



# California School Crossing Guard **TRAINING GUIDELINES**

May 2015

The Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Resource Center is a program within California Active Communities, a joint unit of the University of California, San Francisco and the California Department of Public Health, funded through a Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure award from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).



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## **INTRODUCTION**

School Crossing Guards (Crossing Guards) are an important part of the community and serve a vital role in the lives of children who walk or bicycle to school. Crossing Guards help children safely cross the street at key locations and remind drivers of the presence of pedestrians.

Training is an essential step to help ensure that Crossing Guards are performing properly. To improve the safety of California's school-aged children, the California Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Resource Center (TARC), overseen by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and in partnership with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), has compiled this document, the California School Crossing Guard Training Guidelines (Guidelines). Existing training tools from the Colorado Department of Transportation's Crossing Guard Train-the-Trainer Program, the Florida

Department of Transportation's School Crossing Guard Training Program, and the National Center for Safe Routes to School's School Crossing Guard Guidelines were considered in the development process. The Guidelines reflect the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CAMUTCD) 2014 edition.

The Guidelines, though not mandated, provides consistent operating standards to assist Local School Crossing Guard Programs (Local Programs) in training existing and new Crossing Guards. Local Programs are encouraged to utilize the Guidelines to inform program practices and replace or supplement training procedures to promote safety among California's children.



## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

This section covers where Crossing Guards are needed, an overview of Local Program Crossing Guard program administration, and other points to consider for Crossing Guards and their supervisors.

### 2a. Identification of Where Crossing Guards are Needed

Many factors contribute to the need for a Crossing Guard. At a vehicular location, general guidance is provided by the CAMUTCD, but ultimately, local traffic engineering judgment and analysis are needed to determine when and where a Crossing Guard is needed. Available gaps in traffic (space and time between vehicles) are a primary factor in determining the need for a Crossing Guard.

CAMUTCD Section 7D.02 states:

*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 (see Section 7A.03), and where authorized by law.*

*Adult crossing guards may be assigned at designated school crossings to assist school pedestrians at specified hours when going to or from school. The following suggested policy for their assignment applies only to crossings.*

*Guidance:*

*An adult crossing guard should be considered when:*

- A. Special situations make it necessary to assist elementary school pedestrians in crossing the street.*
- B. A change in the school crossing location is being made, but prevailing conditions require school crossing supervision until the change is constructed and it is not reasonable to install another form of traffic control or technique for this period.*

CAMUTCD Section 7A.03 states:

*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 occurrences of adequate gaps becomes excessive, students might become impatient and endanger themselves by attempting to cross the street during an inadequate gap. In these instances, the creation of sufficient gaps needs to be considered to accommodate the crossing demand.*

Additional factors such as those listed below may affect the need for a Crossing Guard and should be considered.

## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### Age of Students

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

### Road Conditions

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 more than one Crossing Guard.

### Sight Distance

These conditions are measured from the 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 that affect sight from a student or driver's perspective.

### Presence or Absence of Traffic Control Devices

Existing traffic control devices may or may not be present. If no traffic control devices are present, it may be a more appropriate option to add them to improve conditions in a school crossing location rather than using of a Crossing Guard.

### Vehicle Speed

Crossing of 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 Vehicular Traffic and Pedestrians

Vehicular traffic volumes at intersections should be monitored, as should current and projected pedestrian demand based on school demographics.

### School Route Plan

A school route plan is another way to identify which roadways should be considered for Crossing Guards. CAMUTCD Section 7A.01 offers the following guidance for establishing a school route plan:

*A school route plan for each school serving elementary to high school students should be prepared in order to develop uniformity in the use of school area traffic controls and to serve as the basis for a school traffic control plan for each school.*

*The school route plan, developed in a systematic manner by the school, law enforcement, and traffic officials responsible for school pedestrian safety, should consist of a map showing streets, the school, existing traffic controls, established school walk routes, and established school crossings.*



## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### School Adjacent Land Use

Proximity of a school to residential neighborhoods may increase the potential number of student pedestrians, more so than proximity to other land 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 and the need for Crossing Guards.

## 2b. Administration

### Local Programs

A Local Program, as mentioned in the Guidelines, refers to the organization responsible for identifying locations where Crossing Guards are needed, hiring, training, and supervising Crossing Guards, providing uniforms and equipment to help Crossing Guards effectively perform their duties, and securing funds to manage the Local Program. Cities and counties may designate local law enforcement agencies, the governing board of any school district, or a county superintendent of schools to administer the Local Program.

Local Programs should consider seeking input from community members such as school administration, teachers, local traffic engineers, law enforcement officers, and parents, to help bring information and expertise to the process and make the steps in setting up the Local Program simpler.

### California Crossing Guard Training

The Guidelines are available at no-cost to Local Programs to promote standardized training to newly employed Crossing Guards as well as seasoned Crossing Guards. The goal is to help Crossing Guards learn how to perform their duties, foster safe crossing environments for school-aged children, understand their roles and responsibilities, learn about relevant laws and traffic regulations, and practice proper crossing techniques all in a standardized, convenient, and cost-effective way.

There is no formal certification process issued from any one agency in the State of California. However, Local Programs are encouraged to utilize this document and the online training to assess, score, and qualify Crossing Guards.

California Crossing Guard Training has three components:

1. Online Training and Testing;
2. Practical Training; and,
3. Field Assessment.

More details on these components are covered in Section 3 of this document.



## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### Crossing Guard Trainers

Who can train new or existing Crossing Guards on roles, responsibilities, protocols, and procedures is left to the discretion of the Local Programs. With that, it is recommended that a trainer be an experienced Crossing Guard or law enforcement officer. Additionally, the trainer should be familiar with this document and the supplemental training materials.

