

PART 1

GENERAL

CHAPTER 1A. GENERAL

Section 1A.01 Purpose of Traffic Control Devices

Support:

- 01 The purpose of traffic control devices, as well as the principles for their use, is to promote highway safety and efficiency by providing for the orderly movement of all road users on streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public travel throughout the Nation.
- 02 Traffic control devices notify road users of regulations and provide warning and guidance needed for the uniform and efficient operation of all elements of the traffic stream in a manner intended to minimize the occurrences of crashes.

Standard:

- 03 **Traffic control devices or their supports shall not bear any advertising message or any other message that is not related to traffic control.**

Support:

- 04 Tourist-oriented directional signs and Specific Service signs are not considered advertising; rather, they are classified as motorist service signs.

Section 1A.02 Principles of Traffic Control Devices

Support:

- 01 This Manual contains the basic principles that govern the design and use of traffic control devices for all streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public travel (see definition in Section 1A.13) regardless of type or class or the public agency, official, or owner having jurisdiction. This Manual's text specifies the restriction on the use of a device if it is intended for limited application or for a specific system. It is important that these principles be given primary consideration in the selection and application of each device.

Guidance:

- 02 *To be effective, a traffic control device should meet five basic requirements:*
- A. *Fulfill a need;*
 - B. *Command attention;*
 - C. *Convey a clear, simple meaning;*
 - D. *Command respect from road users; and*
 - E. *Give adequate time for proper response.*
- 03 *Design, placement, operation, maintenance, and uniformity are aspects that should be carefully considered in order to maximize the ability of a traffic control device to meet the five requirements listed in the previous paragraph. Vehicle speed should be carefully considered as an element that governs the design, operation, placement, and location of various traffic control devices.*

Support:

- 04 The definition of the word "speed" varies depending on its use. The definitions of specific speed terms are contained in Section 1A.13.

Guidance:

- 05 *The actions required of road users to obey regulatory devices should be specified by State statute, or in cases not covered by State statute, by local ordinance or resolution. Such statutes, ordinances, and resolutions should be consistent with the "Uniform Vehicle Code" (see Section 1A.11).*
- 06 *The proper use of traffic control devices should provide the reasonable and prudent road user with the information necessary to efficiently and lawfully use the streets, highways, pedestrian facilities, and bikeways.*

Support:

- 07 Uniformity of the meaning of traffic control devices is vital to their effectiveness. The meanings ascribed to devices in this Manual are in general accord with the publications mentioned in Section 1A.11.

Section 1A.03 Design of Traffic Control Devices

Guidance:

- 01 *Devices should be designed so that features such as size, shape, color, composition, lighting or retroreflection, and contrast are combined to draw attention to the devices; that size, shape, color, and simplicity of message combine to produce a clear meaning; that legibility and size combine with placement to permit adequate time for response; and that uniformity, size, legibility, and reasonableness of the message combine to command respect.*
- 02 *Aspects of a device's standard design should be modified only if there is a demonstrated need.*

