

# Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

for Streets and Highways

2009 Edition

Including Revision 1 dated May 2012





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**Standard:**

- 07 **Signs and other devices that do not have any traffic control purpose that are placed within the highway right-of-way shall not be located where they will interfere with, or detract from, traffic control devices.**

*Guidance:*

- 08 *Any unauthorized traffic control device or other sign or message placed on the highway right-of-way by a private organization or individual constitutes a public nuisance and should be removed. All unofficial or non-essential traffic control devices, signs, or messages should be removed.*

**Section 1A.09 Engineering Study and Engineering Judgment****Support:**

- 01 Definitions of an engineering study and engineering judgment are contained in Section 1A.13.

**Standard:**

- 02 **This Manual describes the application of traffic control devices, but shall not be a legal requirement for their installation.**

*Guidance:*

- 03 *The decision to use a particular device at a particular location should be made on the basis of either an engineering study or the application of engineering judgment. Thus, while this Manual provides Standards, Guidance, and Options for design and applications of traffic control devices, this Manual should not be considered a substitute for engineering judgment. Engineering judgment should be exercised in the selection and application of traffic control devices, as well as in the location and design of roads and streets that the devices complement.*

- 04 *Early in the processes of location and design of roads and streets, engineers should coordinate such location and design with the design and placement of the traffic control devices to be used with such roads and streets.*

- 05 *Jurisdictions, or owners of private roads open to public travel, with responsibility for traffic control that do not have engineers on their staffs who are trained and/or experienced in traffic control devices should seek engineering assistance from others, such as the State transportation agency, their county, a nearby large city, or a traffic engineering consultant.*

**Support:**

- 06 As part of the Federal-aid Program, each State is required to have a Local Technology Assistance Program (LTAP) and to provide technical assistance to local highway agencies. Requisite technical training in the application of the principles of the MUTCD is available from the State's Local Technology Assistance Program for needed engineering guidance and assistance.

**Section 1A.10 Interpretations, Experimentations, Changes, and Interim Approvals****Standard:**

- 01 **Design, application, and placement of traffic control devices other than those adopted in this Manual shall be prohibited unless the provisions of this Section are followed.**

**Support:**

- 02 Continuing advances in technology will produce changes in the highway, vehicle, and road user proficiency; therefore, portions of the system of traffic control devices in this Manual will require updating. In addition, unique situations often arise for device applications that might require interpretation or clarification of this Manual. It is important to have a procedure for recognizing these developments and for introducing new ideas and modifications into the system.

**Standard:**

- 03 **Except as provided in Paragraph 4, requests for any interpretation, permission to experiment, interim approval, or change shall be submitted electronically to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Office of Transportation Operations, MUTCD team, at the following e-mail address: MUTCDofficialrequest@dot.gov.**

**Option:**

- 04 If electronic submittal is not possible, requests for interpretations, permission to experiment, interim approvals, or changes may instead be mailed to the Office of Transportation Operations, HOTO-1, Federal Highway Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

**Support:**

- 05 Communications regarding other MUTCD matters that are not related to official requests will receive quicker attention if they are submitted electronically to the MUTCD Team Leader or to the appropriate individual MUTCD team member. Their e-mail addresses are available through the links contained on the "Who's Who" page on the MUTCD website at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/team.htm>.

06 An interpretation includes a consideration of the application and operation of standard traffic control devices, official meanings of standard traffic control devices, or the variations from standard device designs.

*Guidance:*

07 *Requests for an interpretation of this Manual should contain the following information:*

- A. A concise statement of the interpretation being sought;*
- B. A description of the condition that provoked the need for an interpretation;*
- C. Any illustration that would be helpful to understand the request; and*
- D. Any supporting research data that is pertinent to the item to be interpreted.*

