

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual for Supervisors



Prepared by:
New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center
Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center

Prepared for:
New Jersey Department of Transportation
New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Federal Highway Administration

Date:
April 2013

RUTGERS

Edward J. Bloustein School of
Planning and Public Policy



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD TRAINING MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I. CROSSING GUARD TRAINING	
Introduction.....	3
Why We Need Crossing Guards.....	4
Goals of the Crossing Guard Training Program.....	4
Primary Crossing Guard Responsibilities.....	5
Relationship of Crossing Guards to Children.....	5
Types of Crashes.....	6
Orientation to Agency.....	10
Traffic Laws and Regulations.....	15
Understanding School Zone Markings, Signs, and Signals.....	16
Crossing Procedure.....	18
Types of Intersections.....	23
Post Routines.....	27
Incident Reporting.....	29
School Student Safety Patrols.....	30
PART II. CROSSING GUARD POLICY/PROCEDURES	
Placement of Crossing Guards.....	31
Hiring.....	33
Uniforms.....	35
Training and Retraining.....	37
Performance Review.....	39
Orientation to Supervising Agency.....	39
Understanding School Zone Markings, Signs, and Signals.....	41
Post Observation.....	42
Reporting Incidents.....	44
Crossing Guard Appreciation.....	46
Collaboration.....	46
Resources.....	46
PART III. RESOURCES	
New Jersey Laws and Legislation.....	49
Crossing Guard Placement Considerations and Gap Assessment.....	63
Medical Examinations for Crossing Guards.....	69
Crossing Guard Performance Checklist.....	73
Crossing Guard Post Observation Report.....	75
Model Municipal Crossing Guard Policy.....	79

For more information visit the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center at <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/>

PART I: CROSSING PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

This manual is part of a statewide school crossing guard training program designed to provide consistent guidance for training crossing guards and to support crossing guards and their supervisors in the performance of their duties. The manual also serves as a reference document to reinforce classroom and field training.

Adult school crossing guards play an important role in the lives of children who walk or bike to school. Young children are more vulnerable to crashes when crossing the street because, until the age of 9 or 10, they lack the motor and cognitive skills required to safely navigate many traffic situations.¹ Crossing guards aid children in safely crossing the street, and through their example, crossing guards help children develop the skills necessary to cross streets safely. In addition, crossing guards serve as a visual alert to drivers about the presence of children.

Training is an essential step in ensuring that crossing guards perform their duties properly. This manual provides consistent, effective operating standards for guarded school crossings across the state. This manual incorporates national guidance, best practices, and state traffic laws and legislation. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)* provides basic standards and guidance for supervision of school crossings by adult crossing guards. The MUTCD is adopted in New Jersey through existing motor vehicle law, specifically Title 39 of the Revised Statutes.

WHY WE NEED CROSSING GUARDS

Nationwide, pedestrian injury is the second leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 5 to 14. Although death and injury rates have declined dramatically over the past 40 years, this trend may be attributable to a decrease in the number of children walking to school and the attendant lack of exposure to traffic. In 1969, 48% of children aged 5 to 14 walked and biked to school but in 2009 only 13% did so. In that time period, the percentage of students being bused rose only 2% from 38% to 40%, but the percentage of students being driven to school in private vehicles rose from 12% to 44%.ⁱⁱ

Within the past decade, interest in improving children's rates of physical activity and reducing traffic congestion and motor vehicle emissions around schools has spurred the creation of Safe Routes to School programs and other initiatives to encourage active transport to school. However, real and perceived safety issues, along with other concerns, counter the efforts to increase the number of children walking and biking to school. The increased traffic in school zones, resulting from parents driving their children to and from school, makes walking and biking to school more hazardous.

Crossing guards are an essential part of the safety equation. They help children make safe street crossings, demonstrate safe crossing procedures, and contribute to more children walking and biking to school because the presence of crossing guards reassures parents and children of the safety of the school route.

GOALS OF THE CROSSING GUARD TRAINING PROGRAM

The principal goal of the training program is to teach candidate guards the procedures and techniques necessary to safely cross student pedestrians. Upon completion of the course, crossing guards will be able to:

- Understand the perspective of children in traffic
- Understand the major types of pedestrian crashes
- Understand the concept of being visible and noticeable
- Know how to communicate effectively with motorists
- Consistently use proper crossing techniques
- Encourage proper crossing behavior by students
- Deter students from committing unsafe acts

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

- Recognize hazardous conditions and other problems and know the proper reporting procedures
- Take proper actions in emergency situations
- Know the full extent of their responsibilities and limitations of their authority
- Exhibit professionalism

PRIMARY CROSSING GUARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The prime duty of school crossing guards is to assist children in crossing the street at assigned times and locations. The first concern of crossing guards is the safety of the students.

- Crossing guards should provide safe crossings of the roadways.
- Crossing guards should model appropriate street skills and behavior for child pedestrians.

The duties of crossing guards in New Jersey are limited by the following:

- Crossing guards shall not have the right to bear firearms or the power of arrest unless the crossing guard is also a member of the police department or force (N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.1).
- Crossing guards shall not direct traffic, but rather, they shall choose opportune times to create sufficient gaps in the traffic flow. At these times, they shall stand in the roadway to indicate that pedestrians are about to use or are using the crosswalk, and that all vehicular traffic must stop (FHWA MUTCD 7D.05).

RELATIONSHIP OF CROSSING GUARDS TO CHILDREN

Children are encouraged to walk and bike to school, yet they are vulnerable to both their own physical and cognitive limitations and to hazardous road situations.

Characteristics of Children 9 Years and Younger

Crossing guards are needed because the physical and cognitive abilities of children differ from the abilities of adults and may negatively affect crossing behavior. These differences are summarized here:

- Children see differently than adults. They have a narrower field of vision, two-thirds that of an adult. In addition, their eye level

Throughout this Manual:

Descriptions of practices that are considered mandatory use the verb "shall".

Statements of recommended practice use the verb "should".

Statements of optional practice use the verb "may."

is lower than that of an adult and their view may be more easily blocked.

- Children are smaller in stature and are not as easily seen by drivers. However, children believe “if I can see it – it can see me.”
- Children hear differently; they cannot determine the source of sounds or direction of sounds.
- Children cannot judge speed and distance of motor vehicles. Their lack of traffic experience limits their ability to perceive dangerous situations.
- Children concentrate on one thing at a time and may not give street crossing their full attention.
- Children are spontaneous and curious. Children will complete any motion they start. Once they begin crossing the street, they will tend to continue even if a car is approaching.
- Children overestimate their abilities. They may believe that they can run faster or change direction faster than they physically can. This belief may cause them to take chances with oncoming traffic.
- Children pattern their actions after others, both good and bad.
- Children value near misses. They may dare to do something so that they can brag about it.

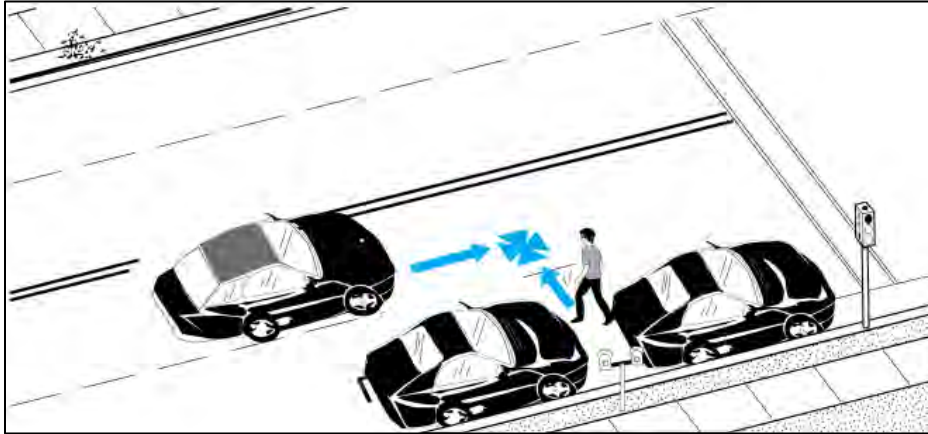
With education, children’s traffic skills can improve, but until they have gained competency they need assistance. ⁱⁱⁱ

The video “Children in Traffic” discusses this subject in detail and may be a useful addition to your crossing guard training. This resource is available at <https://www.aaafoundation.org/store> and can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfgUlcwdTDo>.

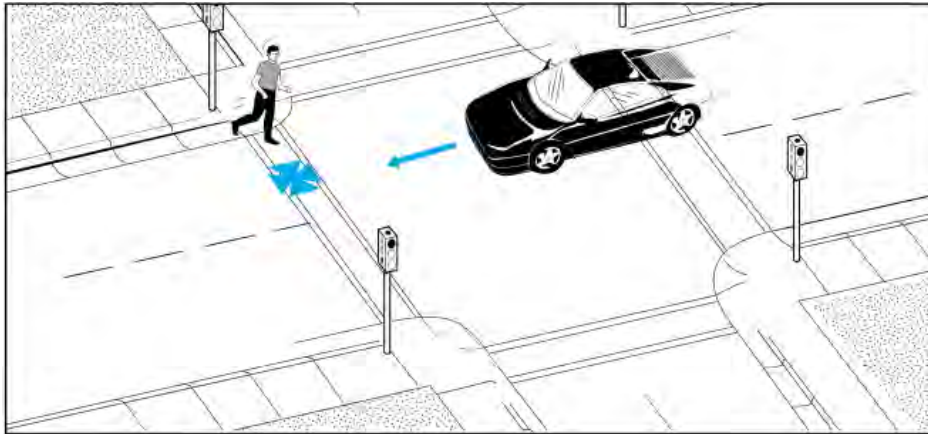
TYPES OF CRASHES

Pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions at intersections usually involve an unexpected violation of road rules by at least one of the parties involved (pedestrian or driver) and the subsequent failure of both parties to take adequate evasive action. ^{iv}

Dart-Out/Dash

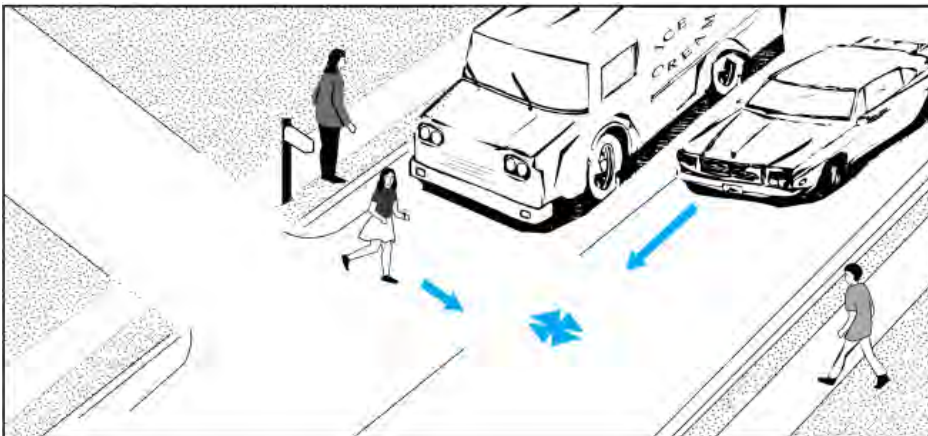


At an intersection, or mid-block, a pedestrian darts into the street without scanning for traffic properly. Generally, these collisions occur in residential areas. Mid-block crossings account for 30% of all pedestrian crashes.



