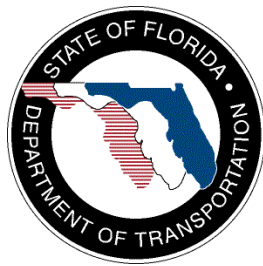




# Florida School Crossing Guard Training Guidelines

Florida Department of Transportation Safety Office



March 2012 Edition

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## Introduction

Adult school crossing guards play an important role in helping children cross streets safely at key locations on their ways to school.

In 1992, the Florida Legislature adopted the Ramon Turnquest School Crossing Guard Act. This law (now incorporated in Section 316.75, F.S.) requires most local governmental entities that administer school crossing guard programs to train their guards according to guidelines adopted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Basic standards and guidance for supervision of school crossings by adult crossing guards are provided in the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD, 2009)*, which is adopted by FDOT as Florida's manual on traffic control devices (pursuant to Section 316.0745, F.S.). To develop more complete guidelines, FDOT convened a task force in 1992. Crossing guard supervisors from counties with crossing guard training programs, public safety officers, and others with relevant experience comprised the task force. The *Training Guidelines* ("Guidelines") were published in 1993 and previously updated in 1995, 1998, 2008, and 2009.

The School Crossing Guard Training Program was established to train and certify local school crossing guard trainers in accordance with the *Guidelines*. Trainers train local school crossing guards. Uniform training promotes consistent, effective operation of guarded school crossings used by public and private school students.

*In these Guidelines, descriptions of practices that are considered mandatory use the verb "shall". Statements of recommended practice use the verb "should". Statements of optional practice use the verb "may".*

## 1. Administration

### 1A. Staffing and funding a local crossing guard program

An agency should generally have at least two certified guard trainers, and additional trainers as needed to manage its training needs in accordance with the Guidelines.

An agency should provide for program expenses in its annual budget. These include salaries for guards and trainers, training expenses, and costs of uniform articles and equipment. A county or municipality is authorized under Section 318.21(11), F.S., to impose a surcharge on parking fines for the purpose of funding a school crossing guard program.

### 1B. Training and certification of guard trainers

The Florida School Crossing Guard Training Program presents a two-day training course for prospective crossing guard trainers and a one-day refresher course for certified trainers. Trainings are scheduled by the Program Administrator to meet requests and equitably cover the state. Agency coordinators request training for their trainers through the on-line crossing guard database found at FDOT's Florida School Crossing Guard Training Program website.

In the training course, candidates acquire background information, practical knowledge, and skills needed to train school crossing guards for their agencies. The training includes classroom instruction and practical training. To be certified as a school crossing guard trainer, a candidate shall pass the written examination with a minimum score of 85 percent and complete the practi-

cal training with entirely satisfactory marks on the performance checklist.

A trainer shall not conduct guard training more than 10 years after the date of his or her most recent certification or recertification. To be recertified, a trainer shall successfully complete either a regular two-day trainer course or a one-day trainer refresher course.

### 1C. Qualification of guards

Adult crossing guards should possess the following minimum qualifications as outlined under Section 7D.03 of the MUTCD:

- A. Average intelligence;
- B. Good physical condition, including sight, hearing, and ability to move and maneuver quickly in order to avoid danger from errant vehicles;
- C. Ability to control a STOP paddle effectively to provide approaching road users with a clear, fully direct view of the paddle's STOP message during the entire crossing movement;
- D. Ability to communicate specific instructions clearly, firmly, and courteously;
- E. Ability to recognize potentially dangerous traffic situations and warn and manage students in sufficient time to avoid injury;
- F. Mental alertness;
- G. Neat appearance;
- H. Good character;
- I. Dependability; and
- J. An overall sense of responsibility for the safety of students.

A morning or afternoon crossing guard shift often requires a guard to stand for up to an hour at an assigned crossing. Noticing and reacting to driver

movements requires alertness and agility. A prospective crossing guard should therefore be given a basic physical examination that checks mobility, blood pressure, vision, and hearing.

A criminal background check should also be conducted on all prospective crossing guards. Passing the basic physical and the criminal background checks should be conditions for employment.

### 1D. Training of crossing guards; certification

Each local government entity that administers a school crossing guard program shall provide at least one guard training course each year. It should be scheduled shortly before the start of the school year. An agency should provide additional trainings as needed to maintain an adequate crew of guards.

Only a certified trainer shall train and recertify crossing guards in those counties in which "successful completion" of the training program is required for each guard by section 316.75, F.S.. Training consists of three elements: classroom instruction, practical training and supervised duty. Requirements for successful completion of each element are described in section 1E of these Guidelines.

A crossing guard candidate shall successfully complete classroom instruction and practical training before being assigned to a crossing. Supervised duty should be completed within four weeks of a guard's assignment. This allows the trainer to promptly address any problems with the guard's conduct. After a guard is certified or recertified, supervisors or trainers should periodically inspect, observe and mentor their guards.

Trainers use a set of test questions and a performance checklist to examine the knowledge and

skills of candidate guards. The performance checklist, shown in Figure 1, is a tool that reflects the techniques and procedures of the Guidelines. The performance checklist aids local agency supervisors and trainers in assessing and certifying their crossing guards. A certified trainer documents the classroom training date, exam score, practical training date, practical training evaluation, on-site observation dates and times, and respective evaluations on the guard's performance checklist.

To produce a Florida school crossing guard certificate, an agency supervisor may generate a certificate by entering a record of the guard into the crossing guard database or produce a certificate approved by the agency administering the school crossing guard program.

