

# Crossing Guard Instructor Guide

## Agenda

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- Basic Crossing Procedures
- Basic Crossing Steps
- Observing and Reporting Unsafe Conditions
- Expectations of Personal Conduct
- Emergency Procedures
- Required Equipment
- Additional Information

## Introduction

Adult school crossing guards play several important roles in the community:

- They help children safely cross the street.
- They remind drivers of the presence of pedestrians.
- They are “eyes on the street.”
- They set an example of safe behavior for children.
- They help children develop the lifelong skills necessary to cross the street safely at all times.

## Basic Crossing Procedures

- Crossing Guards are NOT Allowed to Direct Traffic.
  - Crossing guards’ roles are to create an adequate gap in traffic for children to cross the street safely.<sup>1</sup>
- In Massachusetts, drivers must yield at a crosswalk if a pedestrian is walking in that half of the road, *or* a pedestrian is within 10 feet of crossing that half of the road.
  - Crossing Guards reinforce this law to assist children crossing the street.

## Types of Crossings

- Crossing guards have to be familiar with many types of crossings
- Intersection types
  - Controlled
    - Signalized
    - Stop Controlled
    - Yield Controlled
  - Uncontrolled
- Other crossing types: Midblock
- *[Discuss the crossing types where guards will be posted in your jurisdiction]*

<sup>1</sup> Manual on Uniform Control Devices (MUTCD) Chapter 7D

## Controlled vs. Uncontrolled Intersections

- Intersections can be either uncontrolled or controlled. A controlled intersection includes a stop sign, a yield sign, or a traffic signal, while an uncontrolled intersection has none of these.

## Marked vs. Unmarked Crossings

- Marked crosswalks indicate preferred locations for pedestrians to cross and provide a visual queue for motorists to yield right-of-way to pedestrians, even at uncontrolled intersections.
- Students should be encouraged to cross at, and school crossing guards should be positioned at, controlled intersections with marked crosswalks when possible.

## Identifying Crossing Types

- Signalized intersections have lights that control vehicle movement.
  - Pedestrian signals may also be included in these.
- Stop controlled intersections use stop signs to manage vehicle movement.
- Yield controlled intersections use yield signs to manage vehicle movement.
- Uncontrolled intersections have none of these traffic management devices.
- Midblock crossings are marked crosswalks not located at the intersection of streets.
  - Midblock crossings may seem simple, because vehicles are arriving in only two directions. However, drivers are typically not expecting people to be crossing the street at these locations, so they may be paying less attention.

## Streets with Four or More Lanes

- Using two crossing guards in unison is recommended.
  - Each guard stops one respective direction of travel.
  - Crossing is initiated by the guard on the side of the street from which children are approaching.
  - The other guard takes his/her cues from the first guard.
- Additional precautions are needed on wider crossings.
  - When the vehicle in one lane stops, DO NOT assume that vehicles in other lanes will stop as well.
  - Drivers' views of the crosswalk and any pedestrians in the roadway may be blocked.

## Basic Crossing Steps

While each crossing station is unique, there are some common steps to follow at any location:

1. Assemble Children at the Curb
  - Assemble children at the curb.
  - Ask children to wait about 3 feet back from the street.
  - Ask cyclists to dismount and walk their bicycles across.
2. Wait for an Adequate Gap in Traffic
  - Use your knowledge, experience, and judgement to determine the appropriate time to cross the street.
  - At signalized intersections, use the traffic signal to determine when to cross the street.
    - Wait for the red light or WALK signal, as appropriate, to start crossing.
    - It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the operations of the traffic signal beforehand.
  - At unsignalized intersections, wait for an adequate gap in traffic to initiate the crossing.
3. Enter the Crosswalk
  - While scanning the roadway, enter the crosswalk.
  - Hold your STOP paddle high in the air.

