



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **CROSSING GUARDS**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedures Manual

REFERENCE: WI State Statute: 349.215, City Ord. 50-115, Adult School Crossing Guard Guidelines prepared by the National Center for Safe Routes to School

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to define the areas of responsibilities and procedures for the adult school crossing guards of the Portage Police Department.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. JOB REQUIREMENTS
- III. HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT
- IV. EQUIPMENT
- V. EMPLOYMENT STATUS
- VI. CODE OF CONDUCT
- VII. TRAINING
- VIII. SCHOOL CROSSING INSTRUCTIONS AND TECHNIQUES
- IX. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF LAW
- X. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

XI. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

XII. IDENTIFYING LOCATIONS WHERE CROSSING GUARDS ARE NEEDED

I. POLICY

- A. School crossing guards are civilian employees of the City of Portage who must pay strict attention to duty since the lives of school children are entrusted into their hands. They are authorized to direct traffic to stop at school crossings for the protection of persons who are crossing a roadway in the vicinity of a school.

II. JOB REQUIREMENTS

- A. Applicants must be a minimum age of sixteen (16) years old.
- B. Have the ability to perform all required duties of the position including physical tasks such as standing for long periods of time outdoors.
- C. Vision must be satisfactory in both eyes including depth perception to see approaching children and vehicles, and hearing satisfactory in both ears (hearing aids are allowed).
- D. Must have own transportation to assigned duty location.
- E. Must pass a law enforcement background check including past contacts with law enforcement and criminal background check.
- F. Clear and precise communications skills.

III. HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT

- A. Work hours will be set in accordance with the school hours. Each person will be notified in writing as to what their hours will be. This is seasonal part-time employment.

IV. EQUIPMENT

- A. Equipment shall be furnished by the employer.
- B. Each crossing guard will be furnished with the following;
 - 1. Stop sign paddle
 - 2. Retro-reflective traffic vest
 - 3. Florescent raincoat
- C. All equipment shall be returned to the Portage Police Department when a crossing guard resigns, retires or is dismissed.

V. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- A. School crossing guards are civilian employees of the City of Portage. They are not law enforcement officers and possess no law enforcement powers other than those delegated to all citizens.
- B. School crossing guards are expressly forbidden to carry firearms while on duty and do not have powers of arrest.
- C. School crossing guards will be supervised and under the direction of the assistant chief, shift supervisor, or designee.
- D. If a school crossing guard is unable to report for duty they shall notify the assistant chief or shift supervisor as early as possible so a replacement can be assigned to cover their corner.
- E. If a school crossing guard needs time off for any reason, they should notify the assistant chief as soon as possible so a replacement can be designated.

VI. CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. The public expects and deserves excellent conduct from those in public service. In both your private and official life your actions must always reflect credit upon the good name of the City of Portage and the Portage Police Department.
- B. Do not at any time permit children to enter or loiter near your vehicle if this is the means of transportation to your assigned corner. Park your vehicle so it does not block the view of your crossing. (At least fifteen feet from crossing).
- C. Do not assume an overbearing or dictatorial manner in your dealing with the general public or the school children.
- D. Try to be helpful even under adverse conditions. Courtesy cannot be over emphasized.
- E. School crossing guards are rendering a public service and are entitled to the cooperation of those whom you serve.
- F. School crossing guards will report for duty with all required equipment.
- G. School crossing guards clothing must be neat and clean at all times, which is the duty of the crossing guard to maintain.
- H. While on duty school crossing guards may wear casual, comfortable clothing. Clothing that has alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or statements on them that may be offensive to the public are not permitted.
- I. School crossing guards should show a personal interest in their work. An energetic, friendly and courteous attitude is the best evidence of your interest and attention to duty.