### 1E. Demonstration of competence

To be certified as a school crossing guard, a candidate shall have completed each training element satisfactorily. The guard candidate shall satisfy the following respective requirements:

- A. **Classroom instruction:** pass at least 75 percent of the items on the written examination;
- B. **Practical training:** perform each of the duties listed on the performance checklist satisfactorily. As described in section 2B, children are not present during this phase of training; and
- C. **Supervised duty:** perform no less than two observed shifts in accordance with the duties outlined on the performance checklist. Notwithstanding the guard's performance during the first observation, the guard shall perform all duties listed on the performance checklist satisfactorily during the second or final observation under the following conditions: (1) trainer does not intervene after starting checklist entry for an observation,

(2) each observation is conducted during a regular shift at a crosswalk to which the guard is assigned during that shift, (3) observation is continued for at least 30 minutes, or for the duration of the guard's shift duty at the crosswalk if it is less than 30 minutes, and (4) if the guard performs crossing duty in both the morning and the afternoon, one observation should be conducted in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

Any duties not performed satisfactorily in an observation should be reviewed with the guard at that observation. If guard performance at the second observation is not entirely satisfactory, a third and final observation may be conducted within two weeks of the second observation. A guard who fails to perform all duties satisfactorily in a final observation shall not continue to perform crossing guard duty.

### 1F. Recertification of a guard

A guard who continues to perform guard duty shall be recertified once per school year to assure that he or she maintains the abilities and skills to supervise school crossings. Guards previously certified using the STOP paddle shall receive guard refresher training and then repeat supervised duty. Guards not previously certified using the STOP paddle shall receive practical training before being assigned to a crossing and performing supervised duty at their assigned posts.

Guard refresher training includes a briefing on any changes to the program, procedures and techniques.

Supervised duty is conducted as prescribed in section 1E item C. Observations of guards who return at the start of the next school year should be conducted as soon as practical after any new guards have been observed.

<b>PERFORMANCE CHECKLIST FOR FLORIDA SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Certification <input type="checkbox"/> Recertification <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____						
Guard's Name _____ Employing Agency _____								
<b>Practical Training Skill Exam</b>	For each task performed satisfactorily, place an "S" in the appropriate field. For each task performed unsatisfactorily, place a "U" in the box. During Supervised Duty, two observations are conducted for a minimum of 30 minutes each at the guard's assigned crossing during his regular shift (if the guard performs crossing duty in both the morning and afternoon, one observation should be conducted during the morning shift and the other during the afternoon). The guard must perform all tasks listed satisfactorily in the second observation. If not, a third and final observation may be conducted within two weeks of the second observation. If one or more tasks are performed unsatisfactorily during the Third On-Site Observation, the guard does not meet certification standards and should be suspended until successfully retrained or terminated.	<b>On-Site Observations</b>						
S/U		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">First</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Second</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Third</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">S/U</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S/U</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">S/U</td> </tr> </table>	First	Second	Third	S/U	S/U	S/U
First	Second	Third						
S/U	S/U	S/U						
	1. The guard is wearing the complete uniform adopted by the employing agency, in conformance with state guidelines.							
	2. The guard has brought all assigned equipment (vest, whistle, gloves, stop paddle, etc.) and uses it properly.							
	3. The guard demonstrates understanding of the function of pedestrian signals, traffic signals and crosswalks.							
	4. The guard appears alert and attentive to potential hazards in the crossing zone area.							
	5. The guard displays interest in overall safety of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.							
	6. The guard is correctly positioned at the edge of the roadway in front of children prior to crossing.							
	7. The guard demonstrates the proper search pattern (left, right, left and over shoulder) before entering the roadway.							
	8. The guard ensures that children remain on the sidewalk or at the edge of the roadway until they are told to cross.							
	9. The guard properly positions self in the roadway for maximum visibility.							
	10. The guard makes sure that all motor vehicle traffic has stopped on the roadway that will be crossed before allowing children to cross.							
	11. The guard instructs children to cross behind him/her.							
	12. The guard remains in the intersection until all children have safely crossed the roadway.							
Assignment:								
Classroom Training (Date or N/A) _____  The guard successfully completed the Classroom Instruction portion of the certification process with a score of _____ percent on the final exam.  Trainer's Signature _____  Printed Name _____	Practical Training (Date or N/A) _____    Trainer's Signature _____  Printed Name _____							
First On-site Observation _____	Second On-site Observation _____	Third On-site Observation _____						
Time Observed _____	Time Observed _____	Time Observed _____						
Trainer's Signature _____	Trainer's Signature _____	Trainer's Signature _____						
Printed Name _____	Printed Name _____	Printed Name _____						
Comments:								

**Figure 1. The performance checklist is used by trainers to assess guards.**

## 1G. Training of a multiply-assigned, re-assigned, or transferring guard

If a certified guard (as described in sections 1D thru 1F) is assigned to a crosswalk other than the one or ones at which the guard was observed for certification purposes, a trainer should familiarize the guard with conditions at the newly assigned station or stations, and check that the reassigned guard is able to manage satisfactorily. Key considerations include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- A. Guard assesses traffic to determine an appropriate time to cross (at an unsignalized crosswalk) or uses available signal intervals (at an signalized crosswalk);
- B. Guard searches for potentially conflicting traffic before entering crosswalk;
- C. Guard is properly positioned in the roadway and continues to scan; and
- D. Guard is able to command the crosswalk.

The trainer should help the guard implement any adjustments that may be needed.

If an agency hires a guard who has been certified by another agency in accordance with either section 1D or 1F and assigns the guard to a crosswalk without recertification, the agency shall provide both orientation and familiarization before the guard conducts any crossings with children. Orientation includes orientation to agency (see sections 2A.01 and 2A.13), uniform requirements (see section 2A.04), and devices for alerting traffic (see section 2A.05). Familiarization for a transferred guard is the same process outlined above for a reassigned guard.