CAMUTCD Section 7D.03 provides further guidance for trainers and training course:

*Adequate training should be provided in adult crossing guard responsibilities and authority. This function can usually be performed effectively by a law enforcement agency responsible for traffic control.*

*Training programs should be designed to acquaint newly employed crossing guards with their specific duties, local traffic regulations, and crossing techniques. Training workshops may be used as a method of advising experienced employees of recent changes in existing traffic laws and program procedures. For example, crossing guards should be familiar with the California law which provides that any person who disregards any traffic signal or direction given by a non-student school crossing guard authorized by a law enforcement agency, any board of supervisors of a county or school district shall be guilty of an infraction and subject to the penalties of Section 42001 of the [California Vehicle Code] CVC (Section 2815).*

### Crossing Guard Refresher Training

Ongoing supervision and review of Crossing Guards should continue throughout the year. It is recommended that a refresher training course be completed once every two years. Refresher training should include:

- Changes to agency or program protocols;
- Overview of new and relevant traffic laws and regulations;
- Changes to school crossing procedures; and,
- Changes to protocol for reporting hazards and emergency situations.

Refresher training may also include relevant topics specific to local communities (e.g., working with diverse populations, crossing children with special needs). The refresher training may be combined with end of the year awards or activities. The duration of refresher training courses is left to the discretion of Local Programs.

Field assessment should occur prior to each new assignment. Field assessment will be covered in more detail in Section 3 of this document.

## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### Prequalification of Crossing Guards

Section 7D.03 of the CAMUTCD states that Crossing Guards should possess the following minimum qualifications:

1. Average intelligence;
2. Good physical condition, including sight, hearing, and ability to move and maneuver quickly in order to avoid danger from errant vehicles;
3. 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;
4. Ability to communicate specific instructions clearly, firmly, and courteously;
5. Ability to recognize potentially dangerous traffic situations and warn and manage students in sufficient time to avoid injury;
6. Mental alertness;
7. Neat appearance;
8. Good character;
9. Dependability; and,
10. An overall sense of responsibility for the safety of students.

### Crossing Guard Uniform and Devices

CAMUTCD Section 7D.04 provides the following standards for the uniform of Crossing Guards:

*Law enforcement officers performing school crossing supervision and adult crossing guards shall wear high-visibility retroreflective safety apparel labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 as described in Section 6E.02.*



Figure 1. Example of retroreflective safety apparel.



## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

CAMUTCD Section 7D.05 provides the following for a STOP paddle:

*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.*



Figure 2. Example of STOP paddle.

The CAMUTCD allows for a 24 x 24 inch size of the STOP (C28A(CA) paddle to be used where greater emphasis is needed and speeds are 30 mph or more.

Retroreflective traffic cones or in-crosswalk panels, as determined by each municipality, may be used to enhance the visibility of a crosswalk. Any signage in the school zone must comply with the CAMUTCD.

See CAMUTCD Section 7B.12 (School Crossing Assembly) for guidance on the use of in-street signage.

A whistle can be used as a warning device to alert a motorist who is unresponsive to the display of the STOP paddle. It is at the discretion of the Local Programs whether or not to use a whistle while conducting school crossing procedures. If the Local Program chooses to use a whistle while conducting crossing procedures, the whistle should remain in the Crossing Guard's mouth as they step into the crosswalk to conduct crossing procedures. More on the use of a whistle is covered in Section 5.

### **Training of Multiply Assigned, Reassigned, or Transferred Crossing Guards**

If a Crossing Guard is reassigned to a crosswalk other than the one at which she/he was trained to work, the supervisor should confirm that the Crossing Guard is aware of the new conditions and check that the Crossing Guard is able to perform all duties satisfactorily at the new location.

### **Requirements for Substitute Crossing Guards**

A substitute Crossing Guard should have sufficient experience and be familiar with the crossing procedures appropriate for any school crossing to which she/he might be assigned. If a community service officer, traffic control officer, or other employee is to be available for substitute Crossing Guard duty, she/he should complete the same training as a regular Crossing Guard.

## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### School Crossing Guard Funding

Consistent and sufficient funding is an important factor for maintaining school crossing guard programs. A stable funding source should be identified and secured by Local Programs. In California, there are a variety of methods available to fund school crossing guard programs. Local Programs can utilize cost-sharing approaches with law enforcement, school districts, or public works departments. Local Programs may also utilize fines and forfeitures in their local "Traffic Safety Fund" to compensate Crossing Guards who are not full-time members of the police department as described in California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 42200:

*Of the total amount of fines and forfeitures received by a city under Section 1463 of the Penal Code that proportion which is represented by fines and forfeitures collected from any person charged with a misdemeanor under this code following arrest by an officer employed by a city, shall be paid into the treasury of the city and deposited in a special fund to be known as the "Traffic Safety Fund," and shall be used exclusively for official traffic control devices, the maintenance thereof, equipment and supplies for traffic law enforcement and traffic accident prevention, and for the maintenance, improvement, or construction of public streets, bridges, and culverts within the city, but the fund shall not be used to pay the compensation of traffic or other police officers. The fund may be used to pay the compensation of school crossing guards who are not regular full-time members of the police department of the city.*

### Liability and Risk Management

Liability is an issue that all Local Programs must consider. Given the high profile nature of the position and the risk involved, it is important that all Crossing Guards receive training and the Local Programs address the issue of liability and risk management. Liability may arise for two reasons: (1) negligence by the school crossing guard, and (2) inadequacy or lack of training. If Crossing Guards are well trained and have an understanding of the importance of their roles and responsibilities, they are less likely to act in a negligent manner. Ensuring that agency policies and procedures are followed will help avoid injuries and negligence by Crossing Guards. In addition, Local Programs can reduce their liability risks by training Crossing Guards well and by putting systems in place that anticipate and avoid potential problems. Following a standard curriculum like the Guidelines will not only help avoid injuries, but also help protect agencies from liability claims.