The dash involves a pedestrian who walked or ran into the road and was struck by a motorist whose view was not obstructed. This crash often involves children ages 5 to 9 who are running across the street.

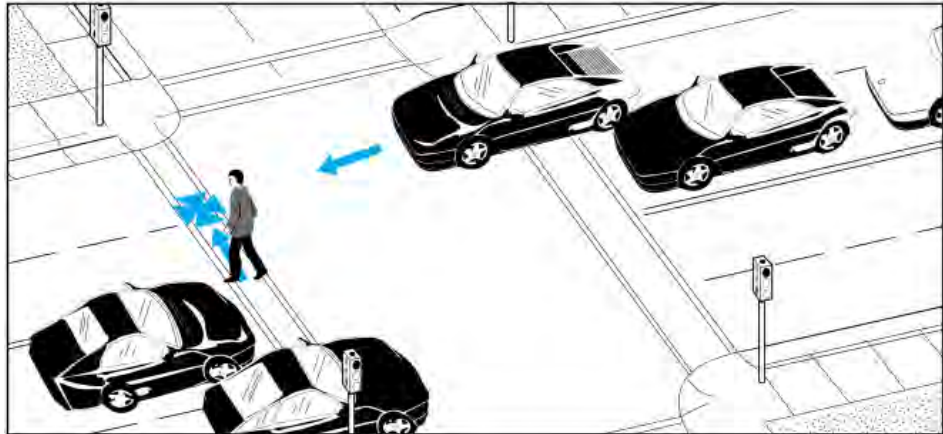
Multiple Threat/Trapped



Multiple threat crashes occur when a pedestrian is crossing a multi-lane road and is allowed to cross by a driver in one lane but is struck by a driver passing the stopped vehicle in the other lane and traveling in the same direction.

¹ Images Source: Federal Highway Administration

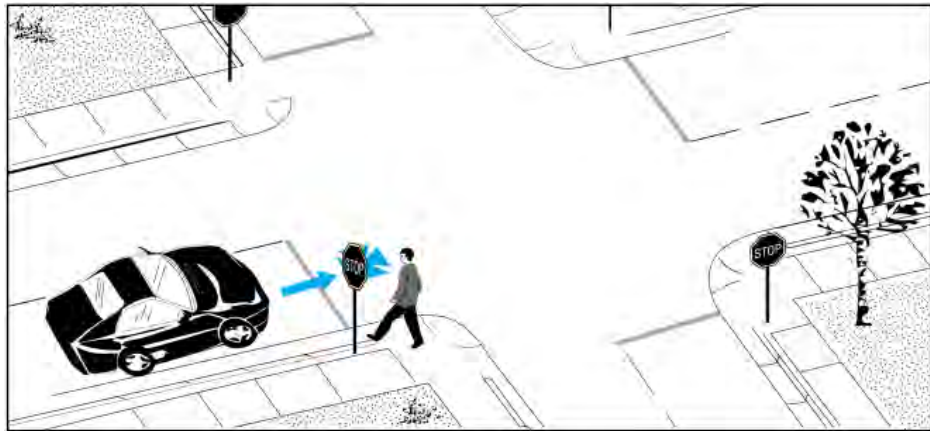
Multiple Threat/Trapped (Continued)



2

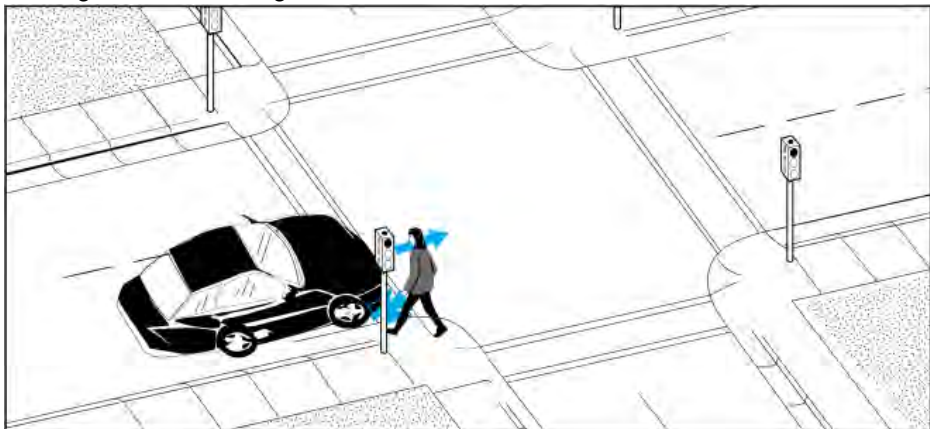
Through Vehicle at Unsignalized Location

A pedestrian is struck at an unsignalized intersection or midblock location. Either the motorist or the pedestrian may have failed to yield.



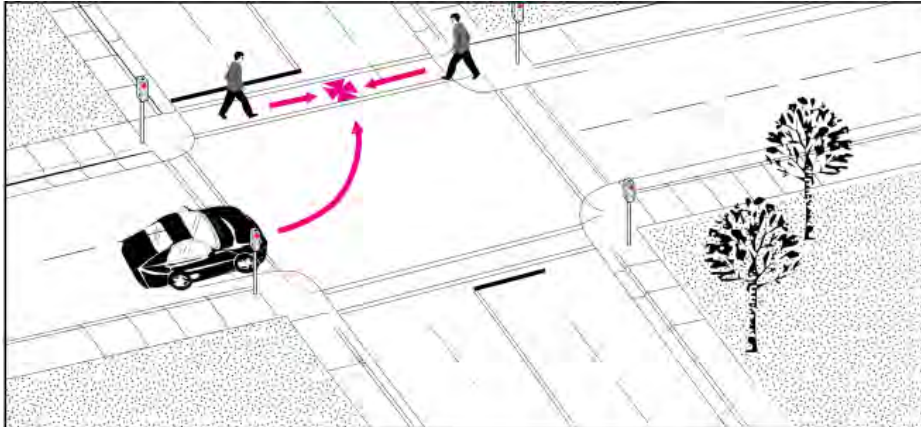
Through Vehicle at Signalized Location

A pedestrian is struck at a signalized intersection or midblock location by a driver that is traveling straight ahead.

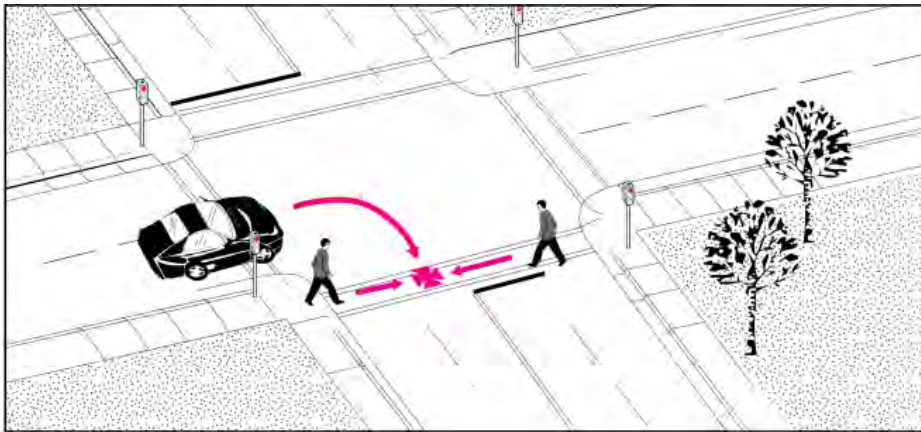


² Images Source: Federal Highway Administration

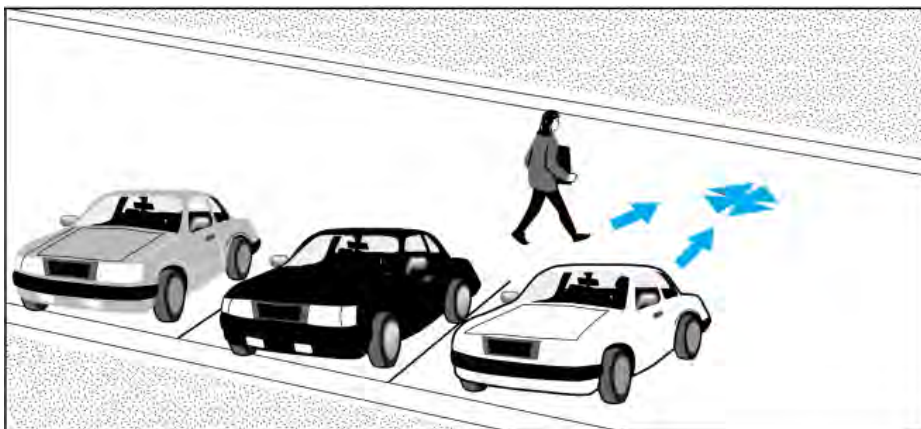
Vehicle Turn/Merge



Almost always occurring at intersections, including driveways, these crashes involve a driver who is turning into and merging with traffic, and who strikes a pedestrian headed in a direction different from the driver's focus of attention. These crashes involve pedestrians of all ages.



Backing Vehicle



Crashes occur when a driver is backing in a roadway, or out of a driveway or parking lot, and the driver is unaware of the pedestrian. These crashes occur in both residential and non-residential areas.