## 1H. Requirements for a substitute guard

A substitute guard should have sufficient experience to be familiar with the crossing procedure

appropriate for any school crossing to which the guard might be assigned. If a community service officer, traffic control officer, or other employee is to be available for substitute crossing guard duty, they shall complete the same training as regular guards. (Although officers may be experts in vehicular traffic control, it is important for them to receive the training to appreciate the limitations of children's traffic skills.)

## 2. Guard training course

### 2A. Classroom instruction

This section describes information that shall be covered in the classroom element of guard training. A four-hour session should generally be sufficient.

#### 2A.01. Introduction to school crossing guard program

- A. **Overview:** the primary function of a crossing guard is to help children safely cross a street as they walk or bicycle to school, promoting the use of safe crossing skills. The guard's job description, its requirements, and compensation shall be reviewed.
- B. **Orientation to agency:** crossing guards should understand their affiliation with the agency that employs them. Typically this is a municipal police department or a county sheriff's office. A guard should know the agency's standard operating procedures in case of lightning or other inclement weather, emergencies, etc. A guard shall know how to contact by phone at least one law enforcement agency that has traffic enforcement jurisdiction on the streets at any crossing assignment. If time permits, crossing guards should receive some orien-

tation to the schools associated with their assigned school crosswalks.

- C. **Basis for use of adult crossing guards:** use of crossing guards is based on an *MUTCD* Option: “Adult crossing guards may be used to provide gaps in traffic at school crossings where an engineering study has shown that adequate gaps need to be created...and where authorized by law” (Section 7D.02).

FDOT’s Vehicle Gap Size Study form (in chapter 8 of the *FDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Studies*) may be used to determine the size and number of gaps in the vehicular traffic stream for a school crossing study. See section 5 for link to the online document.

Florida Statutes present criteria for assessing “hazardous walking conditions” for public elementary school students on “walkways perpendicular to the road” in section 1006.23, F.S., for purposes of determining student busing needs. Whether a crossing guard is present at times when students walk to or from school is among the criteria considered.

- D. **Cooperation of guards and vehicular traffic:** unless trained as a traffic control officer and employed subject to the conditions described in section 316.640(4), F.S., a crossing guard shall stand in the roadway when conducting crossings but shall not direct traffic in the usual regulatory sense. The operating procedures for crossing guards is based on an *MUTCD* standard:

Adult crossing guards shall not direct traffic in the usual law enforcement regulatory sense. In the control of traffic, they shall pick opportune times to create a sufficient gap in the traffic flow. At these times they stand in the roadway to indicate that pedestrians are about to use or are using the crosswalk, and that all vehicular traffic must stop. (Section 7D.05)

At unsignalized locations, guards select

opportune times to use or create sufficient gaps in traffic flow. In other words, they extend selected gaps as necessary, obligating drivers to yield the right of way, so that children have time to complete their crossings. At signalized locations, guards use the signal intervals that allow time for pedestrian crossing.

- E. **Relationship of adult crossing guards to school safety patrols:** in a school district that uses school safety patrols, crossing guards should understand the school district’s policy regarding safety patrols. This will enable both groups to cooperate efficiently and effectively, with a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.

## 2A.02. Common traffic hazards at crosswalks

Pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions at intersections usually involve an unexpected violation of road rules by at least one of the parties (pedestrian or driver) and the subsequent failure of both parties to take adequate evasive action. Even when driver practice is poor, pedestrians who practice good crossing techniques can usually anticipate conflicts and avoid collision.

Pedestrian crashes of the “multiple threat” type have resulted in serious injuries to children at uncontrolled crossing locations. This scenario (see Figure 2) develops when a driver stops to let a pedestrian cross but a driver in the adjacent lane fails to stop. The pedestrian enters the crosswalk in front of the stopped vehicle. The stopped vehicle obstructs the views of the pedestrian and the overtaking driver. Inexperienced pedestrians sometimes assume that if one driver stops for them at an uncontrolled crosswalk, others will too.

However, the second driver erroneously assumes

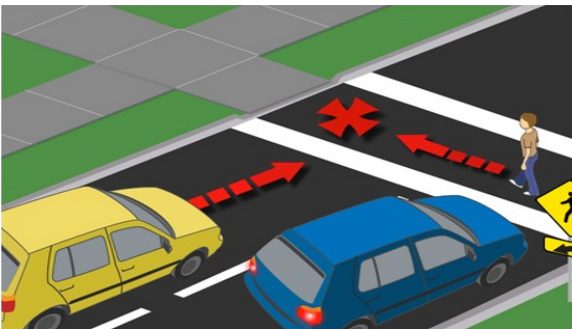


there is no reason to stop and begins to pass. The crossing pedestrian neglects to scan for approaching traffic before proceeding past the stopped vehicle, at which time the second driver and pedestrian collide.

The visible presence of guards crossing children in a roadway tends to improve driver behavior, and guards also deter improper crossings by children (e.g., darting into the roadway). Hazardous driver behaviors that may still occur at a guarded crosswalk include:

- Speeding (when crosswalk use is not noticed);
- Right turn into crosswalk on green light;
- Entering crosswalk to make right turn on red light; and
- Left turn into crosswalk on green light.

A key skill to mitigate crossing hazards is to recognize and pause at “traffic edges”. Traffic edges can be curbs, parked cars, and stopped vehicles, beyond which moving traffic might be encountered. At each traffic edge, one should verify, by seaching in the directions from which traffic might approach, that it is safe to proceed.



**Figure 2. Multiple-threat crash scenario. Neither pedestrian nor driver anticipates the other and takes evasive action.**

### 2A.03. Understanding children’s need to master safe crossing skills

A crossing guard should actively reinforce safe street crossing practices, coaching children to search for traffic before crossing—to “look left, right, left” for any approaching vehicle and (at a corner) over the shoulder for turning traffic.