VII. TRAINING

- A. Training will consist of basic knowledge, observing the CSO or designated trainer doing the crossing guard duties, and then one to two days of observation by the CSO or designated officer. Additional in-service as needed.
- B. School crossing guards will be paid for training and the time spent they attend at in-service sessions.
- C. Training will cover;
 - 1. The basic traffic laws of the community.
 - 2. School zone signage and pavement marking.
 - 3. Proper use and purpose of traffic signs and signals.
 - 4. Methods of signaling drivers and taking advantage of traffic gaps.
 - 5. Crossing procedures and ways to teach them to children.
 - 6. Site-specific traffic factors and potential traffic hazards.
 - 7. Professional work responsibilities, including agency rules and regulations, whom the guard's supervisor is, the proper chain of command and legal aspects of the job.
 - 8. Proper attire and behavior to remain safe and to project a positive public image. For example, while on the job, a guard should not wear clothing that is in poor taste or that promotes alcohol, tobacco or similar products. Also, a guard would not carry or use tobacco products or use foul language. Adult school crossing guards project a positive public image and serve as a role model for children.
 - 9. Proper use of safety equipment.
 - 10. The safety issues and limitations of children as pedestrians.
 - 11. Procedures for crashes involving adult school crossing guards and children on their way to or from school.
 - 12. Emergency procedures,
 - 13. Protecting the health and welfare of the guard while working, including topic such as proper attire to increase visibility, the need for hydration, sun protection, bee sting treatment and how to respond to threat from loose dogs.

VIII. SCHOOL CROSSING INSTRUCTIONS AND TECHNIQUES

- A. School crossing guards will receive instructions from the assistant chief pertaining to their assigned crossing. The following general instructions must be used as a guide to your actions. Every intersection represents a different problem. By following these general rules, it is possible for you to work out a system that fits your particular needs.
- B. The primary responsibility of a school crossing guard is to help children safely cross the street as they walk or bicycle to and from school.
- C. A well-trained school crossing guard can help to accomplish the following goals;
 - 1. Discourage children from behaving unsafely near traffic, such as darting into the street without looking or crossing against a traffic signal. A guard can encourage safe behavior by all pedestrians at the school crossing
 - 2. Use existing gaps in traffic to help students cross safely. When the natural traffic flow does not allow enough time for children to safely cross a street, a guard may need to create gaps by stopping traffic temporarily. The guard stops traffic with hand signals or a STOP paddle, then verbally directs children to cross the street. A guard is always the first person in the street and the last person out of the street.
 - 3. Alert motorists that pedestrians are in the process of using the school crossing.
 - 4. Observe and report any incidents or conditions that present a potential safety hazard to the school children or the guard.
 - 5. A school crossing guard should not direct traffic unless specifically trained as a traffic control officer.
- D. It is permissible to sit in your vehicle only at time when children are not visibly approaching the crossing. It is required that when guards are sitting in their vehicles that they face the crossing that they are assigned to. Vehicles belonging to school crossing guards must be legally parked at all times.
- E. School crossing guards are to report to the Portage Police Department any conditions which may endanger the safety of the public, or conditions which may interfere with the performance of their duties. Conditions may include;
 - 1. Unsafe driver behaviors
 - 2. Unsafe pedestrian behaviors
 - 3. Unlawful parking that interferes with their ability to safely cross pedestrians.
 - 4. Construction interfering with safe crossing
 - 5. Unsafe street conditions
 - 6. Damaged signs

7. Poor visibility
 8. Suspicious activity
- F. At non-signalized crosswalks, it is the responsibility of the crossing guard to determine when children cross based on gaps in traffic flow. A guard who is assigned to a non-signalized crosswalk on an undivided street should:
1. Stand near the curb or edge of the street, on the side from which children are approaching.
 2. Stop children a safe distance back from the curb or edge of the street. Instruct children to cross only on the guard's signal.
 3. Teach children who approach a crossing on a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to dismount and push the bicycle or scooter or carry the skateboard across the street as a pedestrian.
 4. A guard enters the street in the following sequence;
 - a) Wait for a gap in traffic on the guard's side of the street.
 - b) Face the closest oncoming traffic and make eye contact with the approaching drivers.
 - c) Walk to the center of street with the STOP paddle held high.
 - d) Where there are more than two lanes, enter the street and alert the traffic one lane at a time.
 - e) Face opposite approaching traffic and make eye contact with those drivers.
 - f) Stand on the crosswalk line close to the center of the street and make sure that all traffic has stopped, including any turning vehicles.
 - g) Face the intersection. Verbally instruct the children to cross and tell them to look left-right-left while crossing and proceed across the street within the marked crosswalk.
 - h) Do not allow any cars to cross the crosswalk until all the students have crossed.
 - i) Remain in the center of the street until the last child reaches the opposite side of the street.
 - j) Walk to the curb or edge of the street with the STOP paddle and/or stop-arm held high the entire way. When back at the curb or edge of the street, lower hand(s) and allow traffic to flow again.
 - k) Remain near the curb or edge of the street for the next group of children to assemble.