³ Images Source: Federal Highway Administration

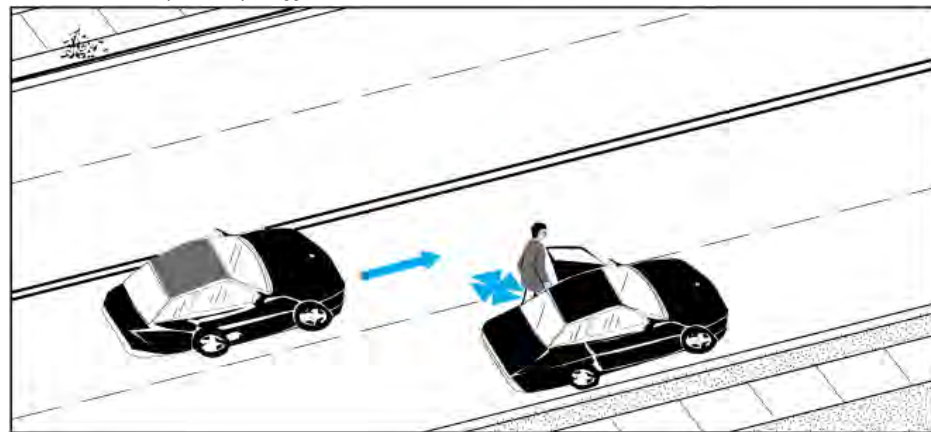
Bus-Stop Related

A child pedestrian is struck going to or from a school bus or school bus stop, while waiting at a bus stop, or while crossing in front of a bus stopped at a bus stop.



A pedestrian is struck going to or from a parent's vehicle as they are being picked up from or dropped off at school OR when they going to or from a vending vehicle, such as an ice cream truck. These crashes almost always occur in residential areas and involve children under the age of 14.

Parent Pickup/Drop-Off and/or Vendor



ORIENTATION TO AGENCY

According to New Jersey law, all crossing guards must be under the supervision and direction of the chief of police or other chief law enforcement officer for the municipality. Familiarity with the personnel and reporting structure of the agency, and knowledge of local ordinances, policies, and procedures will assist the crossing guard with job performance. Of particular importance is an understanding of the chain of command and from whom crossing guards should take direction.

Crossing guards should carry with them at their posts:

- Name and phone number of the supervisor
- List of law enforcement/ emergency numbers

In addition, it is recommended that crossing guards carry:

⁴ Images Source: Federal Highway Administration

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

- List of the school(s) to which students at the crossing guard post are traveling, with the following information:
 - phone numbers of school(s)
 - principals' names
 - hours that schools are in session
 - copy of the school calendar
- Roster of crossing guards containing:
 - guards' names
 - guards' phone numbers
 - post location
 - time of post

Scheduled Changes

- A guard's supervisor shall notify him/her of any school schedule change, such as a half day or emergency closing, or special school function that would affect his/her work schedule.
- Duties, responsibilities, and etiquette remain the same as when on usual crossing guard duty.

School or Municipality Emergency Response Plan

- A procedure for contacting crossing guards at their posts shall be established.
- If an agency has an emergency response plan involving crossing guards, guards shall be briefed on the procedure.
- A crossing guard should be aware of the school's emergency response plan in the event of an incident.

STOP Paddle

A STOP paddle is required as the primary hand-signaling device (FHWA MUTCD Section 7D.05). **The STOP paddle shall be used at all times by crossing guards.**

FHWA MUTCD

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) comprises national standards for all traffic control devices including highway signs, roadway markings and traffic signals. The reference provides guidance on the use of crossing guards, crossing guard uniform and equipment, and school zone signage. Use of the STOP paddle by crossing guards is now required through this federal guidance. (<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part7/part7d.htm>)



Uniforms

A uniform distinguishes the school crossing guard from a member of the regular police department or force. The uniform lends the crossing guard authority and visibility that enable motorists and pedestrians to recognize guards and correctly respond to their signals. The uniform must be worn at all times when on duty. N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.3 requires that school crossing guards wear the following:

- Retroreflective safety vest, worn over all other clothing,
- Hat, and
- Breast and hat badges which shall bear an identification number and the name of the municipality in which the crossing guard is employed.



Section 7E.04 of the FHWA MUTCD states that adult crossing guards should be uniformed so that road users and pedestrians can recognize them and respond to their signals. The uniforms should be distinctively different from those worn by regular law enforcement officers. In addition, adult crossing guards shall wear high-visibility retroreflective safety apparel labeled as ANSI 107-1999 standard performance for Class 2 as described in Section 6E.02.

Additional clothing items and equipment may be determined by the local agency. These may include:

- Uniform pants and shirt
- Spring/winter jacket
- Raingear
- Gloves, either white or retroreflective
- Whistle and lanyard

If a uniform is not provided, supervisors may suggest that dark pants and a light-colored shirt be worn.

Every crossing guard shall maintain a neat and clean appearance while on crossing guard duty and shall wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions. Umbrellas should not be used as they hamper arm movement and block views.

Some municipalities provide crossing guards with whistles. On the direction of the supervisor, whistles may be used consistently to signal drivers, used at the discretion of the crossing guard to signal drivers, or used only in case of emergency. In conjunction with the STOP paddle, the

whistle can be useful in getting the attention of drivers. Crossing guards issue ONE LONG blast to halt traffic.

Public Image

As representatives of the local police force, crossing guards should conduct themselves in a positive, professional manner to gain the respect of community members and to set a good example for the children they cross. Crossing guards should abide by the following list of expectations and duties.

Expectations and Duties

- Be on time. Call out sick well in advance.
- Always wear reflective vest and carry STOP paddle while on post.
- Maintain a neat appearance. Keep uniform in good condition.
- Scan the area for hazardous conditions (potholes, obscured signs, ice, snow, etc.)
- Park your car in a safe and legal place where it will not obstruct your vision of traffic.
- Remain standing at post during hours of duty. Never sit in vehicle.
- Be courteous, pleasant and businesslike with children and adults.
- Never leave your post during hours of duty. If a family emergency arises, contact your supervisor or the school to arrange for relief.
- Leave post at end of shift, unless child pedestrians are approaching the crosswalk.
- Be professional.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco products, eat or drink, or chew gum, use profanity, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty.
- Do not use a personal cell phone or other electronic device unless necessary to report an emergency.
- Do not read or listen to music.
- Do not engage drivers in conversation.
- Do not touch children or allow children to sit in the guard's car.
- Be an authority figure. Teach by example.

Visible and Noticeable

Crossing guards need to be both visible and noticeable to alert motorists that pedestrians are in the process of using the school crossing. Standing in the street, crossing guards are competing with all the other things a motorist sees while driving. Of the tasks drivers face, negotiating intersections is among the most difficult. Drivers must recognize information about the intersection, make decisions, and follow through with their decisions. ^v



Unfortunately, there is often more information than a driver can process in the amount of time it takes to approach and pass through an intersection or crosswalk, leading to errors. In addition, an estimated 30% of the time during which they are operating motor vehicles, drivers are distracted by activities such as cell phone use, texting, or eating. This lack of focus can lead to driving errors. Almost 80% of all crashes and 65% of near-crashes involve drivers who looked away from the forward roadway just prior to the crash. ^v

Within their assigned area, guards should be aware of the potential for drivers to make errors. If possible, crossing guards should drive through their assigned crosswalk to get a driver's perspective of lighting, shading, and other visual distractions, as well as sight obstructions.

The standard crossing guard movements, equipment and attire have been designed to help the guard stand out from the visual clutter. When standing at the crossing guard post, wearing the retroreflective vest outside all other clothing and holding the STOP paddle, crossing guards are generally visible to vehicular traffic.



Crossing guards are instructed to stand at their posts rather than sitting at their posts or in their cars. When standing, guards alert drivers to the possibility of pedestrians in the crosswalk, and the guards can react quickly to any situation.

Noticeable behaviors will improve the crossing guard's ability to gain motorists' attention. Actions (such as stepping into the street, holding the STOP paddle and extending the other arm, and making eye contact with motorists) should be clear and precise. Motorists expect typical procedures in crossing situations and variations may cause confusion.

TRAFFIC LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Laws are made by the legislature to compel or prohibit behavior. Laws establish rights, as well as responsibilities. Regulations are rules made to carry out the intent of a law. A policy is a plan, a course of action, or a principle to guide decisions toward meeting regulations.

Crossing guards should be aware of the following state traffic regulations that form the legal basis for support of school crossings. The full text of these regulations is available in Part III.

- Motorists must stop and remain stopped to allow a pedestrian to cross the roadway within a marked crosswalk, when the pedestrian is upon, or within one lane of, the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling or onto which it is turning.
- Motorists must yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, except at crosswalks when the movement of traffic is being regulated by police officers or traffic control signals, or where otherwise regulated by municipal, county, or state regulation, and except where a pedestrian tunnel or overhead pedestrian crossing has been provided.
- Motorists should obey the posted speed limits and be attentive and cautious when pedestrians are present, or likely to be present, especially in school zones.
- The speed limit is twenty-five miles per hour in a school zone 1) during recess, 2) when children are clearly visible from the roadway, or 3) while children are going to or leaving school (during opening or closing hours). The only exception is when a lower speed limit is posted.

In April of 2010, New Jersey law changed. Motorists are now required to stop and stay stopped for pedestrians crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalks. Motorists shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, except at crosswalks when the movement of traffic is being regulated by police officers or traffic control signals, or where otherwise prohibited by municipal, county, or state regulation, and except where a pedestrian tunnel or overhead pedestrian crossing has been provided.



Image source: New Jersey Department of Highway Traffic Safety

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

- Idling for more than three minutes is prohibited, with limited exceptions.
- Motorists must stop when red school bus lights are flashing and the stop sign is extended.
- Motorists must obey signals from the STOP paddle wielded by school crossing guards. The STOP paddle is an official sign under state law.
- Motorists must yield to pedestrians on all turns.
- Motorists exiting or entering a driveway or alley must yield to pedestrians.
- Except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic, motorists shall not stand or park a vehicle within an intersection, on a crosswalk, or on a sidewalk.

