communications.

12.   Never allow the violator to approach the cruiser while the officer is seated behind the wheel.

13.   Be professional and courteous, but firm. Officers should take the appropriate enforcement action and attempt to alter favorably the violator's future driving habits.

14.   *A police officer may not prohibit or prevent a citizen from recording the police officer's actions if the citizen is otherwise acting lawfully and safely.*

III.   RESPONSIBILITY

A.   Shift Supervisor will monitor the traffic enforcement activities of officers under his/her supervision to ensure the safety of the public and the officer and to ensure compliance with the procedures and guidelines set forth in this and other related directives.

B.   Operations Duty Officers (ODO) will conduct periodic inspections to ensure officers are adhering to the provisions and guidelines set forth in this and other related directives.

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