It is recommended that Crossing Guards fall under the auspice of their Local Programs, and have similar rights and responsibilities (e.g., insurance coverage) as other Local Program employees.

## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### 2c. Other Considerations

#### Reporting Absences

Unless excused, a Crossing Guard should be at her/his station on time, properly attired, and neatly groomed. A policy should be in place whereby a Crossing Guard should notify her/his supervisor of a planned absence at least 24 hours in advance. If illness or another unexpected circumstance prevents her/his timely appearance, a Crossing Guard should notify the supervisor as soon as possible and a process for obtaining a substitute should be in place.

#### Personal Vehicle Parking

If a Crossing Guard travels to her/his assigned crossing location in a personal vehicle, it should be parked only in an allowed location (e.g., not on a sidewalk, nor on the street in any location where signs prohibit parking at the time.) If parked on the street near a crossing, it should not block the Crossing Guard's view of approaching vehicles.

#### Standing While on Duty

A Crossing Guard should not sit while on duty as this would reduce an approaching driver's peripheral view of the Crossing Guard, or might suggest to drivers or arriving children that the Crossing Guard is not on duty. A Crossing Guard also needs to be ready to react quickly in case of an unexpected event. The visible presence of an alert Crossing Guard can also help to discourage unsafe behavior.

#### Distractions and Unrelated Activities

While on duty, a Crossing Guard should not eat, smoke, use other tobacco products, use e-cigarettes, or consume beverages. While in uniform, a Crossing Guard should not patronize liquor establishments. A Crossing Guard should not use a radio (other than a two-way radio for official communication), headphones or portable audio players, nor read books, magazines, newspapers, or other materials while on duty. Mobile communication devices may be used only in an emergency and never while attending to or crossing children.

#### Chain of Command

Any request by school personnel or others outside a Crossing Guard's chain of command (e.g., to change her/his schedule or procedures) should be made through the Crossing Guard's supervisor.

#### Notice of Schedule Changes

A policy should be in place whereby a Crossing Guard's supervisor should notify a Crossing Guard of any school schedule change or special school function that would affect her/his work schedule.

#### Emergency Response Plan

If any emergency response plan has been adopted that involves a special procedure for a Local Program's Crossing Guards, the Crossing Guards should be briefed on the procedure. A Local Program should have a plan for contacting on-duty Crossing Guards in case of an emergency. If the school has a school emergency plan, Crossing Guards should have a copy of this plan.



## 2. ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

### First Aid

Local Programs are strongly encouraged to provide first aid and cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training to all Crossing Guards. Crossing Guards who have not received proper training should not provide first aid or CPR while on duty. All Crossing Guards should be prepared to take reasonable action to help an injured child or contact emergency responders.

### Incident Reporting

It is recommended that Crossing Guards be familiar with the type of information necessary to complete an incident report (e.g., time, date, location, names of those involved, description of incident). Incident reports are typically used to report a crash or infraction that can endanger the lives of pedestrians. Crossing Guards are advised to carry a notebook and pen to write down a description of involved vehicles and/or individuals.

### Reporting Concerns

Crossing Guards are encouraged to be on the lookout for any potential problems or areas of concern while on duty and be prepared to report them to the appropriate individuals or supervisors. A process should be in place to address any problems or concerns.

### Crossing Guards' Interaction with Children

Crossing Guards are representatives of the community, tasked with helping to create a safe environment for children while on duty. Crossing Guards should not physically touch students. Students should never be put into a Crossing Guard's vehicle. Crossing Guards should never give gifts to students.

### Crossing Procedures for Inclement Weather

Crossing Guards need to be particularly careful during inclement weather. Bad weather tends to make people hurry and pay less attention. In addition, visibility is reduced and stopping distances are increased as roads become slippery.

When visibility is reduced, it is critical that Crossing Guards take extra precautions to be seen by motorists. High visibility vests should be worn outside of any jackets (unless the jacket itself is high visibility with retroreflective material). The Crossing Guard should ensure that she/he has the attention of motorists before crossing.

### Courtesy Crossing of Adult Pedestrians

A Crossing Guard may conduct a crossing for an adult who requests it, but this service is secondary to the purpose of crossing student pedestrians and should not be allowed to interfere with this primary purpose.

## 3. CALIFORNIA CROSSING GUARD TRAINING

The information contained in the Guidelines is intended to support Local Program administration and introduce additional training materials that will assist with teaching Crossing Guard candidates the proper procedures and techniques necessary to safely cross student pedestrians.

The Crossing Guard training as outlined here is made up of three components:

1. Online Training and Testing;
2. Practical Training; and,
3. Field Assessment.

Completion of each component is recommended to equip Crossing Guards with the skills and knowledge appropriate to the job. It is at the discretion of the Local Programs to determine appropriate placement of Crossing Guards upon completion of each part of the training.

Upon completion of all training components, including field assessment, it is left to the discretion of Local Programs to determine Crossing Guards' mastery of crossing policies and procedures before assignment to a school crossing location.

Crossing Guard training can be used during the hiring of new Crossing Guards or during refresher training or reassignment of seasoned Crossing Guards. Training is recommended to occur during the first month of employment or reassignment to a new crossing location.