Pedestrians and bicyclists also have responsibilities to obey traffic rules. A pedestrian's right to enter a crosswalk is qualified:

- No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to stop or yield.
- Every pedestrian upon a roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway.
- Anyone under 17 who rides a bicycle must wear a helmet at all times.
- In New Jersey, bicycles are defined as vehicles.
- Although dismounting before crossing in a crosswalk is not legally required, it is best to ask children on bicycles, scooters or skateboards to dismount before crossing. Walking across the street helps avoid conflicts among crossing children and allows the guard and children to be more attentive to traffic hazards and react more quickly to them.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL ZONE MARKINGS, SIGNS, AND SIGNALS

A crossing guard should recognize and understand any signs and pavement markings located within the area of his or her post.

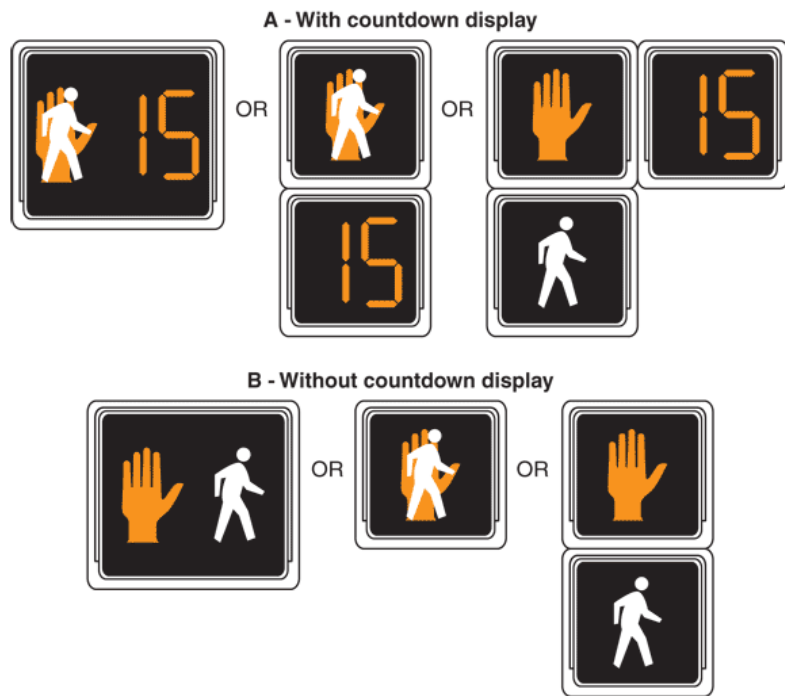
Maintenance of crosswalk markings, stop lines, bike lane lines, school zone markings, warning signs, school speed zone signs, parking prohibition signs, and STOP signs is essential to supporting safe street crossings. A

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

crossing guard should report any missing or damaged signs or markings to her/his supervisor as soon as possible after the shift. Information on school zone signs and markings can be found in FHWA MUTCD Section 7B and 7C at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part7/part7b.htm> and <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part7/part7c.htm>.

Understanding Traffic Signal Operation at Crosswalks

A guard assigned to a signalized crosswalk should recognize and understand pedestrian signal indications and know how pedestrians should cross at these crosswalks.



- Walking Person symbol or “WALK” indication: a pedestrian may start to cross the roadway in the direction of the indication;
- Flashing Upraised Hand symbol or “DONT WALK” indication: a pedestrian shall not start to cross, but any pedestrian already crossing shall proceed to the far side of the roadway;
- Steady Upraised Hand symbol or “DONT WALK” indication: a pedestrian shall not enter the roadway.

If a “WALK” signal must be activated by pressing a pushbutton, the crossing guard is the only person who should activate the signal.



Information on these signals and pedestrian clearance time (from the start of the flashing indication to the time when any conflicting green is illuminated) can be found in FHWA MUTCD Section 4E at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part4/part4e.htm>. A guard should alert his or her supervisor if a traffic signal’s timing does not provide adequate time to finish crossing children before a green light is illuminated for traffic on the crossed roadway.

CROSSING PROCEDURE

Gap Assessment

The school crossing guard crosses children by identifying adequate gaps in traffic or creating gaps by entering the crosswalk with the STOP paddle. Typically, crossing guards are placed at intersections where there is sufficient traffic to require the creation of gaps. If forced to wait too long at a crosswalk, children may become impatient.

The crossing guard must be able to predict the vehicle stopping distance, or the distance required for motorists to see the crossing guard, to recognize the need to stop, to apply the brake in a reasonable manner, and to bring the vehicle to a halt.

Stopping Distance

A marker on the roadway or roadside may help with deciding when a gap is sufficient to stop traffic. Although establishing such a marker will be useful for most traffic, vehicles moving faster than normal will require more distance to stop safely. Stopping distance will also be affected by weather conditions. Using a marker in combination with practical experience will help to avoid conflicts. The following table provides guidance on stopping distances at specific vehicle speeds.

Speed Limit (mph)	15	20	25	30	35	40
Distance (ft)	46	73	102	140	183	234

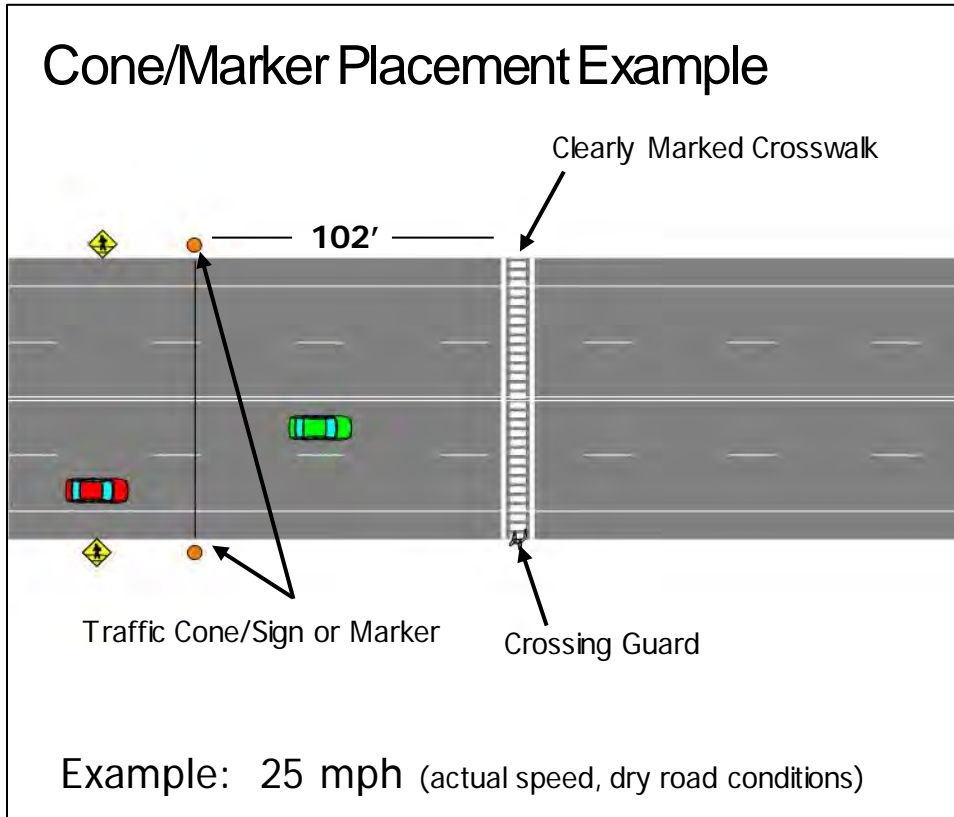
Distances are measured from the nearest crosswalk line to where a cone or marker is to be placed. For example, a Stop and Stay Stopped in-pavement sign can be placed approximately 102 feet from the crosswalk as a visual cue. These distances hold for dry pavement and daylight and suggest a point from which a car HAS TIME to stop. This does not mean that a car WILL stop. The marker provides a visual cue from which the

GAP ASSESSMENT

Adult crossing guards shall not direct traffic in the usual law enforcement regulatory sense. In the control of traffic, they shall pick opportune times to create a sufficient gap in the traffic flow. At these times, they shall stand in the roadway to indicate that pedestrians are about to use or are using the crosswalk, and that all vehicular traffic must stop. (FHWA MUTCD 7D.05)

crossing guard can activate the crosswalk and wait until the near lane of travel stops so that the guard can create a gap, safely proceed into the crosswalk, and initiate a crossing for students.

More information on gap assessment is available in Part III.



Appropriate Signal for Pedestrians

To avoid confusing pedestrians and motorists, different signals must be used for each group.

- A signal from the guard to pedestrians should be **verbal only**.
- The guard should be sure to establish clear eye contact with pedestrians when giving instructions to cross.
- For those students who may be hearing impaired, cannot hear due to traffic noise interference or do not speak the same language as the crossing guard, the guard should use eye contact, a smile in their direction, and a nod of the head along with a verbal command.
- The school may notify the crossing guard supervisor concerning any students who may need special attention at the crosswalk. The supervisor may wish to contact the schools periodically concerning such students.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

- The adult guard should be continually alert for pedestrians who may not follow the signals. The guard should not assume that all students will cross properly. When a student is causing or involved in a dangerous situation, the guard should immediately alert the student verbally. If the student does not respond or refuses to obey direction, the guard should take the student's name and report the incident to her/his supervisor.

Appropriate Signals for Alerting Motorists

- The crossing guard **uses the STOP paddle and hand signals only** for communicating with **motorists**.
- The crossing guard needs to be highly visible to the motorist. Clear and precise signals and gestures are essential. He or she should be positioned at the edge of the crosswalk nearest the center of the intersection.
- The STOP paddle should be held at shoulder height and the other arm extended. A crossing guard must **always** give the visual signal to stop, even if there appear to be no cars in the immediate vicinity or if traffic is very light.
- At the discretion of the local supervising agency, and in addition to using the STOP paddle, the school crossing guard can use clearly delivered hand signals to alert motorists. The signal for alerting and stopping traffic is to raise the arm forward parallel to the ground with palm and fingers extended toward motor vehicles.
- The adult guard should be continually alert for motorists who may not follow these hand signals.
- The guard should not assume that all motorists will stop or remain stopped.
- The guard should prevent motorists from entering the crosswalk while students are crossing.
- When a motorist is creating a dangerous situation, the guard should take the motorist's license plate number when possible and report it to their supervisor at his or her earliest opportunity.
- Remember that crossing guards may not direct traffic unless specifically trained to do so. They may only create gaps in traffic with their STOP paddle for the purpose of crossing students.