Children have only partially acquired the knowledge, skills, and abilities that experienced pedestrians use. Children in traffic

- can be impulsive;
- have limited peripheral vision and ability to locate relevant sound sources;
- have poor ability to assess vehicular approach speeds and gaps;
- are short and easily screened from view by cars;
- are apt to assume that if one driver stops for them, the coast is clear; and
- are apt to consider simply running across a road a viable crossing strategy.

The video *Children in Traffic* should be shown to trainees to help them understand how children’s physical and psychological development affects their ability to detect and recognize traffic risks and make safe choices.

### 2A.04. Uniform

An adult crossing guard shall wear a high-visibility, retroreflective outer garment (vest, shirt or rainwear) that is labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 risk exposure (Section 7D.04, MUTCD). The apparel background material shall be either fluorescent yellow-green or fluorescent orange-red. The retroreflective material shall be orange, yellow,

white, silver, yellow-green, or a fluorescent version of these colors. A crossing guard should also wear:

- A. Uniform slacks, skirt or shorts, color to be determined by the agency;
- B. Light-colored shirt or shirt labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 risk exposure (Section 7D.04, MUTCD);
- C. Uniform crossing guard patch, issued by the agency, on the left sleeve;
- D. Hat or visored cap; and
- E. As needed, a windbreaker, jacket, or rain-wear that is labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 risk exposure (Section 7D.04, MUTCD) or worn underneath a vest labeled as ANSI 107-2004 standard performance for Class 2 risk exposure.

Patches and uniforms shall differ from those of law enforcement officers (Section 843.085, F.S.).

Wearing a hat gives a guard a more official appearance, enhances visibility, and protects the head from UV radiation.

### **2A.05. Devices for alerting traffic and indicating waiting position for students**

A guard shall be equipped with the following items:

- A. whistle; and
- B. STOP paddle that is MUTCD-compliant for use by crossing guards, octagonal, at least 18 inches by 18 inches, i.e., having a red background and white border, displaying the word STOP in upper-case white letters at least 6 inches high on both sides, and retroreflectorized (Section 7D.05, MUTCD)

Guards may also wear and use orange or yellow-green gloves.

A yellow “stand-back” line may be marked or taped at least 3 feet behind the curb at a school

crossing location to indicate an appropriate stand-back distance for students (see Figure 3).

### **2A.06. Understanding applicable traffic regulations**

The state traffic code is set forth in chapter 316 of Florida Statutes, known as the Florida Uniform Traffic Control Law. It includes rules that pertain to speed limits in school zones, right-of-way at crosswalks, parking or stopping at or near crosswalks, and the operation of bicycles. Although drivers do not always comply with these rules and guards should not depend on them to do so, guards should understand the basic traffic laws commonly applicable at school crossings.

During times indicated for school speed zones,

a person may not drive a vehicle on a roadway designated as a school zone at a speed greater than that posted in the school zone in accordance with this section. (Section 316.1895, F.S.)

If no school speed zone is designated but a speed limit is posted, the speed limit at a given point on the roadway is that indicated by the nearest Speed Limit signs on its approaches. On a municipal or county road, if no school speed zone is designated and no speed limit is posted, a statutory (default) speed limit applies (Section 316.189, F.S.). Within a municipality, this default speed limit is 30 mph.

The display of a green light by a traffic signal does not convey an unconditional right-of-way to a driver facing the green light:

Vehicular traffic [facing a circular green signal], including vehicles turning right or left, shall yield the right-of-way to other vehicles and to pedestrians lawfully within the intersection or an adjacent crosswalk at the time such signal is exhibited. (Section 316.075, F.S.)

A pedestrian is usually understood to be lawfully

within a crosswalk if he or she is finishing crossing after entering the crosswalk at a time when it was legal to do so (i.e., when the pedestrian faced an illuminated Walk signal or, where no pedestrian signal is installed, when the pedestrian faced a green light).

A driver facing a red light “shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection” (Section 316.075[1][c][1], F.S.).

Where no (functional) signal is present, a driver is generally obliged to yield right of way to a pedestrian who is “crossing the roadway within a crosswalk”:

When traffic control signals are not in place or in operation and there is no signage indicating otherwise, the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way, slowing down or stopping if need be to so yield, to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger. (Section 316.130[7][c], F.S.)

If “signage so indicates”, however, the driver must stop for the pedestrian:

The driver of a vehicle at any crosswalk where signage so indicates shall stop and remain stopped to allow a pedestrian to cross a roadway when the pedestrian is in the crosswalk or steps into the crosswalk and is upon the half of the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling or when the pedestrian is approaching so closely from the opposite half of the roadway as to be in danger. (Section 316.130[7][b], F.S.)

A sign that “so indicates” could be an In-Street Pedestrian Crossing sign that displays the STOP FOR [pedestrian symbol] legend (section 2B.12, MUTCD).



Figure 3. Stand-back line at a school crossing.

A pedestrian’s right to enter a crosswalk is qualified:

No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield. (Section 316.130[8], F.S.)

Stopping or parking on a crosswalk is prohibited:

Except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic...no person shall stop, stand, or park a vehicle...on a crosswalk. (Section 316.1945[1][a][4], F.S.)

A cyclist riding on a roadway is subject to the rules for drivers; a cyclist operating on a sidewalk or crosswalk has the rights and duties of a pedestrian, but is still subject to the same bicycle equipment and passenger transport requirements that apply to roadway riders. Thus, on both roadway and sidewalk, the following apply:

- A rider under age 16 is required to wear a bicycle helmet;
- A bicycle ridden between sunset and sunrise must have operating front (white) and

rear (red) lights, as well as a rear reflector;

- A bicycle must have brakes;
- A bicycle may carry only as many persons as it was designed for.

Key bicycle regulations can be found in Section 316.2065, F.S.