### 3a. Online Training and Testing

Online training consists of four courses that discuss and instruct Crossing Guards on their roles, responsibilities, protocols, and procedures. Each online training course has an accompanying online test.

Once the online training is completed, the Crossing Guard may be given time for questions and/or discussion with a Crossing Guard Trainer before the online test is completed. This can happen either one-on-one or in a group classroom setting.

If classroom training is part of the process, classes should be taught by a Crossing Guard Trainer as defined in Section 2 of this document and should reinforce the techniques and lessons covered in the online trainings as well as any local issues.

A minimum passing score of 80 percent must be achieved by a Crossing Guard candidate on each of the four online tests in order to move onto practical training. Access to the online tests is available at [www.casaferoutestoschool.org/adult-crossing-guard-training/](http://www.casaferoutestoschool.org/adult-crossing-guard-training/).

### 3b. Practical Training

Practical training involves hands-on instruction from a Crossing Guard Trainer. This aspect involves role play and simulation to practice the techniques and procedures (e.g., how to create gaps for street crossing, safely crossing pedestrians, reporting hazards and/or emergency situations) used to safely and effectively cross student pedestrians.





## 3. CALIFORNIA CROSSING GUARD TRAINING

Practical training should be conducted at a crosswalk or simulated crosswalk with no children present and should cover both signalized and unsignalized intersections. Participants should play all roles (student pedestrians, Crossing Guards, drivers) and practice proper crossing procedures using the STOP paddle, hand gestures, and the whistle.

Practical training is designed to last approximately two to four hours depending on the number of Crossing Guard candidates involved. During this time, Crossing Guard candidates will observe proper crossing behaviors from the pedestrian, crossing guard, and motorist points of view. An indoor simulated school crossing location can be used if weather is not permitting.

At the completion of the practical training, Crossing Guard candidates will participate in field assessment.

### 3c. Field Assessment

Field assessment consists of observation, training, and guidance of a Crossing Guard candidate by a Crossing Guard Trainer while in the work environment. Crossing Guard candidates will perform crossing duties and procedures at school crossing locations where they may be assigned while having their performance evaluated by the Crossing Guard Trainer.

During field assessment, Crossing Guard candidates should demonstrate understanding of proper crossing procedures and emergency protocols. Additional guidance and instruction may be provided during the field assessment and any unsafe practices should be noted and addressed. The duration of the initial field assessment is left to the discretion of Local Programs. The Crossing Guard Trainer can score the Crossing Guard candidate by using the *California School Crossing Guard Field Assessment Tool* available in Appendix A.

It is recommended that prior to an assignment, each Crossing Guard candidate be briefed about what to expect at the crossing. A newly placed Crossing Guard should be observed by the Crossing Guard Trainer to ensure that the Crossing Guard has mastered crossing skills in the field.

## 4. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION FOR CROSSING GUARDS

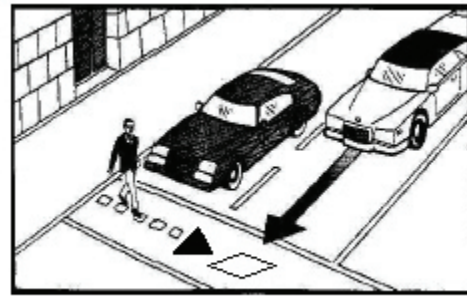
This section covers common situations that Crossing Guards may encounter while on duty and background information, including relevant laws, that will assist them in understanding the scope of their responsibilities.

### Common Traffic Hazards at Crosswalks

Collisions between pedestrians and motor vehicles at intersections usually involve an unexpected violation of road rules by at least one of the parties (pedestrian or driver) and the subsequent failure of both parties to take adequate evasive action. Injury consequences are usually greater for pedestrians; therefore, pedestrians have to use defensible practices. Even when driver practice is poor, pedestrians who practice good crossing techniques can usually anticipate conflicts and avoid a collision.

Pedestrian crashes of the “multiple-threat” type have resulted in serious injuries to children at uncontrolled crosswalks (marked crosswalks where there are no traffic controls or Crossing Guards). This scenario develops when a driver stops to let a pedestrian cross but a second driver fails to stop. The pedestrian enters the crosswalk in front of the stopped vehicle, which partially screens her or him from the view of the overtaking driver. The second driver erroneously assumes there is no reason to stop and begins to pass. Meanwhile the crossing pedestrian neglects to scan for approaching vehicles before proceeding past the stopped vehicle. The second driver and pedestrian collide. Inexperienced pedestrians sometimes assume

that, if one driver stops for them at an uncontrolled crosswalk, others will too.



Source: Federal Highway Administration

Figure 3. Example of a “multiple-threat.”

The visible presence of Crossing Guards crossing children in a roadway tends to improve driver behavior, and Crossing Guards also deter improper crossings by children, such as darting into the roadway. Hazardous driver behaviors that may still occur at a guarded crosswalk include:

- speeding (when crosswalk use is not noticed);
- right turn into crosswalk on green light;
- entering crosswalk to make right turn on red light; and,
- left turn into crosswalk on green light.

## 4. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION FOR CROSSING GUARDS

Drivers who have a green light must still follow the direction of a Crossing Guard. However, the impulse to “go” may prevent the driver from noticing the presence of a Crossing Guard. In this circumstance, it is especially important that the Crossing Guard carefully scan for vehicles upon a signal turning green.