Search Pattern

One of the most important roles of the adult school crossing guard is to model and reinforce proper crossing behavior. To allow time to assess traffic conditions at a crossing, pedestrians need to recognize and pause at “traffic edges.” Typically curbs are the traffic edges beyond which a pedestrian might encounter moving traffic. However, in some situations,

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

where motor vehicles illegally park too close to the crosswalk or where there are stopped vehicles, the traffic edge would extend beyond the curb. At each traffic edge, pedestrians must search in the directions from which traffic might approach before proceeding into the roadway.

A proper search pattern is as follows:

- Stop at the curb or edge of the road.
- Look LEFT - RIGHT - then LEFT again for traffic.
- If at an intersection, one should look ahead and over one's shoulder for possible turning vehicles.
- Keep searching while crossing the road.
- If there are parked cars or other obstacles, the children should walk to the edge of the obstacle to perform their search procedure.

This search pattern needs to be performed **each time** a guard begins to cross children. A guard is **always** the first person in the street and the last person out of the street.

Although most drivers respond appropriately to a crossing guard crossing children, some hazardous driver behaviors that may occur at a guarded crosswalk include:

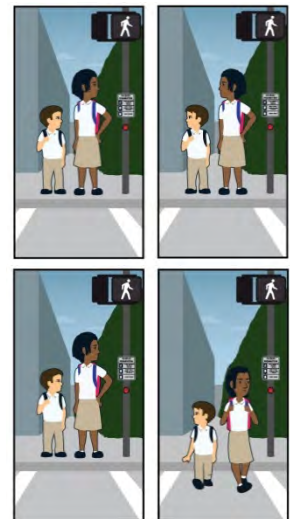
- Speeding
- Driving through a crosswalk
- Stopping within a crosswalk
- Encroaching on a crosswalk when making a left turn at a green light
- Encroaching on a crosswalk when making a right turn on red
- Failure to yield to pedestrians in an unmarked crosswalk, or failure to stop for pedestrians in a marked crosswalk

Crossing guards should expect the unexpected.

Preparing the Students

Crossing guards should talk to the children about safe crossing techniques as they are gathering and waiting to be crossed. Guards should use this opportunity to help students learn good pedestrian skills that they can use any time. The crossing guard should:

- Review with the children what they are searching for when they scan the street and why.
- Stress to them that they must continue looking while they are crossing the street until they are completely out of the roadway.
- Watch for students rushing to join the group.



Look left, right, left, and scan over shoulder

- Socialize with children while they are on the sidewalk but NOT while they are in the crosswalk.
- Remind the children to wait at least one step back from the curb or roadway edge until the guard has stopped traffic and signaled them to search and proceed. It can be helpful to mark a line with tape or use some other marker to show the children how far back they should stand.
- Encourage children to walk directly across the street at a consistent pace, after searching.
- Remind children that bicycles should be walked, and skateboards should be carried, while crossing the street.
- Monitor the children as much as possible to see that they are scanning for traffic properly. Praise those who do and encourage those who do not.

Use of STOP Paddle

To alert traffic on a two-way street to stop, crossing guards must employ the steps described below. Illustrations of these steps can be found on page 23.



1. Raise the STOP paddle with the arm that will be closest to the far (opposite) side of the street when taking the position for crossing children. At an intersection, this will be the arm that is farthest from the intersection when the guard is at the curb facing the crosswalk.
2. Hold the paddle shoulder-high so that one side is displayed to traffic approaching the crosswalk on the near side of the street (“near-side traffic”), and the other is displayed to traffic approaching the crosswalk on the far side of the street (“far-side traffic”). The crossing guard’s body should not block either view of the paddle. The two faces of the paddle should remain continuously visible to traffic approaching on the respective sides. The paddle leads the guard into the crosswalk. S/he looks directly at near-side traffic momentarily, turning her/his head as necessary.
3. Continuing to hold the paddle as described in Step 2, the guard looks directly at far-side traffic, turning her/his head as necessary as s/he approaches the middle of the street.
4. The STOP paddle should be kept raised while a guard is in the roadway. A guard should not switch the STOP paddle from one hand to the other or wave it about while in the roadway.

TYPES OF INTERSECTIONS

The following describes proper crossing procedures for different types of intersections.

Unsignalized Intersections

1. **Curbside assembly:** The guard stands on the curb or behind the edge of the roadway on the side of the street where children approach. S/he keeps children at least one step back from the curb or roadway edge.



the roadway on the side of the street where children approach. S/he keeps children at least one step back from the curb or roadway edge.

2. **Select an opportune time:** The guard first scans traffic on the near-side approach, including any vehicles that might turn into the approach, waiting for an opportune time to create a sufficient gap in traffic. Then s/he scans both approaches before entering the crosswalk. S/he reminds children to wait for the verbal direction before starting to cross.



The guard first scans traffic on the near-side approach, including any vehicles that might turn into the approach, waiting for an opportune time to create a sufficient gap in traffic. Then s/he scans both approaches before entering the crosswalk. S/he reminds children to wait for the verbal direction before starting to cross.

3. **Enter crosswalk, stopping near-side traffic:** The raised STOP paddle leads the guard to the middle of the roadway. If using a whistle, s/he enters with whistle in mouth.



The raised STOP paddle leads the guard to the middle of the roadway. If using a whistle, s/he enters with whistle in mouth.

4. **Stop far-side traffic:** As the guard approaches the middle of the roadway, s/he checks that the STOP paddle is clearly visible to far-side traffic, including any turning traffic.



As the guard approaches the middle of the roadway, s/he checks that the STOP paddle is clearly visible to far-side traffic, including any turning traffic.

Source:
©The State of Florida
Department of
Transportation

5. **Take position:** The guard takes a position where s/he can keep an eye on the children and traffic, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. S/he makes a final check that traffic on crosswalk approaches has stopped.



6. **Initiate crossing:** The guard turns her/his head toward the waiting children and, making eye contact, tells them to search and cross when the way is clear.



7. **Maintain position:** As children cross, the guard ensures that no driver crosses the crosswalk before the last child in the group has reached the opposite curb or roadway edge and s/he has begun step 8.



8. **Return to the starting curb:** The guard remains alert for traffic and continues to display the STOP paddle until s/he has left the roadway.



Source:
© The State of Florida
Department of
Transportation

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Signalized Intersections

1. The guard stands on the sidewalk or edge of road on the side of the street that students will cross.
2. As students gather, s/he pushes the "WALK" button if available.
3. S/he instructs the students to wait one step back from the curb or roadway edge until given the signal to begin the crossing process.
4. After completing the search and determining that it is safe to do so, s/he enters the street with a "fresh" green or "WALK" signal and faces the intersection on the crosswalk line nearest to the center of the street.
5. S/he alerts motorists who are indicating that they intend to make a right or left turn that they must stop for the pedestrians who wish to cross. S/he ensures that no driver crosses the crosswalk before the last child in the group has reached the opposite curb or roadway edge.
6. When the traffic stops, s/he verbally instructs the students to begin their search (left, right, left and over their shoulder for turning traffic) and to cross when safe. S/he instructs the students to continue walking if the signal changes to a flashing "Don't Walk."
7. The guard waits until the students have finished crossing the road.
8. The guard returns to the edge of the road or curb, lowers the STOP paddle, and allows traffic to resume.

Crossing Procedure at Unsignalized Midblock Crosswalk

This procedure follows the same steps used at an unsignalized intersection except that step 5 is:

The guard takes position in the middle of the street, just outside the crosswalk *on the side closest to the approach with the greater apparent risk of traffic conflict (e.g., due to greater volume or higher typical speeds)* and faces that approach, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. S/he makes a final check that traffic on both approaches has stopped.

Four or More Lanes

At a signalized or unsignalized crossing with four or more lanes, two guards should be assigned. Each guard should handle one side of the street. The guard on the side of the street where children are waiting to

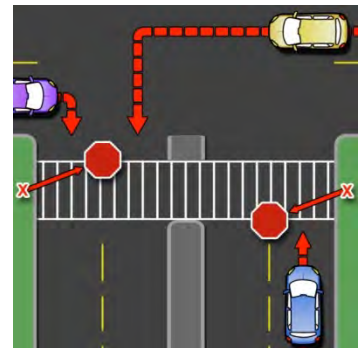


Image Source: © The State of Florida Department of Transportation

cross should initiate the crossing. The guard should use applicable procedures for that side only and should proceed to the middle of the traffic lanes. The other guard should simultaneously alert traffic, then enter the roadway and cross the children the rest of the way. If you do not have the personnel for multiple crossing guards at a multi-lane crossing then discuss the specific challenges and the appropriate protocol for this crossing with the responsible crossing guard. Multi-lane crossings are the most challenging, potentially the most dangerous, and have the most variables for consideration.

Signalized Midblock Crosswalk

Generally, a pedestrian pushbutton is installed at a signalized midblock crosswalk. The crosswalk is considered “signalized” (in the sense of “controlled”) if the signal displays a red indication when activated. If not (e.g., if the signal is a flashing yellow warning beacon), the crossing guard uses the procedure for an unsignalized midblock crosswalk.

The procedure for a signalized midblock crosswalk follows the steps used at a signalized intersection except step 5, which is:

The guard takes position in the middle of the street, just outside the crosswalk *on the side closest to the approach with the greater apparent risk of traffic conflict (e.g., due to greater volume or higher typical speeds)* and faces that approach, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. S/he makes a final check that traffic on both approaches has stopped.

Difficult Situations

If heavy traffic, inadequate signal timing, or other conditions make crossing pedestrians difficult, crossing guards should notify their supervisor. In the near term, adjustments to the procedures described above may be required. Assistance may be available from police officers who can direct traffic. A consistently hazardous situation may require a traffic study to be performed, in which case the police department should contact the municipal engineer.

Courtesy Crossing of Adult Pedestrians

A guard may cross an adult pedestrian who requests assistance if the crossing does not conflict with the guard’s principal duty to cross student pedestrians.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Walking School Buses

A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking to and from school with one or more adults. It can be as informal as two families walking together. It can also be a more structured with an established walking route, meeting points (stops), timetable and schedule of trained parent volunteers or walking bus “drivers” who can take turns during the week to share responsibility. Crossing guards should maintain a friendly but firm relationship with the adult volunteers. At the post, the crossing guard is in charge and all pedestrians must obey crossing guard commands.



