

# DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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<i>Subject</i> <b>Roadblocks</b>			
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## I. Policy

It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department that Officers shall only implement roadblocks with the proper authority to end pursuits or for the apprehension of criminals. Officers shall always consider the safety of themselves and other ~~citizens~~ individuals during roadblocks.

## II. Definitions

- A. *Roadblock* – For the purpose of this policy, roadblocks are defined as a stationary location of police vehicles and Officers intended for the specific purpose of limiting the escape opportunities for suspects who present a potential grave danger to the public if allowed to escape. In addition, carefully designed roadblocks may be established to end police pursuits of suspects known to be involved in violent felonies.
- B. *Watch Commander* – The District Commander or Sergeant, designated by the District Commander, who is responsible for the overall operations of his / her watch or unit in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Department.

## III. Use of Roadblocks for the Apprehension of Criminals

- A. Factors Considered in Establishing Roadblocks
1. Sufficient information and descriptions of wanted persons and vehicles
  2. The elapsed time between the crime and its discovery
  3. The longer it takes to evaluate the seriousness of the crime and assemble information, the less effective the roadblock will ~~potentially~~ be.
- B. Authority and Site Selection
1. The Watch Commander shall have the authority to implement a roadblock to apprehend suspects.

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2. The site selected should provide for safety and surprise.
3. Intersections permit more areas of escape and complicate traffic control. Residential areas create a great danger to the public.
4. Make use of natural obstructions and look for terrain features that offer cover and protection.
5. The location should permit observation of vehicles turning around before reaching the roadblock.
6. The Watch Commander shall be responsible for supervising operations at the scene of the roadblock and shall have the authority to terminate the roadblock.

C. Roadblock Operations

1. Officers shall be in their duty uniform to be easily identified.
2. Officers shall be fully informed about the nature and seriousness of the crime, descriptions of the vehicle and wanted person(s), any weapons involved, and, if possible, any previous criminal record.
3. Courtesy is extremely important since non-involved persons ~~will~~ may be inconvenienced.
4. The patrol vehicle(s) should be positioned at a 45-degree angle to the traffic flow.
5. If possible, a stop sign shall be placed at the roadblock point. Flares, lights, and properly positioned vehicles make the roadblock safer, particularly at night.
6. Officers shall stay off the road and out of oncoming headlights. Once a car has stopped, Officers should not walk in front of the stopped vehicle.
7. Investigate all cars, even those known to the Officers. Determine which side of the road to seek if cover is required.
8. Officers shall not remain inside any vehicle positioned in the roadway blocking traffic.

IV. **Use of Roadblocks for Pursuits**

Officers should be mindful of the fact that barricading a roadway must be considered as a use of force likely to result in death or serious injury. The use of a roadblock must be directly related to the seriousness of the crime for which the suspect is being pursued.

A. Factors Considered in Establishing Roadblocks

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1. Roadblocks shall be utilized only as a last resort, when the violator being pursued presents a significant threat to Officers and / or ~~citizens~~ other individuals and has proven to have a total disregard for the lives and safety of the public.
2. The following factors shall be considered before establishing a roadblock:
  - a. The safety of Officers
  - b. The risk of physical injury to the occupants of the pursued vehicle
  - c. The protection of ~~citizens~~ individuals and their property

B. Authority and Site Selection

1. The Watch Commander shall have the authority to implement a roadblock to end vehicle pursuits.
2. Roadblocks shall be established in a well-lit and / or visible area of the roadway and shall not be positioned in a curve or on a hillcrest so that it cannot be seen by the suspect. The roadblock must be clearly visible from a sufficient distance to allow the suspect the opportunity to safely stop.
3. Every roadblock must offer the suspect an alternate path of travel / exit around the barricade.
4. When setting up a roadblock, Officers shall take measures to protect and warn other motorists. Whenever possible, a minimum of three units should be used: two units to block the lanes of travel and one unit to warn and direct traffic approaching from the opposite direction.
5. Once a decision has been made to establish a roadblock, the Whitfield County 911 Center shall announce on all radio frequencies the location of the roadblock and the circumstances surrounding the roadblock. The dispatcher shall also ensure that the pursuing Officer(s) acknowledge the location of the roadblock.
6. The Watch Commander shall be responsible for supervising operations at the scene of the roadblock and shall have the authority to terminate the roadblock.

C. Roadblock Operations

1. Only marked police vehicles shall be used in a roadblock. ~~All~~ Emergency equipment shall be turned on; however, no headlights or spotlights shall be pointed at oncoming traffic.
2. No ~~civilian~~ unmarked Department vehicles or other privately-owned vehicles shall be used in any roadblock.

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3. Officers shall not remain inside any vehicle positioned in the roadway blocking traffic but should seek protection behind available natural and / or man-made barriers.

V. **Authorized Forcible Stopping Techniques**

Intervention tactics and / or stopping techniques shall only be utilized by Officers trained in their use and only after authorization from the Watch Commander.

A. Low-speed Channeling

1. Low-speed channeling is defined as directing vehicular traffic into a progressively narrowing passageway or lane location on the roadway. In order to employ this technique, Officers must ensure that each side of the suspect's vehicle is covered.
2. A minimum of two police vehicles shall always be used for this technique.
3. This tactic shall only be used at low speeds and only after being approved by the Watch Commander.
4. Officers must exercise extra caution once the suspect's vehicle stops, due to the potential for crossfire.

B. Ramming / Bumping / Intentional Contact

The Watch Commander may authorize the use of these techniques, but only if deadly force is otherwise justified.

VI. **Training**

On an annual basis, all sworn personnel shall receive training on the use of Department-authorized roadblocks and authorized forcible stopping techniques.

VII. **Administrative Review**

Any time a roadblock is used for a pursuit or in an attempt to apprehend a criminal, an incident report shall be completed and the Watch Commander shall complete an After Action Review detailing the circumstances of the incident.

*This policy supersedes any previous policies issued.*

**BY ORDER OF**

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**CHIEF OF POLICE**

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