### Understanding Children’s Needs to Master Safe Crossing Skills

A Crossing Guard should actively reinforce safe street crossing practices. This includes coaching children to “look left, right, and left again” for any approaching vehicles and at a corner, to look over the shoulder for turning vehicles. Children have only partially acquired the knowledge, skills, and abilities that experienced pedestrians use. Children in traffic:

- can be impulsive;
- have limited peripheral vision and ability to locate relevant sound sources;
- have poor ability to assess vehicular approach speeds and gaps in traffic;
- are shorter and easily blocked from view by cars;
- are likely to assume that if one driver stops for them, the coast is clear; and,
- are likely to consider simply running across a road as a viable crossing strategy.

### Alerting Traffic and Indicating Pedestrian Crossing

CAMUTCD Section 7D.05 describes operating procedures for Crossing Guards:

*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.*

*Adult crossing guards shall use a STOP paddle. The STOP paddle shall be the primary hand-signaling device.*

### Understanding Applicable Traffic Regulations

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) includes rules that pertain to nonstudent crossing guards, right-of-way at crosswalks, and parking or stopping at or near crosswalks. Although drivers do not always comply with these rules, and Crossing Guards should not depend on them to do so, Crossing Guards should understand the legal basis that supports school crossings.

CVC Section 2815 describes rules pertaining to nonstudent crossing guards:

*Any person who shall disregard any traffic signal or direction given by a nonstudent school crossing guard, appointed pursuant to Section 21100, or authorized by any city police department, any board of supervisors of a county, or the Department of the California Highway Patrol, when the guard is wearing the official insignia of such a school*



## 4. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION FOR CROSSING GUARDS

*crossing guard, and when in the course of the guard's duties the guard is protecting any person in crossing a street or highway in the vicinity of a school or while returning thereafter to a place of safety, shall be guilty of an infraction and subject to the penalties provided in Section 42001.1.*

CVC Section 21950 describes rules pertaining to right-of-way at crosswalks:

*The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk or within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.*

*This section does not relieve a pedestrian from the duty of using due care for his or her safety. No pedestrian may suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle that is so close as to constitute an immediate hazard. No pedestrian may unnecessarily stop or delay traffic while in a marked or unmarked crosswalk.*

*The driver of a vehicle approaching a pedestrian within any marked or unmarked crosswalk shall exercise all due care and shall reduce the speed of the vehicle or take any other action relating to the operation of the vehicle as necessary to safeguard the safety of the pedestrian.*

*[This] does not relieve a driver of a vehicle from the duty of exercising due care for the safety of any pedestrian within any marked crosswalk or within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection.*

CVC Section 21970 describes rules pertaining to blocking crosswalks:

*No person may stop a vehicle unnecessarily in a manner that causes the vehicle to block a marked or unmarked crosswalk or sidewalk.*

### Understanding Traffic Signals at Crosswalks

Crossing Guards should know the meaning of the following signs:



Figure 4. Indicates that the pedestrian may "WALK" or start to cross by entering the roadway.



Figure 5. A flashing upraised hand signal indicates to the pedestrian "DON'T WALK" or do not enter the roadway.

## 4. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION FOR CROSSING GUARDS

### Familiarity with School Area Signs and Pavement Markings

A Crossing Guard should be familiar with the signs and pavement markings used at and on approaches to his/her assigned crossing. These may include crosswalk markings, parking prohibition signs, stop signs, stop lines, pavement word markings for school areas, and school warning and speed zone signs.



Figure 6. Examples of parking prohibition signs.



Figure 7. Example of a stop sign.

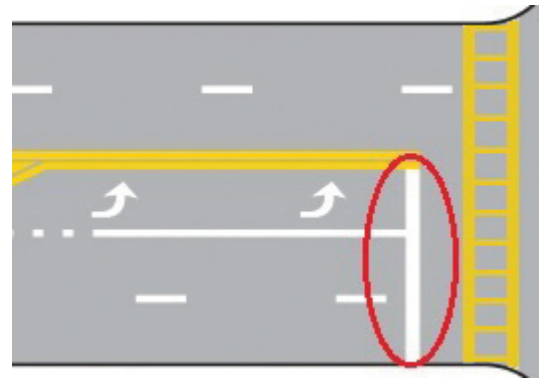


Figure 8. Red oval shows example of a stop line. A stop line is a solid white pavement marking line extending across approach lanes to indicate the point at which a vehicular stop is intended or required to be made.



## 4. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION FOR CROSSING GUARDS

As described in the CAMUTCD, crosswalk markings near schools shall be yellow and school warning signs shall have a fluorescent yellow-green background with a black legend and border.



Figure 9. Examples of school warning signs.

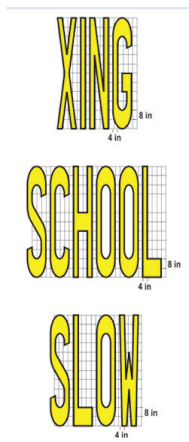


Figure 10. Example of a pavement word marking for a school area without stop signs, traffic signals, or yield signs.

## 5. TECHNIQUES USED FOR SCHOOL CROSSINGS

This section describes crossing techniques that Crossing Guards will need to master in order to do their job safely and effectively. This section does not contain an exhaustive list of crossing techniques.

### 5a. Traffic Scanning Procedure

At an intersection, vehicles can approach a crosswalk from various directions. To gauge whether any approaching vehicles will have time to see her/him in the crosswalk and yield, a Crossing Guard uses the “traffic scanning procedure” for crossing a street. This procedure is:

1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
2. Look left, right, then left again for approaching vehicles.
3. If standing at an intersection, look forward and behind. Scan for any vehicles that might cross your path and look over the appropriate shoulder for any vehicles approaching from your rear that might turn across your path.
4. If the gap seems adequate, make a final search to the left before proceeding. Vehicles on the left are on the side nearest to you.
5. When crossing the street, continue to scan for approaching vehicles.

