

# Hamden Police Department General Orders

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**Policy Number:** 023-002

**Effective Date:** August 01, 2005

**Section:** Traffic Direction and Control.

**Rescinds:**

**Title:** Motor Vehicle Sobriety and Investigative Check Points.

**Approved By:**

**Approval Date:**

## PURPOSE

To establish a uniform procedure for the conducting of motor vehicle sobriety and investigative check points.

## POLICY

To assist in the reduction of drunk driving and related accidents, the enforcement of other safety programs of public concern, and as a technique to assist in on-going criminal investigations, the department will use Sobriety and Investigative Road blocks.

## Procedures

### A. Motor Vehicle Sobriety Check Points.

1. Locations and times of motor vehicle sobriety check points will be determined by the Patrol Deputy Chief or his designee.
2. Location:
  - a. An area with a high frequency of DUI related accidents or violations.
  - b. An area that maximizes visibility to oncoming traffic.
  - c. An area with good illumination.
  - d. An area that allows for a primary screening area and a secondary area, preferably off the traveled portion of the highway, for a more in depth inspection.
  - e. An area that has a sufficient means for safe and easy entrance from and exit onto the traveled roadway.

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### 3. Time:

- a. The check points will be established during time periods that have a high frequency of Drunk driving arrests or related accidents.

### 4. Public Notification Required.

- a. To minimize the fear and apprehension of approaching motorists and to provide for the safety of all concerned, notice of a motor vehicle spot check operation shall be provided to public media organizations at least three (3) days in advance of the operation. The notice need not contain exact hours or operation or the exact location, but should contain a general statement regarding the conduct of the operation in town.

### 5. Procedures:

- a. Sufficient staffing and vehicles must be available.
- b. A patrol or traffic supervisor will be assigned to each check point.
- c. Personnel will be assigned to check points for a fixed period of time.
- d. The Patrol Division Commander, or his designee, will predetermine a systematic number of cars to be stopped.
- e. The only exceptions to the predetermined system will be on sight violations or a vehicle being operated in an erratic manner.
- f. The assigned supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all vehicles stopped are documented on a case incident report including the date, shift, time, location, vehicle registration and action taken.
- g. Road flares, safety cones and marked cruisers with activated emergency lights will be utilized to safeguard the location.
- h. Warning signs indicating "Sobriety Check Point Ahead" will be erected.
- i. If a heavy traffic back up results, the supervisor may discontinue the operation at that point and allow traffic to clear or move to a predetermined alternate site.
- j. At the primary screening area, each operator will be informed of the purpose of the check point.

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- k. The inspecting officer will observe the operator's actions and briefly question the operator to determine whether there are any indications the operator may be under the influence.
- l. If the officer's observations indicate the operator may be under the influence, the operator will be instructed to proceed to the secondary area for further evaluation.
- m. Violations, other than DUI, will be processed according to standard procedures outlined in the Traffic Enforcement Guidelines General Order.

### **B. Investigative Motor Vehicle Check Points.**

#### **1. Location:**

- a. Investigative check points will be established in an area where there is probability that the actual crime or the individual or individuals responsible may have been witnessed by a passing motorist.
- b. The check point must be established with due regard for the safety of the motorists and the officers involved.

#### **2. Time:**

- a. The check point will normally be conducted during a time period that coincides with the time of the actual occurrence.

#### **3. Procedures:**

- a. Investigative check points may be conducted by any Department Division.
- b. A supervisor from the division involved will be assigned to each check point and will be in charge of the field operation.
- c. The Division Commander or the designee on the scene will predetermine systematic procedure for the stopping of vehicles and interviewing witnesses.
- d. Road flares, safety cones and marked cruisers with activated emergency lights will be utilized to ensure visibility and safeguard the location.

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- e. A uniformed patrol officer will be assigned to each check point.
- f. The assigned supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all vehicles stopped are documented including date, shift, time, location and registration and that all individuals interviewed are documented including name, address, DOB, telephone number and any relevant information provided.