4. Stop Traffic
  - Make eye contact with drivers.
  - Using your free hand, signal traffic to stop.
5. Take Position
  - Take position at the center of the crosswalk, holding your STOP paddle high in the air.
  - Face oncoming traffic and scan the roadway.
6. Verbally Initiate Crossing
  - Once you are sure all traffic has stopped, verbally instruct children to enter the crosswalk.
  - Do not signal to children with your hands, as this may confuse drivers who might think the hand motions are directed at them.
7. Maintain Position
  - Maintain your position, holding your STOP paddle high and scanning for traffic as the children cross the street.
  - While children are crossing, continue to scan for potential conflicts, such as vehicles moving into the crosswalk, new children arriving, or children who have veered out of the crosswalk.
8. Return to Curb
  - Once all children have crossed, return to your original position.
  - Keep your STOP paddle raised the entire time you are in the street.
  - Do not signal to vehicles to move ahead;
    - when you have removed to the sidewalk and lowered your STOP paddle, vehicles will move ahead because you are no longer controlling traffic.

## Observing and Reporting Unsafe Conditions

### Watch for unsafe behaviors

Besides assisting with street crossings, crossing guards serve as “eyes” on the street, watching for unsafe conditions or behaviors.

- Report any of the following to your supervisor:
  - Unsafe driving behaviors
  - Unsafe pedestrian behaviors
  - Unlawful parking
  - Construction interfering with safe crossing
  - Unsafe street conditions
  - Damaged signs
  - Poor visibility
  - Suspicious activity
  - Improper use or lack of safety belt or bicycle helmet

### Ensure no vehicles are parked within 20 feet of a crosswalk

- This includes your own vehicles!
- Vehicles parked close to crosswalks can reduce drivers’ visibility of you and children crossing.

## Expectations of Personal Conduct

As a crossing guard, you are expected to:

- Arrive on time to your designated post.

- Do not use an umbrella or carry anything like a drink or cell phone that prevents you from using your hands.
- Remain standing at your post.
- Be firm, courteous, and pleasant.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke on duty.
- Exhibit behavior that projects a positive image of your agency.

## Emergency Procedures

### In the event of an emergency

- Remain at the post with the children.
- Assemble children in a group and stop crossing them until the situation is under control.
- If possible, call 911. If not, ask others to call 911.
- If a victim can walk, he or she should move out of the road. Otherwise, a victim should not be moved except by qualified emergency medical personnel.
- Always notify your supervisor of any emergency as soon as possible.

### Caring for an injured person

- Do not attempt to help if you are injured.
- If a qualified person is at the scene, stay out of the way.
- Do not move a severely injured person unless there is a greater danger.
- Keep the injured person warm and still.
- Stop the bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- Watch for changes in breathing and alertness. If the person shows no sign of circulation, conduct CPR if you are trained.
  - Ask your supervisor about CPR training or contact your local Red Cross to learn about classes.

## Required Equipment

Safety equipment improves your visibility to drivers and helps keep you and pedestrians safe. Supervisors will supply guards with the required equipment.

### Vest

- ANSI<sup>2</sup> II or III retroreflective
- On cold or rainy days, wear the vest on the outside of jackets, sweaters, or other clothing
- Ensure vests are fully zipped to drivers can see you from all directions

### STOP Paddle

- Retroreflective or illuminated
- It is important to retain complete control of paddle *and* have a free hand available
  - Use a rain jacket instead of an umbrella on rainy days
  - Do not hold food, beverages, or other items while working – including a morning coffee

### Optional equipment

- Reflective gloves
- Reflective hat

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<sup>2</sup> American National Standards Institute

- Whistle

## Additional Information

- Massachusetts Safe Routes to School
- Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards and their recommendations for Crossing Guards
- Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development Crossing Guard Safety
- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Chapter 7D: Crossing Supervision

## Local Information

- *Training instructors, please provide local information and links, as needed (for example, school contact and supervisor information, supplemental local laws or best practices, etc.)*