Although dismounting before crossing in a crosswalk is not legally required, it is best to ask children on bicycles, scooters or skateboards to dismount before crossing. Walking across helps avoid conflicts among crossing children and allows the guard and children to be more attentive to traffic hazards and react more quickly to them.

### 2A.07. Understanding traffic signal operation at crosswalks

A guard assigned to a signalized crosswalk should understand how pedestrians are expected to cross at such locations. Guards shall know the meanings of pedestrian signal indications (as defined in Section 4E.02, *MUTCD*):

- **WALKING PERSON symbol or “WALK” indication:** pedestrian may start to cross the roadway in direction of the indication;
- **Flashing UPRAISED HAND symbol or “DONT WALK” indication:** pedestrian may not start to cross, but any pedestrian already crossing shall proceed out of the roadway;
- **Steady UPRAISED HAND symbol or “DONT WALK” indication:** a pedestrian shall not enter the roadway.

The pedestrian clearance time (defined in Section 4E.06, *MUTCD*) extends from the start of the flashing indication to the time when any conflicting green is illuminated. The time ordinarily rec-

ommended should be sufficient for a pedestrian who travels at least 3.5 feet per second and began crossing during the WALK interval to reach the far side of the traveled way (or a refuge island) before a conflicting green is displayed.

At many signalized crossings, a WALK interval can be initiated only by pressing a pushbutton. Where no pedestrian signal is provided for a crosswalk, a pedestrian is permitted to start crossing when facing a circular green light (Section 316.075, F.S.).

If a traffic signal’s timing seems too short to finish crossing children before a green light is illuminated for traffic on the crossed roadway, guards should inform their supervisors so adjustments may be considered. For example, the agency that maintains the signal might be able to add time to the pedestrian clearance interval, or (if the crossing has used only one guard) an additional guard might be assigned to the crossing.

### 2A.08. Familiarity with school crossing-related signs and pavement markings

A guard should be familiar with the signs and pavement markings used at and on approaches to an assigned crossing. These may include crosswalk markings, warning signs, school speed zone signs and markings, parking prohibition signs, STOP signs, and stop lines. Guards should report to their supervisors any signs or markings that seem to be missing, damaged, or otherwise in need of maintenance. Refer to Index 17344 of the *FDOT Design Standards* and Chapters 7B and 7C of the *MUTCD*.

### 2A.09. Reporting hazards and operational problems

Various conditions can increase risks to school children traveling to, in, and from school cross-

walks. A condition that is hazardous in a guard's judgment should be reported to his supervisor as soon as practical. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Sidewalk obstruction (e.g., fallen tree limb or motor vehicle parked on sidewalk) or construction closure;
- Sight obstructions (including any that might be due to parked vehicles);
- Standing water or mud in the pedestrian pathway;
- Driver violations that threaten crossing safety; or
- Disorderly behavior, or harassment of a child.

If a traffic signal at a crossing malfunctions (i.e., does not operate in its normal mode, either flashing or going dark), guards should call their supervisors immediately to obtain police assistance.

If no crash was involved, a driver violation that threatened crossing safety may be reported after the shift. While a law enforcement officer must ordinarily observe a traffic violation in order to issue a citation in this case, information provided by a crossing guard can help to identify the offender in case of another violation. Such reports can also help to identify operating conditions that may require attention.

A guard should be able to describe a vehicle operated by a driver who has endangered student safety, and if possible, the driver. Vehicles can be described with respect to make, model, color, body style, and license tag number. A guard should endeavor to memorize this information and write it down after crossing children and returning to the curb.

## 2A.10. Procedure in event of pedestrian crash or fall

An alert, assertive, and agile guard can usually prevent or avoid pedestrian crashes. Occasionally, a child may fall (e.g., by tripping) or somehow be injured without being struck by any motor vehicle. If a pedestrian is struck or falls at a crosswalk and appears to be injured, guards should use the following procedure:

- A. **Assess the scene:** if the involved pedestrian is ambulatory, the pedestrian should move to the curb, but if a fallen victim is unresponsive or shows signs of possible head or spinal injury, the person should not be moved from the location except by qualified emergency medical personnel. In this case, traffic on the approach to the victim should be alerted to the need to proceed with caution around the scene.
- B. **Obtain help:** at a crossing with only one guard, ask a bystander or passerby to call 911 for emergency assistance. Even a struck pedestrian who initially appears uninjured may display symptoms later. The caller should be able to identify the location, answer questions about what has happened, and receive and relay any instructions the 911 dispatcher may give. The dispatcher will guide the conversation. The caller should remain on the line until a 911 dispatcher answers, collects all requested information, and hangs up.
- C. **Keep children clear:** when any emergency response vehicle using its siren and/or red or blue lights approaches, keep children off the roadway and out of responders' way.
- D. **First aid:** a guard should not attempt to do anything he or she is not trained and prepared to do. Training in first aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) is desirable although not required. Courses are offered by community organizations such as the American Red Cross.

- E. **Support investigation:** a guard should be familiar with the type of information needed to describe a crash to an investigating officer.
- F. **Notify:** guard notifies supervisor.

### 2A.11. Conducting crossings in inclement weather

Rain, hail, thunder, lightning, and other weather conditions can reduce traffic safety at crossings.

A roadway is most slippery during the first 10 to 15 minutes of a rain when oils in the pavement are brought to the surface but have not yet been washed to the sides. During a rain, vehicles and crossing pedestrians have less traction, motorists require more distance to brake, and their ability to see the road ahead can be reduced.

An electrical storm can distract motorists or disrupt the regular operation of a traffic signal. Guards shall not use an umbrella or other gear that would interfere with their ability to use their hands, or to see and hear. Any outerwear shall be worn as described in section 2A.04, item E.

