

CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject: TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

To provide Barstow Police Department employees with guidelines relative to public relations and traffic enforcement attitudes.

OBJECTIVE

To provide a more rapid response to accident scenes, stranded motorists, and to locations where the normal flow of traffic has been disrupted due to traffic signal malfunction, objects in the roadway, etc.

To produce a reduction in traffic collisions by concentrating primarily on the enforcement of those violations which are accident causing by nature.

To promote a positive impression of the Department by being mindful of the role each officer plays as a member of the "public relations team".

ENFORCEMENT

It is the responsibility of every officer to enforce those statutes which apply to the safe operation of motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians while keeping in mind that the primary objective is the reduction of traffic accidents. While officers will normally use their own discretion as to when to issue a citation or warning, flagrant or potential accident causing violations should be cited, keeping in mind the circumstances and the spirit of the law.

TRAFFIC CONTROL/CITIZEN ASSIST

Police Officers are in a unique position to assist the general motoring public. It is the responsibility of every officer to be alert for opportunities to expedite the flow of traffic, to assist stranded motorists and to act as a general information resource.

DEMEANOR

At all times officers shall conduct themselves in a professional business-like manner when dealing with violators.

A citation should not be issued unless the officer is certain of the identity of the violator and that all of the elements of the offense have been witnessed. The officer should:

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1. Be positive of the action he may lawfully take prior to approaching the violator.
2. Avoid a firm decision that a citation will be issued until conversing with a violator. In some cases the circumstances may support a warning.

The officer shall be courteous and informative in behavior, language and tone of voice. An officer must:

1. Remain aware of his facial expression and body movements as the violator will read certain expressions and/or body language as being sarcastic, rude, flippant, unsympathetic or generally demeaning.
2. Avoid language intended to belittle, ridicule or embarrass the violator.
3. Whenever practical, remove sunglasses while conversing with violators, as many people are offended by them.

CONVERSATION

The citing officer should immediately inform the violator of the reason for the stop. The officer should not ask the violator, "Do you know why I stopped you?" This question usually puts the violator on the defensive immediately. The officer should, as best as possible, explain his observations to the violator thus furthering an understanding of the section violated. All proper questions, excluding specific bail information, should be answered.

DRIVER'S LICENSE

The citing officer shall accept only the Driver's License, not a billfold, card case, envelope, etc.

1. Remember, the violator is not required to surrender the license, only to present it. C.V.C. 40302a.
2. Many times violators complain that the citing officer did not return the Driver's License. To avoid such complaints the following is suggested:

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- a. After having the violator sign the citation, make a comment such as, "This is your copy of the citation and here is your license".
- b. The officer may make a note on the backside of the department's copy of the citation (pink copy) indicating what the violator did with his/her license after it was returned, such as:
 - (1) CDL returned to wallet/purse.
 - (2) CDL placed in center console.
 - (3) CDL placed in shirt pocket.
 - (4) CDL placed in glove box, etc.

UNNECESSARY DELAY

The officer should complete the citation in an expeditious but thorough manner, detaining the violator no longer than necessary. Additional time may be required to run warrant checks, particularly when the violator is not in possession of a valid license.

After releasing the violator, do not follow the vehicle any further than necessary unless waiting for a return on a warrant check.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations comprise an overall impression of the Police Department based upon all of the contacts, attitudes, activities, policies and opinions that are involved in the relationship between officers and members of the community. It is essential that officers recognize that they are perhaps the most visible representatives of the Department and, therefore, are the most important members of the public relations team.

In his contacts with the traffic violator, the officer is expected to be guided by the following:

1. Service to the public - display a friendly and courteous spirit when giving service, even when issuing a formal notice to appear.
2. Fairness - carry out responsibilities without bias or personal prejudice.

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3. Patience - patience on the officer's behalf tends to produce a calming effect.
4. Courtesy - courtesy to others presupposes an attitude of desiring to please and to serve.

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