

**WEST VALLEY CITY  
SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD MANUAL  
2008-2009**

In setting up a uniform training manual for school crossing guards, many things must be taken into consideration. Each crossing presents individual challenges and problems. They vary regarding the physical characteristics of the crossing, the vehicles and motorists in the area, the personalities of children and school personnel, and the number of children who need to be crossed.

One thing standard for all schools, though, is the fact that the purpose of a crossing guard is to insure that the children go to school and return from school safely. This can be a rewarding responsibility, but can also be very trying at times. Our aim is to create knowledgeable, practical guidelines for crossing guards to follow, and reduce risk and fear through proper training.

In reading and implementing these guidelines, you will be preparing yourself to handle most situations on your own without worrying about acting or reacting properly. Make sure that you read and understand this pamphlet.

If you have any problems or questions, please contact :

**SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROTOCOL**

Each crossing guard shall:

1. Know and comply with all West Valley City and school crossing guard written policies and procedures.
2. Comply with crossing procedures as specified in the Utah Traffic Code and School Zone supplement to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
3. Have seen and be familiar with the film, "School Crossing Guards in Utah" training video.
4. Have and pass a yearly eyesight and hearing exam.
5. Be a "First Responder" through CPR certification.
6. Have no felony or DUI arrests.
7. Be guilty of no offense involving juveniles.
8. Cannot be under the influence of any substance which may impair the ability to successfully complete their assignment. (Refer to West Valley City Drug and Alcohol Policy).
9. No smoking on duty
10. No sleeping on duty or any other activity which diminishes watchfulness.

11. Will wear regulation uniform/equipment.
12. Must possess sufficient stamina and judgment necessary to protect students in any situation.

## **DEPARTMENT**

As a member of the West Valley Police Department you are required at all times to represent the department professionally. In your dealing with the children, with the motorists, and with the school personnel you will be required to conduct yourself prudently and reasonably. Crossing guards shall not take their own children to the crossing. Anything otherwise will result with a verbal or written reprimand and possibly further action.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD**

One very predictable thing about school-age children is that they will be unpredictable. One of the main responsibilities of a school crossing guard is to develop a structured control over the children at the crosswalk. This means that they must know and understand the rules relating to that particular crossing and are willing to obey those rules. They must also understand that compliance is very important, since disobedience might result in injury or even death. It is also important to know that crossing guards do not have the authority to direct traffic.

Each regular guard is required to leave their information with the school secretary and make arrangements to receive up to date school schedules. This is vital, as missing an early day or schedule change could mean that children would be left unprotected. It is each guard's personal responsibility to attend every crossing on time.

There is a difference between the LAW regarding what is legal for citizens to do in a crosswalk, and the RULES that we have in place as a West Valley City policy regarding crossing guards authority to make elementary school children comply.

For instance, it is NOT ILLEGAL for an individual to ride a bike across the street or bounce a ball in the intersection or ride roller blades in a crosswalk. However, we have a crossing guard POLICY which dictates that children must walk their bikes, scooters, skateboards, roller blades, etc...across the street. You shall, in reason, enforce this policy. If a child refuses to comply, you shall

talk to the Principal or contact your Supervisor. You cannot, however, expect a Police Officer to issue a citation.

Let the children know you are interested in them and willing to be their friend, but insist they also know you are there to do a job and see that they do their part. Work with them right from the beginning of the year since that will set the tone for the length of the time you are with them. The School Zone Safety Act states that crossing guards shall instruct students in safe crossing practices.

Be sure that you are in uniform at all times. Cones must be properly placed in the crosswalk at all times while on duty. Placement and removal of cones shall be done with the stop sign held high so to be seen by motorists. The vest and stop sign should be with you each time you are on duty. Stand so that the crossing is blocked off by the stop sign, facing the traffic so that you can see exactly what the existing conditions are. Never let one of the crossing children hold the stop sign (they will invariably ask) and see that it is firmly in your grasp. While you are in the crosswalk the stop sign must be held high above your head. Children tend to shove and push against the stop sign, and dropping it might send a child sprawling into the street.

Being on time is one of the most important responsibilities of a crossing guard. The standard times are 35 minutes before school and 35 minutes after school. The noon (kindergarten) crossing is an individual matter. A few schools have children requiring help home from morning kindergarten and coming to afternoon kindergarten.