### 2A.12. Courtesy crossing of adult pedestrians

When no school-aged child requires crossing, a guard may conduct a crossing for an adult pedestrian who requests the service, but should not offer to provide the service. Adult pedestrians may have little interest in receiving such assistance, or inclination to heed guard warnings. Routine provision of such service can contribute to a misperception that different rules govern use of crosswalks when crossings are not conducted by guards.

### 2A.13. Other considerations

- A. **Report any absence:** unless excused, guards shall be at their stations on time, properly attired, and neatly groomed. Guards should notify their supervisors of a planned absence at least 24 hours in advance. If illness or another unexpected circumstance prevents a timely appearance, a guard should notify the supervisor as soon as possible.
- B. **Parking a personal vehicle:** if a guard travels to his or her station in a personal vehicle, it shall be parked only in an allowed location (e.g., not on a sidewalk, nor on the street in any location where signs prohibit parking at the time). If parked on the street on an approach to the crossing, it should not block the guard's view of approaching traffic.
- C. **Remain standing while on duty:** a guard should not sit while on duty. Sitting down somewhere on the roadside would reduce an approaching driver's peripheral view of the guard and suggest to drivers and arriving children that the guard is less than fully prepared to conduct crossings. The visible presence of an alert, standing guard helps deter unsafe behavior and maintain orderly crossings.
- D. **Avoid distractions and unrelated activities:** while on duty, a guard shall not eat, smoke, use other tobacco products, or consume beverages (excluding water). While in uniform, a guard shall not patronize liquor establishments. A guard shall not use a radio (other than a two-way radio for official communication), headphones or portable audio players, nor read books, magazines, newspapers, or other materials while on duty. Any mobile communication device may be used only in an emergency and never while crossing children.
- E. **Accept instructions only through the chain of command:** any request by school personnel or others outside a guard's chain

of command (e.g., to change a guard's schedule, location or procedures) should be made through the guard's supervisor.

- F. **Receive notice of schedule changes:** a guard's supervisor shall notify guards of any school schedule change or special school function that would affect the guards' work schedules.
- G. **Emergency response plan:** if any emergency response plan has been adopted that involves a special procedure for an agency's crossing guards, guards shall be briefed on the procedure. An agency should have a plan for contacting on-duty guards in case of an emergency.

## 2B. Practical training

Practical training involves highly interactive teaching and practice of the techniques (part 3) and procedures (part 4) used to conduct school crossings and an examination of each candidate's skills using the performance checklist. The training is conducted at a crosswalk (or simulated intersection) with children not present. A session of two hours is typical.

Signalized and unsignalized crosswalks present different challenges. Practical training should prepare guards for crossing situations that they are likely to encounter, as they may be reassigned to another location in the course of the school year.

In this phase of training, trainees practice using STOP paddles and whistles, making hand signals, and coaching "children" as they conduct simulated crossings. Trainees alternate in playing the roles of guards, drivers, and children in these exercises. "Drivers" can hold cut-out images of the fronts of cars for greater realism. "Drivers" and "children" should act out behaviors that may challenge guards.

## 2C. Supervised duty

When guards are assigned to a crossing and prior to their first crossing duty, they should be briefed on the approximate number of children to expect and conditions at the location. Once guard duty starts and the trainer has determined that the guard is ready to be observed, the trainer can begin an observation using the performance checklist, as described in section 1E. However, supervised duty should be completed within the time described in section 1D.

# 3. Techniques used in school crossings

This part describes basic techniques used in conducting school crossings.

## 3A. Traffic searching procedure

At an intersection, traffic can approach a crosswalk from various directions (see Figure 4). To gauge whether any approaching traffic will have time to see the guard in the crosswalk and yield, a guard uses the traffic search procedure for crossing a street, and coaches children to follow the same steps. This procedure is:

1. At curb or edge of roadway, stand and face the roadway. Search to the left and to the right for traffic approaching from either direction.
2. If at an intersection, search forward and behind: observe the oncoming approach of the parallel roadway for any traffic that might cross your path (e.g., vehicle 4 in figure) and look over the appropriate shoulder for any traffic approaching from your rear that might turn across your path (e.g., vehicle 2);

3. If the gap seems adequate, before proceeding make a final search to the left (because traffic on that approach is on the side nearest to you).
4. When crossing the street, continue to scan the approaches for moving vehicles.

### 3B. Signaling to drivers

A guard signals to drivers to alert them to their duty to stop for crosswalk users (i.e., the guard and the crossing children), not for purposes of directing traffic. While in the roadway, a guard should never make any hand or head movement that might be interpreted by a driver as a signal to proceed. When a guard has taken position and is ready to cross children, the instruction to children to make their traffic searches and begin crossing is made verbally, without gestures.

#### 3B.01. Technique for use of STOP paddle

To alert traffic on a two-way street to stop with a STOP paddle:

1. Raise the STOP paddle with the arm that will be closest to the far (opposite) side of the street when you take the position for crossing children. At an intersection, this will be the arm that is farthest from the intersection when you are at the curb facing the crosswalk.
2. Hold the paddle shoulder-high so that one side is displayed to traffic approaching the crosswalk on the near side of the street (“near-side traffic”), and the other is displayed to traffic approaching the crosswalk on the far side of the street (“far-side traffic”). Your body should not block either view of the paddle. The two faces of the paddle should remain continuously visible to traffic approaching on the respective sides. As shown in Figure 5, *the STOP paddle precedes you into the crosswalk*. Look directly at near-side traffic momentarily, turning your head as necessary.

3. Continuing to hold the paddle as described in step 2, look directly at far-side traffic, turning your head as necessary, as you approach the middle of the street.
4. If a driver disregards the STOP paddle, blow your whistle as described in 3B.03.

As shown in Figure 6, the STOP paddle should be kept raised while the guard is in the roadway. A guard should not switch the STOP paddle from one hand to the other or wave it about while in the roadway.