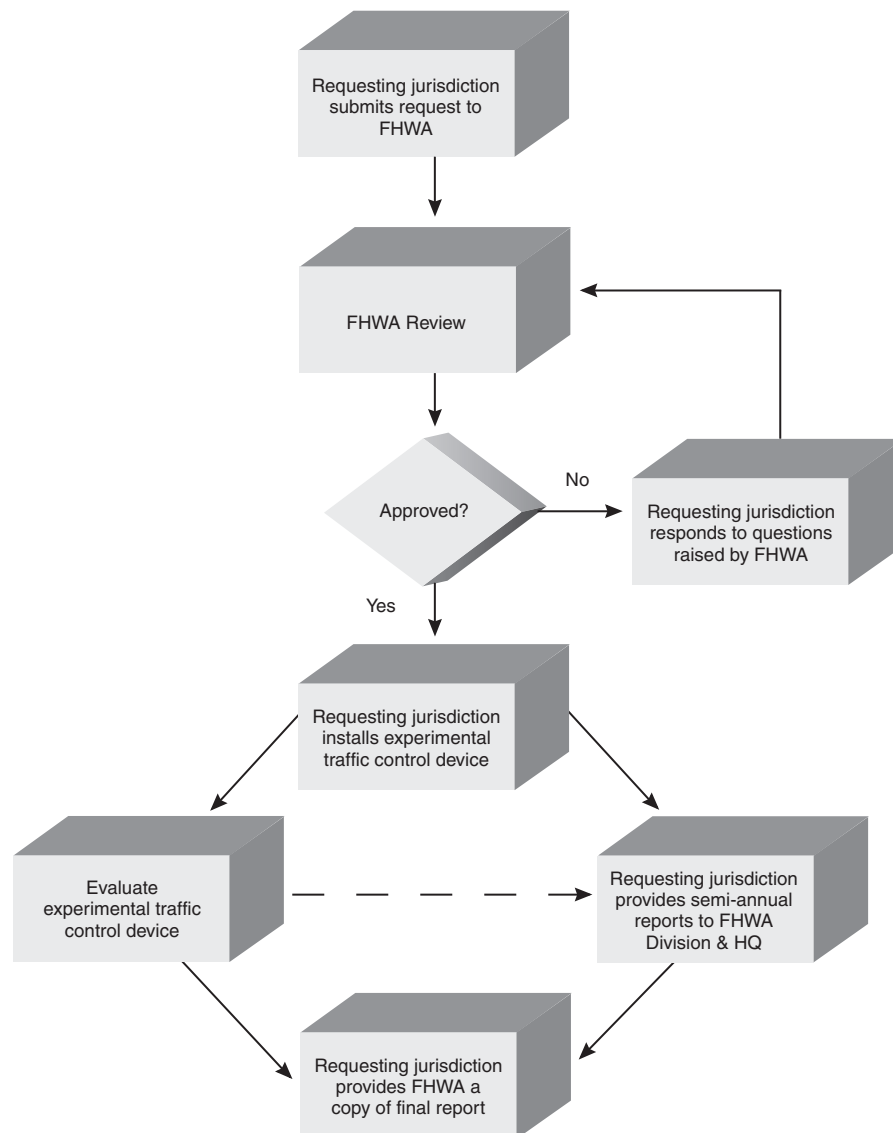
**Support:**

08 Requests to experiment include consideration of field deployment for the purpose of testing or evaluating a new traffic control device, its application or manner of use, or a provision not specifically described in this Manual.

09 A request for permission to experiment will be considered only when submitted by the public agency or toll facility operator responsible for the operation of the road or street on which the experiment is to take place. For a private road open to public travel, the request will be considered only if it is submitted by the private owner or private official having jurisdiction.

10 A diagram indicating the process for experimenting with traffic control devices is shown in Figure 1A-1.

**Figure 1A-1. Process for Requesting and Conducting Experimentations for New Traffic Control Devices**



- 39. "Guidelines for Accessible Pedestrian Signals (NCHRP Web-Only Document 117B)," 2008 Edition (TRB)
- 40. "Highway Capacity Manual," 2000 Edition (TRB)
- 41. "Recommended Procedures for the Safety Performance Evaluation of Highway Features," (NCHRP Report 350), 1993 Edition (TRB)
- 42. "The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG)," July 1998 Edition (The U.S. Access Board)

### Section 1A.12 Color Code

Support:

- 01 The following color code establishes general meanings for 11 colors of a total of 13 colors that have been identified as being appropriate for use in conveying traffic control information. tolerance limits for each color are contained in 23 CFR Part 655, Appendix to Subpart F and are available at the Federal Highway Administration's MUTCD website at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov> or by writing to the FHWA, Office of Safety Research and Development (HRD-T-301), 6300 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101.
- 02 The two colors for which general meanings have not yet been assigned are being reserved for future applications that will be determined only by FHWA after consultation with the States, the engineering community, and the general public. The meanings described in this Section are of a general nature. More specific assignments of colors are given in the individual Parts of this Manual relating to each class of devices.

**Standard:**

- 03 **The general meaning of the 13 colors shall be as follows:**
  - A. **Black—regulation**
  - B. **Blue—road user services guidance, tourist information, and evacuation route**
  - C. **Brown—recreational and cultural interest area guidance**
  - D. **Coral—unassigned**
  - E. **Fluorescent Pink—incident management**
  - F. **Fluorescent Yellow-Green—pedestrian warning, bicycle warning, playground warning, school bus and school warning**
  - G. **Green—indicated movements permitted, direction guidance**
  - H. **Light Blue—unassigned**
  - I. **Orange—temporary traffic control**
  - J. **Purple—lanes restricted to use only by vehicles with registered electronic toll collection (ETC) accounts**
  - K. **Red—stop or prohibition**
  - L. **White—regulation**
  - M. **Yellow—warning**

### Section 1A.13 Definitions of Headings, Words, and Phrases in this Manual

**Standard:**

- 01 **When used in this Manual, the text headings of Standard, Guidance, Option, and Support shall be defined as follows:**
  - A. **Standard—a statement of required, mandatory, or specifically prohibitive practice regarding a traffic control device. All Standard statements are labeled, and the text appears in bold type. The verb "shall" is typically used. The verbs "should" and "may" are not used in Standard statements. Standard statements are sometimes modified by Options.**
  - B. **Guidance—a statement of recommended, but not mandatory, practice in typical situations, with deviations allowed if engineering judgment or engineering study indicates the deviation to be appropriate. All Guidance statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verb "should" is typically used. The verbs "shall" and "may" are not used in Guidance statements. Guidance statements are sometimes modified by Options.**
  - C. **Option—a statement of practice that is a permissive condition and carries no requirement or recommendation. Option statements sometime contain allowable modifications to a Standard or Guidance statement. All Option statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verb "may" is typically used. The verbs "shall" and "should" are not used in Option statements.**
  - D. **Support—an informational statement that does not convey any degree of mandate, recommendation, authorization, prohibition, or enforceable condition. Support statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verbs "shall," "should," and "may" are not used in Support statements.**