School children will tend to stay on the grounds and play as long after school as they can get away with. Most principles require that children leave the building no later than 15 minutes after the last bell. Let the children know at the first of the year that they are to leave the grounds for home. It will help you get away without spending more time than necessary at your post and will also help parents see their children after school. There is nothing wrong with letting kids know that it is time to go home.

### **FLASHING LIGHTS**

The purpose of flashing school zone lights, are to make the motorist aware that they are in a reduced-speed zone. Making sure that flashing lights are on 3-5 minutes before your appointed time and until the crossing time is over will help

motorists be aware that they are to slow down. If a speeder is to be ticketed for going above the speed limit in a school zone, those lights need to be flashing for the citation to be effective. Keeping flashing lights on other than instructed, may result in deluding their effectiveness

It is important that the flashing lights be locked when you are not on duty. Many times children will tamper with them and the lights will be on in the evening or on the weekend. Keep your locks with you if your flashing lights will not lock in the ON position. Many times if they are left unlocked during your crossing time, they will be stolen. You are personally responsible for the locks and you will be charged to replace them if they are lost or stolen because of negligence. This also applies to other equipment.

If flashing lights are left on, you will be contacted and required to go turn them off.

### **GENERAL CROSSING INSTRUCTION**

- ☺ You should have a list of contacts and know where the nearest phone is. You must arrive at your crosswalk in time to inspect the signs, crosswalks and crossing guard equipment so as to be able to turn on lights 35 minutes before school starts.
- ☺ Always wear your vest while on duty.
- ☺ If you are working at a 20 mph reduced school speed zone you must turn on the flashing lights and place the cones in the proper sequence 35 minutes prior to the start of school.
- ☺ Group the children away from the curb or roadway and wait for a suitable gap in the traffic before stepping out into the crosswalk. Keep in mind that not all motorists will stop for you, no matter who you are or what you are doing.

### **CROSSING CHILDREN**

#### **ASSIGNMENT TO CROSSING LOCATIONS**

The assignment of school crossing guards to any location in West Valley City is at the discretion of the supervisor and may take place at any time during the year.

Your main function as a crossing guard is to create a safe passage across the street to and fro, school. West Valley City School Crossing Guards are required to use the following method to cross children:

Once a safe gap has been determined the crossing guard will, with a stop sign held in position, precede the children into the crosswalk and position him/herself. At that time the guard will call the children from the curb and stay in position until the children are on the opposite side of the curb.

### **CROSSING AT AN INTERSECTION**

Some crossings are at major intersections where there are traffic lights. It is very important that you cross children only with these lights. Much of the problem in these intersections stem from people making left and right hand turns. They will try to proceed even though a guard and children are in the intersection.

When you step out into the street, be sure that you block as much of the intersection as possible. Step into the street as far as the left-turn lane so that the people will not be able to turn while children are in the street, then follow the proper crossing procedure.

### **CROSSING IN THE MIDDLE OF A BLOCK**

Some crossings are in the middle of a block where there is no intersection. Since crossing guards are not authorized to direct traffic it is important that you wait until there is a safe gap in traffic to help children across. Sometimes this is almost impossible so you need to use your very best judgment in selecting a time to cross the children. Be sure that you hold children back firmly until you are ready and give them a clear message to come, then proceed with the proper crossing procedure.

Standing on the side of the street is necessary until you get a group of children ready to cross. Take them out all at once and then wait until another group congregates to let them go again. Guards shall not stand in the middle of the street holding up traffic while children are walking toward the intersection. This irritates motorists who have to wait for children to walk to the crossing.

## IDENTIFYING TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

There is a difference between the motorist who inadvertently violates traffic laws within a school zone and the motorist who deliberately violates the law. Those who are willfully negligent where children are involved need to be made aware of how dangerous it is. A full description of vehicle, driver, and situation are important in bringing this kind of a driver in.

Things happen so quickly sometimes that it is difficult to catch everything at once. Be sure to keep a pencil and piece of paper on you at all times so that the information can be recorded accurately.

The PERTINENT information is:

- License number of car
- Color and make (if possible of car, if not, a concise description if necessary)
- Description of driver (sex, hair color, occupants of car, approximate age, etc.)
- Direction of travel
- Approximate speed, time of violation

After contacting with this information, confirmation of owner of vehicle will take place. After this, contact will be made with the individual. If the officer involved feels that this is sufficient, no further action will be taken.