### 5b. Signaling to Drivers

A Crossing Guard signals to drivers to alert them to their duty to stop for crosswalk users (the Crossing Guard and crossing children), not for purposes of directing traffic. While in the roadway, a Crossing Guard should never make any hand or head movement that might be interpreted by a driver as a signal to proceed.

### 5c. Technique for Use of STOP Paddle

To alert vehicles on a two-way street to stop with a STOP paddle:

1. Hold the STOP paddle shoulder-high so that one side is displayed to vehicles approaching the crosswalk on the near side of the street and the other is displayed to vehicles approaching the crosswalk on the far side of the street. Your body should not block either view of the paddle. The two faces of the paddle should remain continuously visible to vehicles approaching on the respective sides.
2. The STOP paddle leads you into the crosswalk. Look directly at any drivers momentarily, turning your head as necessary.

## 5. TECHNIQUES USED FOR SCHOOL CROSSINGS

3. Continuing to hold the STOP paddle high, look directly at any drivers, turning your head as necessary, as you approach the middle of the street.
4. If a driver disregards the STOP paddle, blow your whistle as described in Section 5d. The STOP paddle should be kept raised while a Crossing Guard is in the roadway. A Crossing Guard should not switch the STOP paddle from one hand to the other or wave it about while in the roadway.

### 5d. Use of Whistle for Warning

The whistle is a warning device and cautions in regard to warning signs. Excessive use can result in reduced effectiveness.

The whistle should be in the Crossing Guard's mouth when stepping into the crosswalk. If a driver fails to stop in response to the display of a STOP paddle, the response is to blow one long blast on the whistle to warn the driver while looking directly at her/him and continuing to display the STOP paddle to her/him with an extended arm.

Whether to blow the whistle when stepping off the curb at a given location is at the discretion of the Local Program. The decision to use a whistle or not should be based on the traffic conditions and the safety of the Crossing Guard. Each crosswalk should be considered individually.

### 5e. Signaling to Children to Begin Crossing

When a Crossing Guard has taken position and is ready to initiate signaling children to cross the street, the instruction to children to make their traffic searches and begin crossing is made verbally, without gestures. The verbal instruction should include the following:

1. Look to the left, right, and left again for vehicles approaching from either direction; and,
2. Begin and continue crossing the street.



## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

This section describes common situations that a Crossing Guard may encounter while on duty. This section **does not** contain an exhaustive list of every possible situation. It is left to the discretion of the Local Program to ensure that each Crossing Guard is adequately trained and prepared to work her/his crossing location. (Note: All figures in this section were adapted from the Florida Department of Transportation's School Crossing Guard Training Program).

In every situation, a Crossing Guard uses the "traffic scanning procedure" for crossing a street (as described in Section 5) and encourages student pedestrians to follow these safety steps.

To review, this procedure is:

1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
2. Look left, right, then left again for approaching vehicles.
3. If standing at an intersection, look forward and behind. Scan for any vehicles that might cross your path and look over the appropriate shoulder for any vehicles approaching from your rear that might turn across your path.
4. If the gap seems adequate, make a final search to the left before proceeding. Vehicles on the left are on the side nearest to you.
5. When crossing the street, continue to scan for approaching vehicles.

### 6a. Procedures for Crosswalk Configurations on Two-Way Roadways

The following section describes the procedures for typical crossings at unsignalized crosswalks and signalized crosswalks.

## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### Unsignalized Crosswalks

#### 1. Curbside assembly

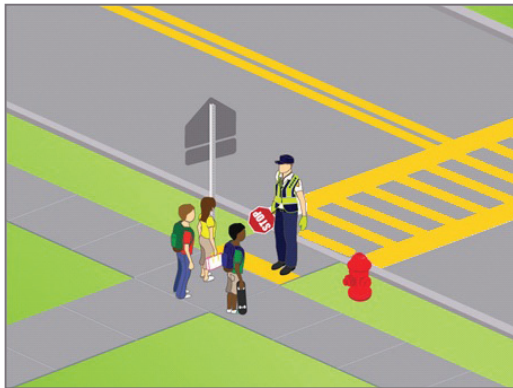


Figure 11.

Stand on curb or behind edge of roadway on the side of the street where students approach. Keep students at least one step back from the curb or roadway edge. If a yellow "stand-back" line is marked or taped on sidewalk, it should be at least three feet behind the curb. Instruct those arriving on a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to dismount and walk the bicycle or scooter or carry the skateboard when crossing the street.

#### 2. Select an opportune time



Figure 12.

As students collect, wait for an opportune time to create a sufficient gap in traffic. Make a final scan for vehicles before entering the roadway. Remind students to wait for your verbal direction before starting to cross the street.



## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### 3. Enter crosswalk, stopping near-side approaching vehicles



Figure 13.

Raise and display the STOP paddle as you walk to the middle of the roadway. Make the hand signal to vehicles on continuing to hold your upraised palm as you walk to the middle of the roadway.

### 4. Stop far-side approaching vehicles



Figure 14.

As you approach the middle of the roadway, check that the STOP paddle is clearly visible to that approach as well.

## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### 5. Take position



Figure 15.

Stand in the middle of the street, just outside the crosswalk on the side closest to the approach with a greater apparent risk of traffic conflict (e.g., due to greater volume or higher typical speeds). Face that approach, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. Keep both arms extended horizontally to your sides. Make a final check that vehicles on both approaches have stopped.

### 6. Initiate crossing



Figure 16.

Turn your head toward the waiting students and make eye contact with them. When you are ready to initiate signaling students to cross the street, instruct students verbally and without gestures to look to the left, right, and left again for vehicles approaching from either direction and begin and continue crossing the street.

## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### 7. Maintain your position

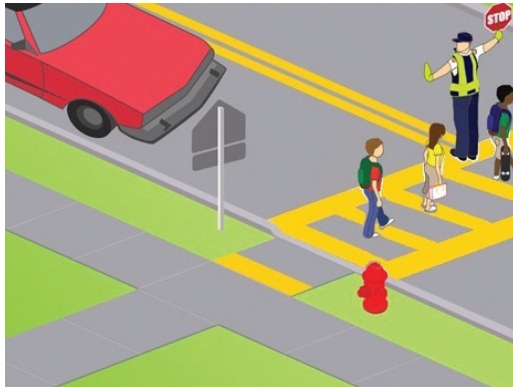


Figure 17.

As students cross behind you, do not allow any vehicle to cross the crosswalk until the last student of the released group has reached the opposite curb or roadway edge.

### 8. Return to the starting curb

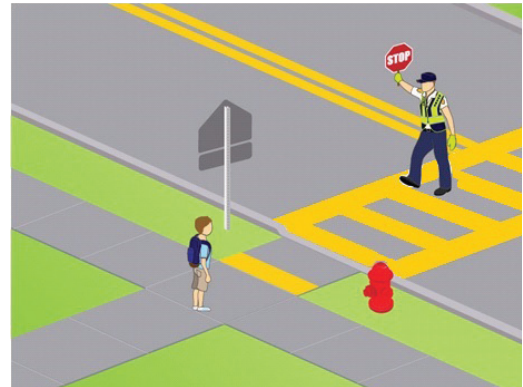


Figure 18.

Remain alert for approaching vehicles and continue to display the STOP paddle until you have left the roadway. Do not lower your upraised hand to the near-side approach until you have left the roadway.

## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### Signalized Crosswalks

In the case of a signalized crosswalk, a pedestrian pushbutton is ordinarily installed.

#### 1. Curbside assembly



Figure 19.

Stand on curb or behind edge of roadway on the side of the street where students approach. Keep students at least one step back from the curb or roadway edge. If a yellow “stand-back” line is marked or taped on sidewalk, it should be at least three-feet behind the curb. Instruct those arriving on a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to dismount and walk the bicycle or scooter or carry the skateboard when crossing the street.

#### 2. Wait for walk indication



Figure 20.

As students collect, press the pedestrian pushbutton to activate the pedestrian walk signal. Remind students to wait for your signal before starting to cross the street. When a fresh walking person symbol (or “walk” message) is displayed (or when the appropriate green is illuminated if there is no pedestrian signal), make a final scan for vehicles.

## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

3. Enter crosswalk, stopping near-side approaching vehicles



Figure 21.

Raise and display the STOP paddle as you walk to the middle of the roadway.

4. Alert far-side approaching vehicles



Figure 22.

Walk toward the middle of the street, alerting vehicles on all approaches (including those that might make left or right turns into the crosswalk) by holding the STOP paddle high.



## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### 5. Take position



Figure 23.

Stand in the middle of the street, just outside the crosswalk on the side closest to the intersection. Face vehicles on that side, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. Keep both arms extended horizontally to your sides. Make a final check that vehicles on both approaches have stopped.

### 6. Initiate crossing



Figure 24.

Turn your head toward the waiting students and make eye contact with them. When you are ready to initiate signaling students to cross the street, instruct students verbally and without gestures to look to the left, right, and left again vehicles approaching from either direction and begin and continue crossing the street.

## 6. CROSSING PROCEDURES FOR A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

### 7. Maintain your position



Figure 25.

As students cross behind you, do not allow any vehicle to cross the crosswalk until the last student of the released group has reached the opposite curb or roadway edge.

### 8. Return to the starting curb or roadway edge



Figure 26.

Remain alert for approaching vehicles and continue to display the STOP paddle until you have left the roadway. Do not lower your upraised hand to the near-side approach until you have left the roadway.

## 6b. Crosswalks on Multi-Lane Streets

At a signalized or unsignalized crosswalk that crosses four or more lanes (on an undivided or divided street), two Crossing Guards should be assigned, so that each can handle one side of the street. (One of the Crossing Guards should be designated lead Crossing Guard.)

Crossing Guards stand at the edge of the crosswalk on the side closest to vehicles approaching their side and face that approach.

Positions taken by both Crossing Guards to conduct a multi-lane crossing are indicated below in Figure 27:

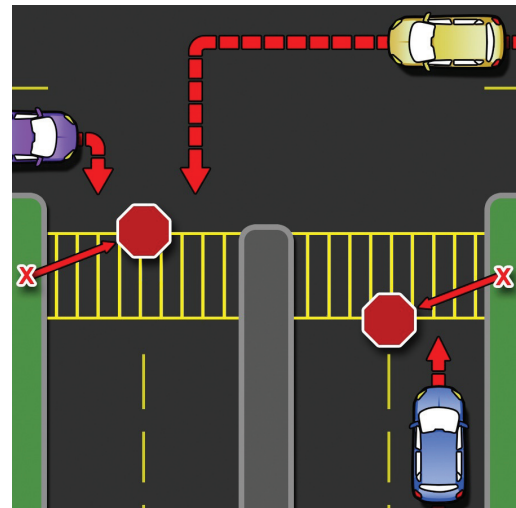


Figure 27.

The lead Crossing Guard makes the final visual check and gives the verbal direction to students to look for approaching vehicles and directs them to proceed when the roadway is clear.

Students cross in the crosswalk between the two Crossing Guards.

