

PATROL

OFFICER/TRAFFIC VIOLATOR RELATIONS

Purpose: Traffic violation enforcement is one of many routine tasks performed by police officers, but for violators it can be an emotionally traumatic experience. The purpose of this policy is to provide officers of the North Little Rock Police Department with procedures for dealing with the traffic violator.

Policy Statement: The Department strives to have every officer make every traffic violator contact courteous, informative and safe, leaving the violator with the impression that the officer has performed a necessary task in a professional and friendly manner.

Summary of Changes: New format.

Procedure:

1 Violator Contact [CALEA 61.1.8]

- 1.1 Once the officer has made the traffic stop and is prepared to contact the violator, the following eight (8) steps should be followed whenever possible:
 - 1.1.1 **Greeting:** The appropriate greeting consists of "Good morning sir / ma'am," or "Good afternoon, sir / ma'am."
 - 1.1.2 **Identification:** The appropriate greeting is immediately followed by identifying yourself and your Department. By giving the violator your name, it personalizes the encounter making it more difficult for the violator to be disrespectful and or confrontational. It also establishes command presence and Departmental backing on your lawful stop.
 - 1.1.3 **Reason for Stop:** Tell the violator your reason for stopping them. By explaining to the violator your reason for stopping them, you alleviate speculation on their part and establish the fact that the stop was based on the violation of a law and not just an arbitrary act.
 - 1.1.4 **Ask for a Justified Reason for the Violation:** Ask the violator if there was a justified reason that they committed the violation for which they were stopped. This places the burden on the violator and gives them an opportunity to explain what may actually be a justified reason.
 - 1.1.5 **Request Drivers License:** Ask the violator for their driver's license. Remember to maintain safe tactics by watching the violator's hands and movements. This may necessitate asking the violator where their driver's license is before they retrieve it.
 - 1.1.6 **Request Proof of Insurance:** After receiving all of the necessary documents, tell the violator something such as "I will need to evaluate these items. For your safety and mine please remain in your vehicle." This lets the violator know what you are doing and makes it clear and precise as to where you want them to remain. Return to your patrol car or other vantage point to evaluate the paperwork and make your decision on what action to take.
 - 1.1.7 **Decision of Action: Verbal Warning, Citation or Custodial Arrest:** If tactically sound, return to the violator's vehicle and inform the violator of your decision.
 - 1.1.8 **Closure; Effectively Disengage:** An effective disengagement will dramatically enhance your professionalism and safety. If a citation is to be issued, make sure the violator understands their options on the citation. If necessary, assist the violator in re-entering the traffic flow.
- 1.2 The above eight (8) steps are guidelines to be followed whenever possible. Officer safety should be the first priority of any traffic stop and should not be compromised by these steps.

Mike Davis
Chief of Police