If the violator pleads not guilty, the crossing guard may be asked to attend court proceedings. Although this might sound very intimidating to some guards, the experience is made easy. Very seldom is a guard asked to testify; most times the situation is taken care of and a fine assessed to the motorist. Make sure you keep a copy of all details for future reference.

Most people feel pain very most in the pocketbook and a child's life might be saved by being willing to act where someone has willfully disobeyed the law. Most people tend to be more careful in a school zone if they have had the experience of standing before a judge.

You must be very careful, though, in making an accusation against a motorist. Those who have inadvertently made a mistake will probably, once they realize it, take more care as they drive through school zones.

NOTE: If the situation seems extremely serious to you, make an attempt to find witnesses who will be willing to testify if necessary.

## **WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

Along with being a "traffic control device," a crossing guard is an educator. Part of your responsibility is to educate the children as to safe crossing procedure. You have a very limited amount of time with each child, so take advantage of that time. Talk with the children about being alert and identifying potential hazards.

Children tend to rely solely on the crossing guard to make judgments and provide a safe crossing. While the children are at your crosswalk, urge them to be active in looking for the safest time to cross and being aware of what is going on around them. This will better prepare them for those times when they will be crossing without assistance.

There will be many times in your career as a school crossing guard when a child or a group of children will be disobedient. It is important to have a good working relationship with your school principal in cases like this, since much of the discipline needs to be taken care of within the school.

A guard does not have the license to personally discipline the child. Rarely it may be necessary to physically remove a child from harms way. It is inappropriate otherwise, to touch or grab a child in any manner. If there is an incident where any altercation takes place, immediately contact Dale Ann to make a report. This is an important risk management procedure.

When you have a situation where a child willfully misbehaves, try to obtain the name of the child, and, if possible, his school room number. As with a motorist, try to make sure that it was done with prior knowledge of the rules, as a child will sometimes make an unintentional mistake.

Setting the tone of the relationship early with a child might make the difference in the control you will have later. Let them know that if they endanger themselves or other children with horseplay or bravado, they will most likely be in conference with their teacher or the school principal over the situation.

Don't let kids get away with situations which prove dangerous. Talk the situation over with the principal if possible and ask them to support you and aid you by talking to the student.

It might be a good idea to set some guidelines with the principal at the first of the year concerning how he/she would like you about reporting these situations and how he would feel best in handling them. Thereby, you will be able to follow these guidelines and maintain good rapport with your principal.

You are the only person who should give instructions or directions. Anyone else must stay clear of the crosswalk area and not interfere in anyway with your job.

## **SUBSTITUTIONS**

There will, invariably, be days when sickness or other needs will keep a guard off the job. For this purpose, West Valley Police has hired substitute crossing guards.

Only hired and trained employees are allowed to function as crossing guards, **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

If you know in advance that you will need a substitute, please contact Dale Ann Wright no more than a week and no less than a day before time needed.

If you are ill and need a substitute, call at home between **6:30-7:00 AM** so that a substitute will have enough time to make preparations to work.

In these cases, the pay will automatically be deducted from your check and added to that of the substitute.



The following emergencies will be valid reasons for getting a substitute **at the last minute:**

- Illness (yourself or family)
- Car problems which would keep you from getting to the crossing
- Other reasons which can be reasonably explained

The following procedure **MUST** be followed in this case:

1. Try to contact Dale Ann at the office, home, or cell phone.
2. If she is not available please ask to speak to at
3. Explain the situation and they will either page or ask you to contact your own substitute.
4. Make sure that is made aware of the situation sometime that day.
5. If you have made every effort to (1) Call , (2) Contact a sub, (in that order) and are not successful, contact dispatch at 840-4000. You will be held accountable for a reasonable explanation of this action.

This does not mean that you cannot make arrangements for personal reasons at times, but these must be done **IN ADVANCE.**

If this program is to continue it will have to be used with discretion. Even though this is a part-time situation, you must still be aware that too much absenteeism or calling in sick when you really are not could endanger your employment.

Being a crossing guard is like going to work two or three times a day. PLEASE make every effort to be there each time promptly and stay until the appointed time. Too many absences or tardiness will endanger your position.

