



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

SOP 2-43

Effective: 01/17/16 Review Due: 01/17/17 Replaces: 07/02/15

2-43 ROADBLOCKS AND CHECKPOINTS

2-43-1 Policy

It is the policy of the Department to use roadblocks when reasonably necessary to detour motorists from hazardous roadway conditions; when authorized by supervisors for selective traffic enforcement; when necessary to prevent the escape of a felon(s) from a contained area; and when reasonably necessary to stop the driver of a vehicle attempting to avoid apprehension, after all other means have failed.

2-43-2 Definitions

A. Roadblock

Emergency intentional obstruction of traffic for the safety of the community.

B. Class A Roadblock

Stopping traffic by use of portable signs and warning devices without physically blocking the roadway.

C. Class B Roadblock

Physically blocking the roadway with lightweight materials and/or equipment which will cause little or no damage to a vehicle striking them, i.e., lightweight barricade devices, flares, pylons, etc.

D. Class C Roadblock

Physical blockage of the roadway with heavy material or equipment, i.e., patrol vehicles, city-owned equipment, etc. Only city-owned materials and equipment shall be used for a Class "C" roadblock. Commandeering a tractor-trailer or another such vehicle is prohibited.

E. Checkpoint

Planned enforcement activity, with a specific violation targeted, where vehicles are stopped and drivers are contacted.



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2-43-3 Rules and Procedures

A. Classification of Roadblocks/Checkpoints

1. A Class A Roadblock may be used to inspect persons and vehicles in the event of jail/prison escapes, major felony investigations, D.W.I. detection, etc.
2. A Class B Roadblock may be used to warn motorists of severe road conditions, such as snow and ice, or to reroute traffic due to special events, traffic accidents, crime scenes, etc.
3. A Class C Roadblock shall be used as a last resort after other reasonable, and less hazardous measures have failed and when stopping the vehicle is necessary to protect lives.

B. Criteria for All Checkpoints

1. The selection of the site and procedures for conducting the roadblock must be made and established by supervisory personnel.
2. Vehicles should not be stopped randomly. A pre-established formula must be used when determining what vehicles to stop, i.e., every vehicle, every third vehicle, etc. Uniform procedures must be established for dealing with each motorist in precisely the same manner.
3. Safety measures must be considered for warning approaching traffic, the degree to which the roadblock causes traffic congestion and whether the roadblock is set up in such a way so as to put the motoring public and officers in unnecessary peril.
4. The roadblock location should be reasonable.
5. The time and duration of the roadblock should be reasonable.
6. The official nature of the roadblock should be immediately apparent. Officers should be uniformed; police cars should be highly visible, marked, and the use of warning or stop signs, flares, and pylons are advisable.
7. The average length of time that a motorist is detained at the roadblock and the degree of intrusiveness should be minimized. Where facts within the observation of the officer warrant further investigation, the suspected motorist should be asked to pull into a separate area so as not to unreasonably inhibit the flow of traffic.
8. Selective traffic enforcement roadblocks should be given advance publicity to enhance deterrence.



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C. Authorization for Checkpoints

All enforcement targeted checkpoints must be approved by the Traffic Division Commander. In all cases, a supervisor will be in charge at the scene.

D. Initiating Road Blocks

1. The decision to activate a roadblock should be based on the following:

- a. The seriousness of the crime.
- b. Sufficient information and description on the wanted persons or vehicles.
- c. The elapsed time between the criminal act and its discovery.

E. Roadblock Sites

1. Selection of roadblock sites should:

- a. Provide safety and convenience in stopping vehicles.