F. Procedures for a signalized Crosswalk;

1. Stand on the side of the street from which children are approaching. If there is a pedestrian push button push the button for a WALK signal.
2. Group children a safe distance from the curb or edge of the street. Instruct children to cross only at the guard's signal.
3. Teach children who approach a crossing on a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to dismount and push the bicycle or scooter or carry the skate board across the street as a pedestrian.
4. Enter the street in this sequence:
 - a) Enter the street only with a WALK signal, and STOP paddle. Stand on the crosswalk line closest to the intersection.
 - b) Face oncoming traffic and make eye contact with drivers who are attempting to turn.
 - c) Verbally instruct the students to begin their search (left, right, left and over their shoulders, for turning traffic) and cross when safe.
 - d) Tell the students to continue walking if the signal changes to flashing "DON'T WALK", but do not allow children to start crossing at this time. Help students learn that a flashing "DON'T WALK" signal means Don't Start.
 - e) Wait for children to reach the opposite side of the street.
 - f) Return to the curb or edge of the street with your STOP paddle. After reaching the curb or edge of the street, a guard can lower their STOP paddle and allow traffic to flow again.

G. School crossing guards should give motorists plenty of advance warning of the intention to stop them. School crossing guards should be sure the motorist knows what they want them to do and that it is physically possible for them to do it.

H. School crossing guards should maintain a friendly, but not an affectionate attitude toward the children. Never show extra personal attention to any one child.

I. If a school crossing guard has an emergency and access to a phone they should dial 911.

IX. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW

- A. Serious motor vehicle violations should be reported to the Portage Police Department. Be sure to get a full description of both the car and the driver. In addition to the license number, observe closely the make, model, color, and outstanding identifying marks, damage to the car stickers on the windows, etc. Observe the driver so you can give sex, age, clothing, facial features, glasses, mustache, etc. If enough information is obtained for a citation to be issued, the school crossing guard will have to be able to identify the driver not just the car itself, unless a confession is obtained.
- B. Occasionally a school crossing guard may have a child that constantly fails to cooperate. This conduct will be reported to the school principal through the Police Department. The school crossing guard should make every attempt to gain the child's cooperation prior to reporting bad behavior or unsafe practices to the Police. In cases where there is repeated refusal to abide by your direction at your crossing, or persistent use of the street at a point removed from the school crossing guard's designated crossing, a report would be justified.
- C. If a suspicious person is observed obtain as complete a description as possible of the person involved and any vehicle that may be involved. Do not approach the person to ask questions, but note the circumstances that arouse your suspicions. If the circumstances warrant, contact the Portage Police Department at once.
- D. All information regarding violations should be written down as soon as possible. It will be the responsibility of the crossing guard to get this information to the Police Department as soon as possible. School crossing guards should supply themselves with a pencil and paper while on duty so as to be prepared to take any notes in regard to an emergency situation.

X. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

- A. If a school crossing guard is injured even slightly while on duty, they must report it to the Portage Police Department as soon as practical and follow any instructions that might be given. The shift supervisor should fill out a City of Portage injury report if applicable for workers compensation purposes.
- B. During a guard's duty, emergency situations, such as a sudden illness or an injury due to a crash, may occur near the school crossing. In the case of an emergency, a guard must stay at their post, keep control of the situation, and use the following basic procedure to ensure the children's safety;
 - 1. Stop crossing the children.
 - 2. Group the children way from the street to maintain control.
 - 3. Remain at the assigned post with the children.
 - 4. Ask several people to call 911.
 - 5. Do not move the victim, unless the victim is in serious and immediate danger of being struck by another vehicle.