POST ROUTINES

Common Hazards

Crossing guards should regularly inspect the area surrounding their posts for hazards.

- Sight Obstructions – such as vegetation that obstructs signs or views, and trucks or cars parked too close to the crosswalk, thereby blocking lines of sight.
- Sidewalk or Crosswalk Obstructions – such as snow or ice, fallen branches, broken pavement, pot holes, standing water, mud, construction, or the absence of sidewalk paving. These obstructions might force children to walk in an unsafe location or might create slip or trip hazards.
- Missing or damaged signs, lights, crosswalk striping/paint – the absence of functioning signs increases hazardous conditions by providing fewer warnings to motorists of potential crosswalk activity.
- Other potential hazards – loose dogs, suspicious activity.



Hazards should be reported as soon as practical without interrupting the crossing of children. If the hazard poses an immediate threat the crossing guard should contact a supervisor or police dispatch. As eyes and ears on the street, crossing guards may be aware of issues in a neighborhood and these concerns should also be reported to the supervisor. Guards are responsible for putting the department "on notice" that a potential problem exists. They should always document the date, time, and details of the problem for future reference and note who was notified and when.



Weather Conditions

Inclement weather may create hazardous conditions that require increased attention on the part of crossing guards.

- Rain, fog, sleet, hail, and snow reduce visibility for both drivers and pedestrians. In addition, drivers may be distracted by weather conditions.
- A lightning storm can be dangerous and can disrupt operation of traffic signals.
- In a rainstorm, roads can quickly become slippery. Stopping distances for vehicles increase. Crosswalk striping may be slippery when wet.
- In a rainstorm, children may run to get to shelter.
- Inclement weather leads to increases in school drop-off and pick-up traffic, thus complicating crossings near schools.
- Plowed snow may block curb ramps or cause water and slush to accumulate in the crossing area.
- Plowed snow may reduce sight lines for motorists.
- Sun glare may impair drivers' ability to see, particularly in the winter months when the sun is low in the sky.
- Keeping the STOP paddle raised in windy conditions can tire the guard's hand. A guard should rest her/his hand when not crossing students.

In adverse weather, guards should take extra precautions to ensure that all traffic is stopped before they step into the road and they should plan an escape route in case they are threatened by vehicles in the street. They must wear the retroreflective vest on the outside of all clothing to maintain visibility. Umbrellas shall not be used as they hamper arm movement and block views.

Crossing guards should pay attention to local weather forecasts and dress appropriately. They should keep comfortable with the correct jacket and footwear. Boots that provide traction are useful in snow and ice. Guards should consider buying traction devices (cleats) that attach to the soles of boots. A brimmed hat helps to keep rain, snow, and sun out of eyes or off glasses, improving the ability to see. A hat may need to be tied on windy days. A STOP paddle with a long handle may provide stability in wind, ice and snow.

INCIDENT REPORTING

Traffic Violations

In the case of motor vehicle traffic violations at a crossing guard post, the guard should not engage with the motorist. If possible, without disrupting the crossing of children, s/he records a description of the vehicle and the driver with tag number. S/he should report the offense to the supervisor or to police dispatch as directed by the supervisor.

Emergencies

Emergencies may include vehicle crashes, collisions involving vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists, sudden illness of pedestrians or motorists, or injury of pedestrians or bicyclists.

The same basic rules apply to each situation. Crossing guards should:

- Remain at the post with the children. Group children to maintain control. (Ask the safety patrol to assist, if available).
- Stop crossing the children until the situation is under control, and then determine the best way to cross them safely. If practical, the guard may select another temporary crossing location.
- If able, report emergencies by phoning 911. If not able, ask others to call 911. Instruct the caller to give the closest intersection or cross street and describe the situation to the 911 operator. The guard might also ask the caller to notify the school administration so they can assist with the children.
- If a victim is ambulatory, he or she should move out of the road. Otherwise, a victim should not be moved except by qualified emergency medical personnel.
- Always notify the crossing guard supervisor as soon as possible of any emergency that may have occurred at the post.

First Aid

The department may provide First Aid and CPR training for crossing guards to learn the appropriate response to an emergency situation. Remember that guards should only care for the injured if they are trained to do so.

Guards:

- Should first protect themselves and the children in the area.
- Should not attempt to help if they are injured.
- Should try to prevent additional damage or injury.
- Should contact authorities.



SCHOOL STUDENT SAFETY PATROLS

Crossing guards should be familiar with the school district's policy on student safety patrols. This understanding will clarify roles and responsibilities and promote effective cooperation between members of the two groups to support safe street crossings of students.

School safety patrol responsibilities differ from the duties of crossing guards. Safety patrol members do not control vehicular traffic or place themselves in the path of vehicular traffic. Members of the school safety patrol control and direct pupil traffic on school grounds, on sidewalks and paths adjacent to a street or roadway. Their duty is to keep other students back from the street in a safe place, to keep order in a group preparing to cross, and to watch for stragglers and latecomers. Members of the school safety patrol should work in cooperation with the signals of the adult crossing guard.

The adult crossing guard should maintain a friendly but firm relationship with members of the school safety patrol, should state requests clearly, and should encourage members of the school safety patrol to wear their uniforms and to behave appropriately.^{vi}

PART II. CROSSING GUARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This section supplements the crossing guard training in Part I and provides crossing guard supervisors with information on hiring, training, and managing crossing guards as well as crossing guard post review. Familiarity with the material in Part I will assist the trainer in providing a comprehensive training program.

PLACEMENT OF CROSSING GUARDS

Many factors contribute to the need for a crossing guard. General federal guidance, states that “adult crossing guards may be used to provide gaps in traffic at school crossings where an engineering study has shown that adequate gaps need to be created and where authorized by law” (FHWA MUTCD 7D.02).

“The frequency of gaps in the traffic stream that are sufficient for student crossing is different at each crossing location. When the delay between the occurrence of adequate gaps becomes excessive, students might become impatient and endanger themselves by attempting to cross the street during an inadequate gap” (FHWA MUTCD Section 7A.03).

Gap Assessment - Observing traffic flow and conditions

Crossing guards assist children by identifying adequate gaps in traffic or by creating adequate gaps. The Institute of Transportation Engineer’s “School Trip Safety Program Guidelines” defines an acceptable gap as the minimum time between vehicles that 85 percent of all groups of pedestrians waiting to cross a street will accept as adequate to cross the street and that at least one adequate gap should occur each minute to allow for children to cross without undue delay

Ultimately, local criteria and traffic engineering judgment and analysis are needed to determine when and where an adult school crossing guard is needed. Resources relating to gap studies and stopping distances are included in Part III.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Placement considerations

Traffic Surveys

Sites where a school crossing guard may be needed are surveyed by the police department and the municipal engineering department following requests or observations made by the school crossing guard supervisor, school officials, or concerned parents.

Given changes in school-age population from year to year, the police department may find it necessary to conduct an annual survey to identify locations requiring crossing guard supervision. Discontinuation of a crossing guard post due to shifts in traffic or student population or due to fiscal constraints should be documented.

Additional Factors

The Institute of Transportation Engineers lists additional factors that may affect the determination of placement for adult crossing guards.

Age of students: Younger students have a harder time judging the safety of an intersection, as they have more difficulty judging the speed and distance of approaching vehicles. They may be more tempted to cross during an unsafe gap in traffic.

Road conditions (width, number of lanes): The complexity of the crossing may warrant the need for a crossing guard. Wide streets with multiple lanes of traffic may require the use of multiple crossing guards.

Sight distance: These conditions are measured from a student's and driver's perspectives and calculated using actual vehicle operating speeds. Temporary obstructions (such as parked cars or snow) may also be factors.

Presence or absence of traffic control devices: Determine if the existing traffic control devices are appropriate. Does a signalized intersection at a school crossing location have a Walk/Don't Walk signal, and if so, does that signal have a push button? Is it fixed time?

Vehicle speed: A crossing located along a higher speed roadway may require a crossing guard because children have a harder time judging necessary stopping distance than adults and may have a harder time identifying safe gaps in traffic.

Volumes of traffic and pedestrians: Traffic volumes at the intersections should be monitored, as should current and projected pedestrian demand based on school demographics.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Attendance boundary and walk zone for school: The distances that walk zones extend from schools and policies for school bus transportation affect the number of children walking to school and the routes they take. They also vary by school district and by age of the students attending the school.

Distance of crossing from school, and adjacent land use: Proximity of a school to residential neighborhoods may increase the potential number of student pedestrians, more so than proximity to other uses.

Crash history: All crashes along the roadways included on the school route plan should be reviewed and analyzed. Various attributes of these crashes (type, frequency, time of day, etc.) should be analyzed to determine their relevance to school safety.

HIRING

New Jersey Statute (N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.1) requires that crossing guards be supervised by the chief of police or other chief law enforcement officer of a municipality. Candidates for the position of school crossing guard in New Jersey must possess the following qualifications:

- Is a citizen and resident of this state;
- Is sound in body and of good health;
- Is of good moral character; and
- Has not been convicted of any criminal offence involving moral turpitude.

The Federal Highway Administration suggests other minimum qualifications to consider when hiring crossing guards (FHWA MUTCD Section 7D.03):

- Average intelligence;
- Good physical condition, including sight, hearing, and ability to move and maneuver quickly in order to avoid danger from errant vehicles;
- Ability to control a STOP paddle effectively to provide approaching road users with a clear, fully direct view of the paddle's STOP message during the entire crossing movement;
- Ability to communicate specific instructions clearly, firmly, and courteously;
- Ability to recognize potentially dangerous traffic situations and warn and manage students in sufficient time to avoid injury;

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

- Mental alertness;
- Neat appearance;
- Good character;
- Dependability; and
- An overall sense of responsibility for the safety of the students.

As with all police department employees, crossing guard candidates should undergo a criminal background check that includes fingerprinting, as required by municipal policy.

In addition, after a job offer is made, an employer may require a medical examination if everyone working in the same capacity is required to have a medical examination. The job offer may be conditional upon the results of the examination. After employment, a medical examination may be required if physical standards are essential to effective conduct of job duties.

N.J.S.A. 40A: 9-154.1

“Every adult school crossing guard shall be under the supervision and direction of the chief of police or other chief law enforcement officer of the municipality wherein he is appointed and shall perform his duties only in such municipality. He shall comply with the rules and regulations applicable to the conduct and decorum of the regular police officers of the municipality.”