#### 3B.02. Making the hand signal

To make the hand signal for traffic to stop:

1. Look directly at the nearest driver to be alerted and point at driver with an extended arm and index finger;
2. Continuing to watch driver and to hold extended arm parallel to the ground, raise your palm upward, facing the driver.
3. If driver disregards hand signal, blow whistle as described in 3B.03.

#### 3B.03. Use of whistle for warning

The whistle is a warning device. As the *MUTCD* cautions in regard to warning signs, “excessive” use can result in reduced effectiveness.

**The whistle should be in the guard’s mouth when stepping into the crosswalk.** If a driver fails to stop in response to a hand signal or the display of a STOP paddle, the response is to blow one long blast on the whistle to warn the driver while looking directly at the driver and continuing to display the STOP paddle or hand signal towards the driver with extended arm.

Whether to blow the whistle when stepping off the curb at a given location is a local agency decision that should be based on the traffic conditions and the safety of the guard. Each crosswalk should be considered individually.



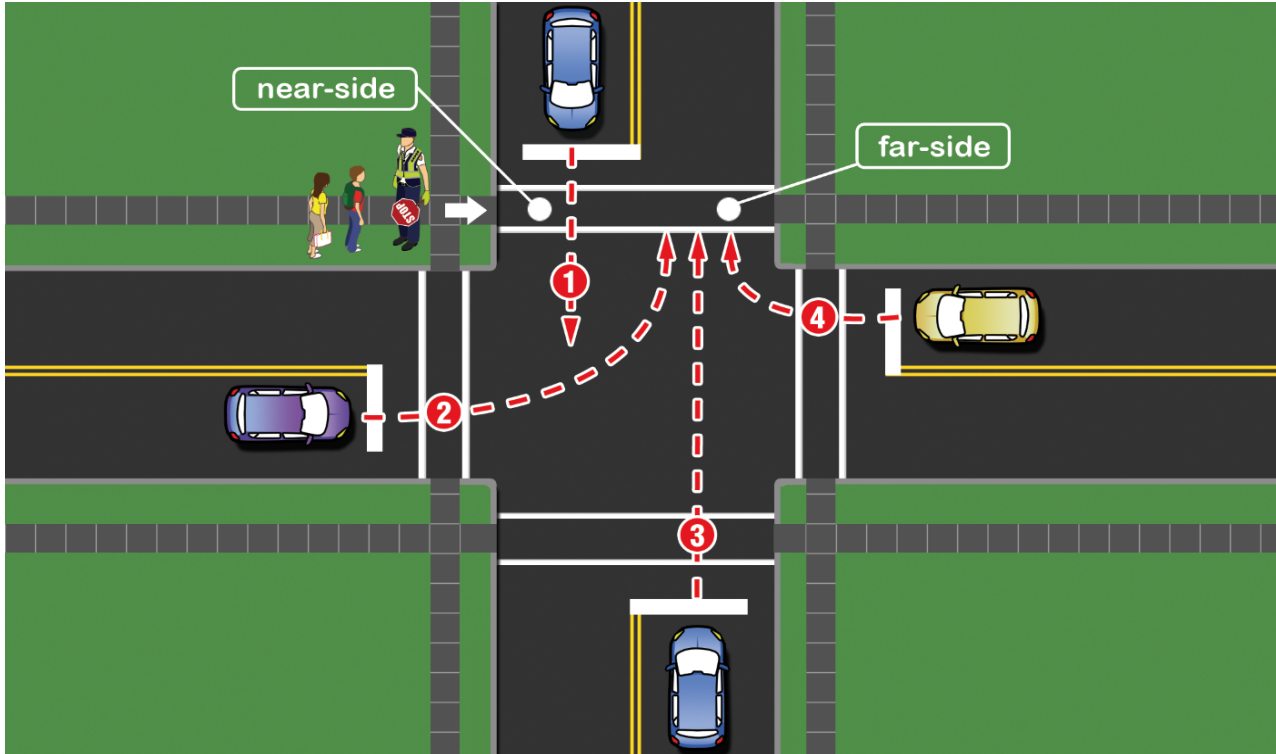


Figure 4. Paths of potential conflict at an intersection crosswalk: (1) through vehicle approaching near side, (2) vehicle approaching to turn left onto far side, (3) through vehicle approaching far side, (4) vehicle approaching to turn right onto far side.

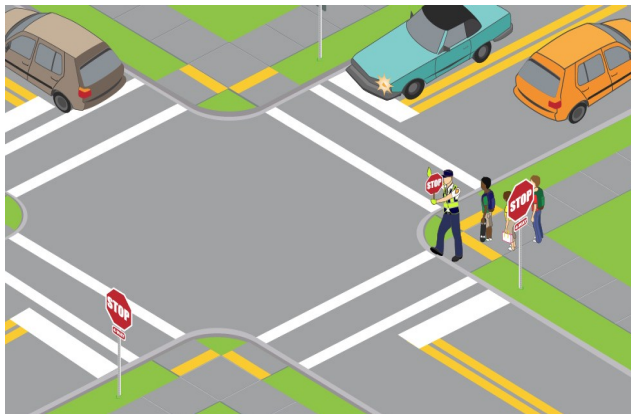


Figure 5. The guard enters the crosswalk stopping nearside traffic using the STOP paddle technique.



Figure 6. STOP paddle should be kept raised while guard is in the roadway.