6. Always notify the supervisor as soon as possible of any emergency that occurred.

C. Administer First Aid only to your level of training.

D. Do not respond to a call for assistance in cases involving police responsibilities. Advise the person requesting your aid to call the police department. Do not leave your corner in response to such a call. Your duty is the safety of the children and must come first at all times.

E. If fire trucks, ambulances or other emergency vehicle approach the crossing with emergency lights and sirens in use, the guard shall keep the children out of the street and a safe distance away from the crossing until the emergency vehicles have passed.

XI. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A. Actions on the part of an school crossing guard, such as failure to observe the instructions of a supervisor, neglect of duty, failure to report for duty without cause, use of alcoholic beverages in any amount while on duty, and conduct unbecoming an employee of the Portage Police Department, will result in disciplinary action and possible removal from the job.

XII. IDENTIFYING LOCATIONS WHERE CROSSING GUARDS ARE NEEDED

A. No absolute national criteria exist for identifying which street crossings in a community require an adult school crossing guard. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provides some general federal guidance on how to determine the need for a guard at a particular location.

The Portage Police Department along with the Portage School District will decide the selection criteria by which school crossing Guards are assigned to crossings. Location decisions reflect relevant federal, state and local policies and funding issues, and a tailored to the individual conditions of the needs of the community. The following information will be considered when identifying guard placement:

1. The age of the students who are crossing. Generally, younger children need more assistance than older children because they have a more difficult time judging the speed and distance of approaching vehicles and may be tempted to cross during an unsafe gap.
2. The width of the street and the number of lanes of traffic students must cross. Wide streets with multiple lanes of traffic typically require the use of two or more adult school crossing guards.

3. The sight distance at the crossing. These conditions are measured from the student's and driver perspectives and for actual vehicle operating speeds. Sight distance can be affected by temporary obstructions such as parked vehicles and piled snow near the crossing.
4. Safe gaps in traffic. Are the gaps long enough and frequent enough to allow safe crossing opportunities? The ITE "School Trip Safety Program Guidelines" states that on the average, at least one adequate gap should occur each minute to allow for children to cross without undue delay or risk.

However, other factors, such as volume of child pedestrians or pedestrian groups should also be considered when decreeing the need for adult school crossing guards or other traffic control. If traffic volumes during crossing hours do not correspond to enough safe gaps, some method to interrupt traffic should be considered, such as a crossing guard or traffic signal.

5. Presence of traffic control devices, including traffic signals, signs, and pavement markings. If present are the traffic controls sufficient? For example, a signalized intersection at a school crossing location should have WALK/DON'T WALK signals, and a pedestrian push button may also be appropriate. Guards and students should be properly trained on traffic signals relative to safe street crossings.
6. The speed of vehicles at the crossing. Vehicles that travel faster require greater stopping distances, and younger children have more difficulty, than adults judging the speed of a fast-approaching vehicle.
7. Volumes of traffic and pedestrian. Local transportation planning or engineering departments can provide or help collect these data. Vehicle counts may be readily available, but pedestrian counts will likely need to be made during this process. The number of student currently using pedestrian facilities as well as the projected pedestrian demand based on school demographics should be determined.
8. The attendance boundary and walk zone for each school. The distances that walk zones extend from schools as well as policies regarding the provision of bus service differ among states and communities. Both can impact the number of children walking to school and the routes they take.
9. The distance the crossing is from a school and the type of adjacent land use. A crossing in close proximity to a school within a residential neighborhood may attract more student pedestrians than, for example a crossing located further from a school surrounded by non-residential land uses.
10. Crash history of the crossing. The number, type and time of day that each crash occurs at a specific location should be recorded and analyzed.

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This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

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