Typical crossing guard shifts can range in duration from one-half hour to two hours or more. A guard must be capable of standing for the entire shift. Noticing and reacting to driver movements requires alertness and agility. A basic physical examination for prospective crossing guards should check mobility, blood pressure, vision, and hearing. The following standards are from the New Jersey Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund website at http://www.njmel.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=118:medical-examinations&catid=191.

The examination should be repeated as follows:

- Up to age 39: every five years
- From 40 to 49: every two years
- 50 +: every year

The physical examination, vision and hearing tests should be conducted in a clinical setting by a physician with experience examining job applicants.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

The examining physician should be provided a job description listing the physical requirements for the position including:

- Ability to stand for one to two hours at a time
- Ability to lift and hold in position a STOP paddle weighing approximately one pound while holding the opposite hand in an upright, raised position
- Ability to walk, unassisted, across the street numerous times
- Ability to raise both feet to step over a curb
- Ability to work in adverse weather conditions
- Requirements for vision and hearing are specified in Part III.

If abnormalities or deficiencies are identified as a result of the physical examination including vision and hearing tests, the candidate is not qualified for the position. As an option, candidates not meeting the standards can be referred to an appropriate specialist for further examination to determine their physical capacity to perform the duties of the position. If this option is pursued, the specialist must be provided with the results of the first examination and the standards that are to be met. Until the specialist report is received, the candidate should not be permitted to serve as a crossing guard. If the specialist report confirms the earlier testing outcomes, the candidate is not qualified to serve as a crossing guard.^{vii}

UNIFORMS

The presence of crossing guards informs motorists that children may be crossing the street. The uniform and equipment increases the visibility of the crossing guard and therefore relates to effective job performance. The uniform gives the crossing guards an air of professionalism, thereby contributing to the public perception of them as authority figures deserving respect.

N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.3 requirements relating to crossing guard uniforms and equipment are as follows:

“Before being assigned to any post, an adult school crossing guard shall be provided with a uniform which shall identify his/her function and which shall be distinct from the uniform of a member of the regular police department or force. Such uniform **shall include** but not be limited to:

- Safety vest, worn over all other clothing. This vest shall be high-visibility retroreflective safety apparel labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 (FHWA MUTCD Section 7D.04).



New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

- Hat, and
- Breast and hat badges which shall bear an identification number and the name of the municipality in which the crossing guard is employed.”

STOP paddles **shall be used** by all adult crossing guards and shall be the primary hand-signaling device (FHWA MUTCD Section 7D.05).

Additional clothing items and equipment may be provided by the local agency. These may include:

- Pants, shirts
- Whistle and lanyard
- Raingear
- Gloves, either white or retroreflective
- Spring/winter jacket

No umbrellas or other gear that might interfere with the performance of duties may be used.

A stipend may be provided to the crossing guard for purchase of uniforms and equipment. If a uniform is not provided, supervisors may suggest that dark pants and a light-colored shirt be worn.

The whistle can be a useful tool. When in use by all guards in a municipality, guards gain the attention of drivers by utilizing ONE LONG blast with a STOP paddle to halt traffic.

- Whistle use varies among municipalities. Your policy may be:
 - Whistles shall be used at all times to signal drivers, or
 - Whistles shall be used at the discretion of the crossing guard to signal drivers, or
 - Whistles shall be used only in case of emergency.

However, it is important to ensure that whistle use is consistent among all crossing guards in a municipality.

It shall be the responsibility of every crossing guard to maintain a neat and clean appearance while on crossing guard duty and to wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions.

FHWA MUTCD

The Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices comprises national standards for all traffic control devices including highway signs, roadway markings and traffic signals. This reference provides guidance on the use of crossing guards, crossing guard uniform and equipment, and school zone signage. Use of the STOP paddle by crossing guards is now required through this federal guidance. "Adult crossing guards shall use a STOP paddle. The STOP paddle shall be the primary hand-signaling device." The STOP (R1-1) paddle shall be an octagonal shape. The background of the STOP face shall be red with at least 6-inch series upper-case white letters and border. The paddle shall be at least 18 inches in size and have the word message STOP on both sides. The paddle shall be retroreflectorized or illuminated when used during hours of darkness.

(<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part7/part7d.htm>)

TRAINING AND RETRAINING

- The school crossing guard supervisor will be responsible for supervision, training, and equipping of school crossing guards.
- Training and retraining should be held shortly before the start of the school year.
- Field training may take place at the guard's primary post or a similar post, or a guard may be rotated through posts to acquire familiarity with different situations.
- If a guard is reassigned, or transferred to a crosswalk other than the one at which s/he was trained, or if a guard is assigned to multiple posts, the supervisor shall confirm that the guard is aware of the new conditions and check that the guard is able to manage satisfactorily.
- Substitute guards should have sufficient experience to be familiar with the crossing procedure appropriate for any school crossing to which s/he might be assigned.
- A community service officer, traffic control officer, or other employee available for substitute crossing guard duty should complete the same training as a regular guard. School crossing guards will be provided copies of procedures and all rules and regulations applicable to the municipality and other job-related information such as contact information, school daily schedules and annual calendars, municipal calendars, post addresses, and other training or pertinent information.
- Prior to the start of each school year, continuing school crossing guards will be retrained and reevaluated.
- A guard who is to be retrained should repeat the training course, including the practical training element.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Classroom training

Classroom training may include review of the material in Part I (pages 3-30) of this training manual, review of resource materials on the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center website (www.saferoutesnj.org/crossingguards), and presentation of departmental policies and procedures. The use of photographs of crossing guards in everyday situations at their posts, and/or intersection diagrams and aerial photographs of intersections, may facilitate discussion of common issues.



Practical Training

Practical training incorporates role play and simulation to practice the techniques and procedures used to safely and effectively cross student pedestrians. These exercises should form a part of the mandatory, annual **two-hour classroom training** for new employees and the review session for established guards.

It is recommended that field training be conducted at one or two school crossing locations. If field training is not feasible, practical training can be held in the classroom using a simulated crosswalk marked out on the floor. Participants adopt the roles of student pedestrians, crossing guards, and drivers, and practice proper crossing procedures using the STOP paddle, hand gestures, and whistles if they are used by crossing guards in a municipality. Review should include crossing procedures for signalized and unsignalized intersections, and appropriate responses to incidents and emergencies.

Field Review of Skills

The mandatory **20-hour field training** for new crossing guards should include observation of an experienced guard followed by supervised practice of crossing procedures at the post where the new guard will be assigned or a post similar to that post. Alternatively, training may take place at multiple posts to accustom new crossing guards to various situations. This process may be particularly valuable for training substitute crossing guards.

N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.2 requirements relating to crossing guard training are:

- A minimum of two hours of classroom instruction which shall include information on methods of traffic control and the duties and responsibilities of adult school crossing guards.
- A minimum of 20 hours of field training in which the trainee shall be supervised by an experienced adult school crossing guard or a regular police officer. This training requirement may be waived by the chief of police for an adult school crossing guard who is also a police officer.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The crossing guard's understanding of the role of the crossing guard and standard crossing procedures may be assessed through use of the Performance Checklist for New Jersey Crossing Guards. Results should be shared with the crossing guard and gaps in knowledge should be addressed before the guard assumes independent responsibility for a post.

The Performance Checklist may be used on an annual basis to provide information for retraining sessions. For experienced guards, observation by the supervisor while at their post can confirm that the guard has a firm understanding of job responsibilities and procedures, and can bring to light misunderstandings or omissions in the crossing guard training. Performance review will benefit both the crossing guard and the supervisor and ultimately the student pedestrians.

- Each guard should be observed by the supervisor at least once during their term. Newer guards or complex posts should be observed several times.
- A copy of the observation report should be shared with the crossing guard who should be given an opportunity to discuss the report. Inappropriate behavior that has been observed or reported may be addressed by issuance of a warning followed by retraining.

The Performance Checklist is available in Part III.

Resources

Crossing guard job performance can improve with access to information to be conveyed through:

- Tip sheets or brochures
- Referral to online resources
- Opportunities for networking with other crossing guards
- Retraining sessions

ORIENTATION TO SUPERVISING AGENCY

All crossing guards must be under the supervision and direction of the chief of police or other chief law enforcement officer for the municipality. Familiarity with the personnel and reporting structure of the agency, and knowledge of local ordinances, policies, and procedures will assist the crossing guard with job performance. In particular, guards should be familiar with the chain of command.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Crossing guards should carry with them at their posts:

- Name and phone number of the supervisor
- List of law enforcement/ emergency numbers

In addition, it is recommended that crossing guards carry:

- List of the school(s) to which students at the crossing guard post are traveling, with the following information:
 - Phone numbers of school(s)
 - Principals' names
 - Hours that schools are in session
 - Copy of the school calendar
- Roster of crossing guards containing:
 - guards' names
 - guards' phone numbers
 - post location
 - time of post

As partners with the police, crossing guards should have the support of their department. They should be seen by the public as representatives of the police force and as professionals. Members of the public tend to see a uniformed guard as a figure of authority. When issues arise at their posts, guards need to know that their supervisors will respond in a timely manner and remedy any issues. This response will empower guards to report incidents and to command respect at their posts.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL ZONE MARKINGS, SIGNS, AND SIGNALS