### **WORKING WITH A SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL**

Generally, it is not recommended that crossing guards be involved in training or operating a school safety patrol. Guards should understand how safety patrols operate so that when they are required to work together at a particular crossing this can be done smoothly and effectively. It is important to know that a child working as a safety

patrol officer is not to serve in the same capacity as a school crossing guard serves. This means that they are NEVER to go out past the curb. A child does not possess the judgment or responsibility to lead other children into street.

A school safety patrol, however may be very effective (especially in a large intersection) in holding waiting children back until the appointed time to cross the street. They may be stationed at the corner with a flag to hold back the waiting children, and when given a signal by the crossing guard, may open the way for the children to cross the street under the direction of the adult guard.

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

There may be times when problems or complaints will arise which are not within your authority to handle. Specific procedures have been established to deal with most of these problems and complaints.

A general guideline to follow is to contact your supervisor as soon as possible giving her as much detail as possible. Any action that is appropriate for the situation will be taken in the manner deemed to be in the best interest of both the guard and the department.

If, for any reason, you feel that the solution to this problem or complaint is not sufficient, you may request to meet with your supervisor and/or the Traffic Sergeant. If the matter is still not resolved to your satisfaction, you may meet with the Administrative Services Captain and finally the Police Chief.

It is imperative that you follow the procedure and meet with each of these individuals before requesting to go on to the next to find a solution to the situation.

### **ON-THE-JOB INJURY**

If you are injured in any way during the time you are actually at your crossing, you must follow procedure in reporting this injury. As soon as possible contact , and if she is not available, contact

After reporting the incident you will need to obtain treatment from Concentra 1735 South Redwood Road, 562-520. You must call Pinnacle Risk Management

Services, 288-4240 within 24 hours of the injury to prevent any delay in receiving benefits. By following this procedure you will receive medical coverage for your injury.

**Employees not reporting to CONCENTRA may be responsible for payment of any medical expenses incurred up to the time that the employee reports to CONCENTRA.**

### **PAY**

Pay day will be every other Friday. The first pay day in the regular school year will be September 12<sup>th</sup>. That will include pay for August 25 through September 5<sup>th</sup>. Crossing guards will be paid the current bi-weekly crossing guard salary. **CROSSING GUARDS WILL BE PAID** the actual number of crossings worked per day **PLUS** one extra crossing-this is an **INCENTIVE** hour. This incentive hour is only paid if the crossing guard works a FULL day.

If a crossing guard needs a substitute for one or all of their daily crossings, they will be paid only for actual time worked and the incentive hour is then paid to the substitute who works for them. A substitute is eligible for only one incentive hour per day.

Crossing guards are paid by the direct deposit program. Each guard shall have a bank account to which this deposit can be made. It is established through West Valley Human Resource Department.

### **A FEW NOTES**

home phone number, her office number, and her cell phone number are all provided to you to insure that she is readily available. Her home phone number should be used for needs prior to 8:00 a.m. After 8:00 a.m. the easiest way to contact is on her cell phone. If she doesn't answer, leave her a message and she will contact you as soon as possible.

The crossing guards will be receiving pertinent information periodically in the mail. It is mandatory that you comply with all instructions received in this manner. Failure to do so may result in reprimand or dismissal.

**PLEASE** do not put school children in your car at any time. This is directly against the policy of the department and could prove to be a problem.

If an accident were to occur while they were in your personal car, you might be held personally responsible.

Also, it is against policy for a guard to hand out treats to the children. This might be very tempting at holiday times, but please don't do it.

### **IN CLOSING**

We hope that being a school crossing guard will be a worthwhile and rewarding experience. We hope that you will take it seriously as it is a very important undertaking. You are responsible for the most precious thing on earth; the life of a child.

Please read these instructions and sign the form found on the next page. These guidelines are for your personal benefit, so keep this pamphlet for future reference. The attached signature form is to let us know that you have read and understand our policies and procedures, and will be included in your personnel file. Please return it to at the Police Department by mail or in person.

Crossing guards will have the opportunity at some time during the year to be evaluated as to the job that they are doing. This will give us an opportunity to praise you for what you are doing in an outstanding manner and aid you in the areas needing improvement.

Please contact us if there are any problems you are having that might be made easier with our help.

Help us make the 2008-2009 school year a truly safe and happy time.

With best wishes,

Police Chief

Police Service Officer