## 7. RESOURCES

1. California Department of Transportation, Safe Routes to School Programs, [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm)
2. California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2014 edition, [www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/mutcd/pdf/camutcd2014/CAMUTCD2014.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/mutcd/pdf/camutcd2014/CAMUTCD2014.pdf)
3. California Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Resource Center, [www.casaferoutestoschool.org](http://www.casaferoutestoschool.org)
4. California Vehicle Code 2013, [www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/vctop/vc/vc.htm](http://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/vctop/vc/vc.htm)
5. Colorado Department of Transportation Crossing Guard Train-the-Trainer Program, [www.coloradodot.info/programs/bikeped/safe-routes/training/crossing-guard](http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/bikeped/safe-routes/training/crossing-guard)
6. Florida Department of Transportation School Crossing Guard Training Program, [www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/2A-Programs/SchoolCrossingGuard.shtm](http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/2A-Programs/SchoolCrossingGuard.shtm)
7. National Center for Safe Routes to School Adult School Crossing Guard Guidelines, [guide.saferoutesinfo.org/crossing\\_guard/index.cfm](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/crossing_guard/index.cfm)

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ChangeLabSolutions





## California School Crossing Guard Field Assessment Tool

1st Field Assessment  
 2nd Field Assessment  
 Other

**Crossing Guard Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** For each task performed satisfactorily, place an “S” in the appropriate area. For each task performed unsatisfactorily, place a “U” in the appropriate area. Enter comments or notes to provide Crossing Guards additional feedback, particularly in “unsatisfactory” areas.

Two observations are recommended, each lasting a minimum of 30 minutes at the Crossing Guard’s assigned crossing location during shift hours. If the Crossing Guard performs duties during the morning and afternoon shift, one observation should be conducted in the morning and the other during the afternoon. Crossing Guards who do not perform all tasks listed satisfactorily during the observational assessment will continue to receive field supervision by the Crossing Guard supervisor. Once they are observed performing safe and consistent crossing procedures, another observational assessment may be conducted.

Performance Assessment Score (S/U)		Practical Training Skills Assessment Areas	Comments
First Observation	Second Observation		
		1. The Crossing Guard is wearing the appropriate uniform authorized by the Crossing Guard Local Program.	
		2. The Crossing Guard is utilizing the proper equipment (e.g., retroreflective vest, STOP paddle, whistle, gloves, etc.) as authorized by the Crossing Guard Local Program.	
		3. The Crossing Guard demonstrates understanding of school crossing signs, crosswalk markings, and traffic signals.	
		4. The Crossing Guard appears alert and attentive to potential hazards in or near the crossing location.	
		5. The Crossing Guard is attentive to the overall safety of crossing pedestrians and vehicular traffic.	
		6. The Crossing Guard is not engaging in any distracting behaviors (e.g., eating, drinking, using mobile devices, headphones, portable audio players, or reading books, magazines, newspapers, etc.).	
		7. The Crossing Guard is correctly positioned at the edge of the road, in front of student pedestrians, while performing curbside assembly.	
		8. The Crossing Guard makes sure student pedestrians remain on the sidewalk until they are told to cross.	
		9. The Crossing Guard properly positions herself or himself in the roadway for maximum vehicle visibility.	
		10. The Crossing Guard makes sure all oncoming vehicles have stopped before instructing student pedestrians to search for oncoming vehicles.	
		11. The Crossing Guard instructs student pedestrians to cross behind her/him.	
		12. The Crossing Guard remains in the intersection until all of the students have safely crossed the roadway.	

**Crossing Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**First On-site Observation Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Second On-site Observation Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time Observed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time Observed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Trainer’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Trainer’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_





## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** School Crossing Guard  
**Agency:** Police Department  
**Reports To:** Sergeant, Traffic Division

**Job Summary:** A School Crossing Guard assists children to safely walk or bicycle to and from school when crossing public roadways and intersections. School Crossing Guard identifies gaps in traffic and leads children across the roadway or intersection. School Crossing Guard does not direct traffic.

### Job Scope:

- Works under the School Crossing Guard Supervisor.
- Must wear agency uniform and utilize high visibility vest and agency approved STOP paddle at all times while on duty.
- Must demonstrate good judgment and follow instructions while providing for the safety of pedestrians.
- Must successfully complete the California School Crossing Guard Training and participate in refresher training courses at least once every two years.

### Physical Requirements:

- Must be able to lift and control a STOP paddle (weighing approximately five pounds) repeatedly.
- Must be able to stand and walk for extended periods of time, often on uneven terrain.
- Must be able to safely step on and off street curbs or roadway edges.
- Must be able to work outside in seasonal weather conditions.
- Must have good vision and hearing (e.g., clearly see and hear approaching vehicles, pedestrians, and traffic signals.)
- Must be able to communicate instructions clearly in English.

### Other Requirements:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must be self-motivated and reliable.
- Must be able to follow oral and written instructions.
- Must be able to be courteous with the general public.
- Must successfully complete the California School Crossing Guard Training and participate in annual refresher courses.
- Must submit to and successfully complete Department of Justice (DOJ) fingerprinting and background check. Must also maintain DOJ clearance.
- May be subject to drug and/or alcohol screening prior to and/or at random during employment.
- Must notify supervisor immediately of any temporary or long term accommodations needed due to limitations and/or restrictions regarding physical or mental inability to perform duties of the job.

This job description is not intended to be, and should not be construed to be, an all inclusive listing of responsibilities, skills, and/or working conditions affiliated with this position. While it is intended to reflect the position activities and requirements, the lead crossing guard agency reserves the right to modify, add, or remove duties and assign other duties as necessary.

**I have read and understand the Job Description and attest that I am able to perform the requirements of this position as outlined above.**

---

Signature

---

Print Name

---

Date