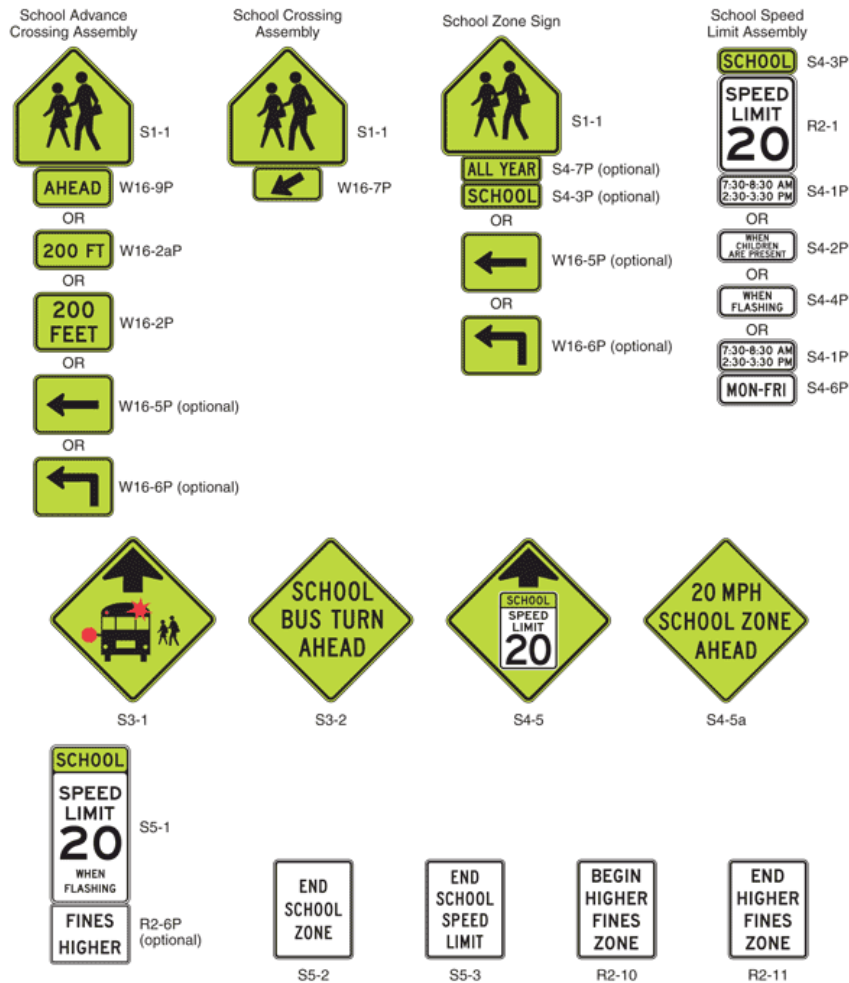


Image Source: MUTCD

A crossing guard should recognize and understand any signs and pavement markings located within the area of his or her post. Maintenance of crosswalk markings, stop lines, bike lane lines, school zone markings, warning signs, school speed zone signs, parking prohibition signs, and STOP signs is essential to supporting safe street crossings. Replacement of missing or damaged signs or markings should be a priority. Information on school zone signs and markings can be found in FHWA MUTCD Section 7B at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part7/part7b.htm> and Section 7C at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part7/part7c.htm> and in Part III of this Manual.

Understanding Traffic Signal Operation at Crosswalks

A guard assigned to a signalized crosswalk should recognize and understand pedestrian signal indications and know how pedestrians should cross at these crosswalks.

Information on these signals and pedestrian clearance time (from the start of the flashing indication to the time when any conflicting green is illuminated) can be found in FHWA MUTCD Section 4E at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/htm/2009/part4/part4e.htm>. If a supervisor receives a report that a traffic signal's timing does not provide adequate time to finish crossing children before a green light is illuminated for traffic on the crossed roadway, the post should be observed and, if necessary, the signal timing should be adjusted. The Post Observation Report, discussed below, can be useful for documenting issues such as inadequate signal timing.

POST OBSERVATION

Obstructions and unusual conditions near the crossing location can lead to high risk vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Crossing guards are instructed to inspect the area of their posts each day to identify any hazards in the physical environment that might negatively impact pedestrian safety. Crossing guards should be familiar with school zone signage and pavement markings, traffic control devices and pedestrian signs and signals.

Review potential hazards and discuss how crossing guards should handle these situations, including the means to determine if the issue needs immediate attention and whom to contact.

In some communities, crossing guards report problems to dispatch or to another appropriate agency and in some they are instructed to report all issues to their supervisor. Make sure that all crossing guards know the proper reporting procedure. The crossing guard supervisor should follow up on reported issues and should inform the reporting crossing guard of the outcome.

Guards should be aware of malfunctioning traffic or pedestrian signals, school zone signals, and damaged, worn or missing traffic signs or painted striping.

If a guard observes a nonfunctioning traffic signal upon arrival at the school zone or during post time, the guard shall call his or her office

immediately to obtain police assistance in directing traffic. If the signal phase needs adjusting, the guard should report the problem as soon as possible.

Hazards which can create sight obstructions include but are not limited to:

- parked cars
- bushes or low-hanging tree branches
- signal controller boxes
- signs
- mail boxes
- benches
- trash cans
- snow banks

Guards should park their own vehicles so they do not obstruct visibility for approaching cars or students or force pedestrians to walk in an unsafe location. Never park on a crosswalk, on a sidewalk, within 25 feet of a crosswalk or within 50 feet of a STOP sign (N.J.S.A. 39:4-138).

Hazards which can force pedestrians to walk in an unsafe location include, but are not limited to:

- standing water, mud, ice or snow on the sidewalk or curb ramp
- broken pavement
- open drainage grates
- overgrown plants
- construction debris
- loose dogs
- lack of sidewalks
- parents loading or unloading vehicles
- vehicles parked across driveways or in crosswalks

Other hazards:

- speeding motorists
- inattentive motorists
- suspicious activity

Some conditions may not be correctable. Supervisors should discuss with the guards how they should handle these conditions to ensure their own safety and that of the children.

Look for hazards from a child's eye level. Sight lines will be different for children than for adults.

Resolution to hazardous conditions may require the supervisor to communicate with other municipal departments such as public works, engineering or planning, or to coordinate with county or state agencies if the hazard involves a county or state road. Prioritization of crossing guard posts for maintenance and repair will improve conditions for crossing guards and pedestrians.

Guards should also be alert to suspicious situations in the area, such as an occupied parked car or a vehicle that repeatedly passes the guard's location. Students may tell the guards of suspicious subjects. The guard should not treat this information as factual, but should be cautious. In all these cases, the guard should notify his or her supervisor as soon as the shift ends, or if the situation requires immediate police attention, s/he should contact her/his supervisor or police dispatch.

All posts should be reviewed by the traffic safety officer on an annual or semiannual basis. An example of a Post Observation Report is available in Part III.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

Crossing guards are not law enforcement officers, nor are they assigned for the purpose of enforcing traffic laws. However, the guard is sometimes in a good position to observe infractions that can endanger others.

In the event of such an infraction, a crossing guard must be able to accurately describe the vehicle and license number or persons involved. The guard should carry a pen and notepad for this purpose, or the guard can write the information on his or her hand. In the event of a traffic crash or infraction, a guard may be asked to provide information to law enforcement personnel. Any infraction or crash should be reported to the guard's supervisor, unless other reporting procedures have been defined. If an emergency has occurred, the guard should ask multiple motorists to call 911 to report it.

Information required for reporting vehicles:

- Color, body style, size model of car.
- License plate number.
- Features of the driver.
- Time and day of incident.

New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual

Information required for reporting persons:

- Sex
- Race
- Age
- Clothing description
- Hair color
- Height, weight, body build
- Direction of travel

Whom to Talk With

Guards should talk to law enforcement personnel only. They should not talk to the media or the parties involved in the incident. They should politely refer any questions from the news media to their supervisor, giving the supervisor's name and phone number. They should contact their supervisor immediately after post time to advise him or her of what occurred at their post.

Problem posts

Numerous reports of offenses, such as speeding or ignoring the STOP paddle, at a particular crossing guard post may require a traffic safety officer to monitor the intersection, conduct a crosswalk sting, or set up a speed check.

Emergencies

Emergencies may include vehicle crashes, crashes involving vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists, sudden illness of pedestrians or motorists, or injury of pedestrians or bicyclists.

For each situation, the crossing guard must maintain control of the situation.

- Guards should first protect themselves and the children in the area.
- Guards should not attempt to help if they are injured.
- Guards should try to prevent additional damage or injury.
- Guards should contact authorities.

The police department may provide First Aid and CPR training for crossing guards to learn the appropriate response to an emergency situation. Remember that guards should only care for the injured if they are trained to do so.

Personal Emergencies

If a personal emergency or illness arises while a crossing guard is on duty and requires the guard to leave the post, the guard must contact the supervisor to arrange for coverage of the post.

CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION

Crossing guard supervisors should work with municipal government to recognize effective, dedicated crossing guards. They should investigate the possibility of holding a Crossing Guard Appreciation Day during the school year or instituting an award, such as “School Crossing Guard of the Year” to be given to the school crossing guard who conducts her- or himself in a professional manner when crossing students and who provides a strong role model when teaching young children appropriate street skills and behavior. Public acknowledgment of the important role crossing guards play raises awareness among community members.



COLLABORATION

Improving safety conditions for child pedestrians requires collaboration between school district transportation supervisors, school staff, local law enforcement, municipal traffic engineers and parents. The process can include mapping safe pathways to school, making improvements to intersections, implementing bicycle and pedestrian safety instruction or organizing Walking School Buses or Bike Trains. The formation of a municipal or school traffic safety committee is a good way to start planning for safe travel to and from school for all students. For more information go to

http://www.saferoutesnj.org/?page_id=2916&preview=true.

RESOURCES

A model municipal school crossing guard policy is available in Part III. This model policy serves as a template and can be adapted to the particular circumstances of a municipality. The policy describes procedures to guide traffic safety officers in hiring, training, and supervising crossing guards. The policy, along with training resources such as an image library and tip sheets, and a School Zone Design Guide, can be found on the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Crossing Guard Resource page at <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/crossingguards>.

This manual is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety with funding from the US Department of Transportation -Federal Highway Administration.

ⁱ Rosenbloom, T., Haviv, M., Peleg, A., Nemrodov, D., 2008. The effectiveness of road-safety crossing guards: Knowledge and behavioral intentions. *Safety Science* 46, 1450-1458.

ⁱⁱ National Center for Safe Routes to School. *How Children Get to School: School Travel Patterns from 1969 to 2009*.
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/NHTS_school_travel_report_2011_0.pdf. Accessed June 5, 2012.

ⁱⁱⁱ AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. *Children in Traffic*, 1999. Washington, D.C.

^{iv} Federal Highway Administration. *Crash Type Manual for Pedestrians*.
http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/docs/intro1.pdf, Accessed March 20, 2012.

^v U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. *Human Factors Issues in Intersection Safety*.
<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/resources/fhwasa09027/resources/Intersection%20Safety%20Issue%20Brief%2012.pdf>, 2009. Accessed March 12, 2012.

^{vi} AAA Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Safety and Education, 2007. *Safe Crossings Adult School Crossing Guard Training Program*, Wilmington, DE.

^{vii} New Jersey Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund (<http://njmel.org/>)