## 4. Procedures for typical crosswalk configurations on two-way roadways

### 4A. Unsignalized crosswalks

#### 4A.01. Crossing procedure at unsignalized intersection crosswalk

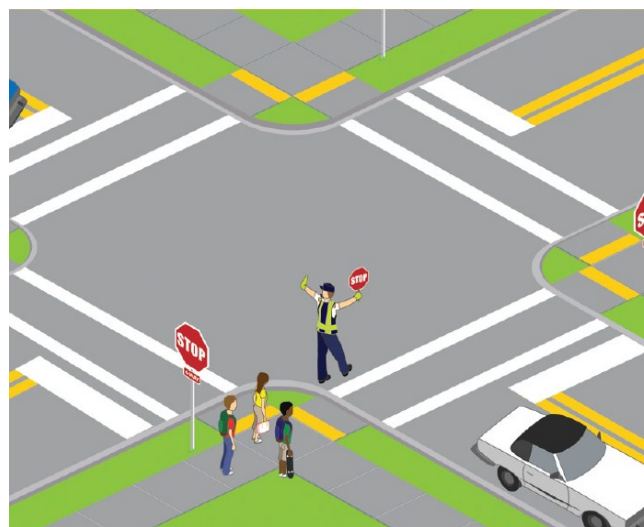
1. **Curbside assembly:** stand on curb or behind edge of roadway on the side of the street where children approach. Keep children behind the stand-back line or, if none, 3 feet or more from the curb or roadway edge.
2. **Select an opportune time:** first search traffic on the near-side approach, including any that might turn into the approach, waiting for an opportune time to create a sufficient gap in traffic. Search both approaches before entering the crosswalk. Remind children to wait for your verbal direction before starting to cross.
3. **Enter crosswalk, stopping near-side traffic:** enter with whistle in mouth. The raised STOP paddle precedes (or leads) you to the middle of the roadway.



Step 1. Curbside assembly.



Step 2. Select an opportune time.



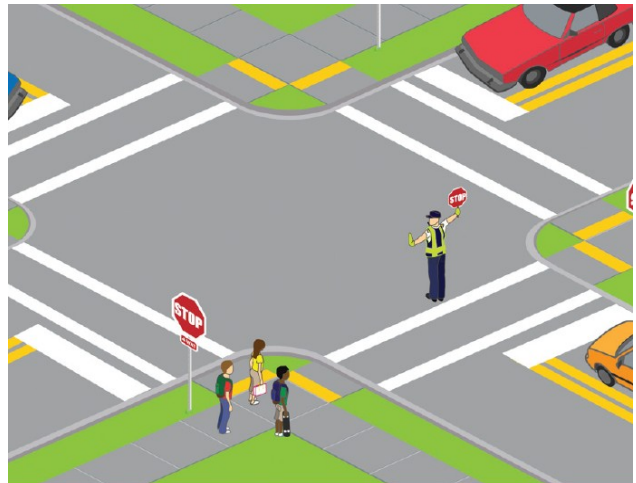
Step 3. Enter the crosswalk.

4. **Stop far-side traffic:** as you approach the middle of the roadway, check that the STOP paddle is clearly visible to far-side traffic, including any turning traffic.



Step 4. Stop far-side traffic.

5. **Take position,** facing the intersection with back to crosswalk, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. Make a final check that traffic on crosswalk approaches has stopped.



Step 5. Take position.

6. **Initiate crossing:** turn your head toward the waiting children and, making eye contact, tell them to search and cross when the way is clear.



Step 6. Initiate crossing.

7. **Maintain your position:** as children cross behind you, do not allow any driver to cross the crosswalk before the last child in the group has reached the opposite curb or roadway edge and you have begun step 8.



Step 7. Maintain your position.

8. **Return to the starting curb:** remain alert for traffic and continue to display the STOP paddle until you have left the roadway.



Step 8. Return to starting curb.

#### 4A.02. Crossing procedure at unsignalized midblock crosswalk

This procedure follows the same steps used at an unsignalized intersection except that step 5 is:

**Take position** in the middle of the street, just outside the crosswalk *on the side closest to the approach with the greater apparent risk of traffic conflict (e.g., due to greater volume or higher typical speeds)* and face that approach, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. Make a final check that traffic on both approaches has stopped.

#### 4B. Signalized crosswalks

##### 4B.01. Crossing procedure at signalized intersection crosswalk

This procedure follows the same steps used at an unsignalized intersection crosswalk (4A.01) except that step 2 is:

**Wait for Walk indication:** as children collect, press pedestrian pushbutton, if needed to actuate a phase for pedestrian crossing. Remind children to wait for your signal before starting to cross. When a fresh WALKING PERSON symbol (or “WALK” message) is displayed (or when the appropriate green is illuminated if there is no pedestrian signal), search all approaches before entering the crosswalk.

##### 4B.02. Crossing procedure at signalized midblock crosswalk

In this case, a pedestrian pushbutton is ordinarily installed. The crosswalk is considered “signalized” (in the sense of “controlled”) if the

signal displays a red indication when activated. If not (e.g., if the signal is a flashing yellow warning beacon), use the procedure for an unsignalized midblock crosswalk, 4A.02). The procedure for a signalized midblock crosswalk follows the steps used at a signalized intersection except step 5, which is :

**Take position** in the middle of the street, just outside the crosswalk *on the side closest to the approach with the greater apparent risk of traffic conflict (e.g., due to greater volume or higher typical speeds)* and face that approach, continuing to display the STOP paddle to both approaches. Make a final check that traffic on both approaches has stopped.

##### 4C. Crosswalks on multilane highways

At a signalized or unsignalized crosswalk that crosses four or more lanes (on either an undivided or divided highway), two guards should be assigned, so that each can handle one side of the highway (see Figures 7 and 8).

The guard for the side on which children approach is in charge of initiating a crossing (thus, the responsibility of the lead guard will switch from one side in the morning to the other side in the afternoon). The lead guard enters the highway first, following the appropriate procedure for an unsignalized or signalized crosswalk, but proceeding only to the middle of the traffic lanes on his or her side and alerting traffic only on that side. The guard on the opposite side waits for the lead guard before entering the highway and alerting traffic on his or her own side.

Each guard stands at the edge of the crosswalk on the side closest to traffic that approaches on his or her respective side, and faces that approach.

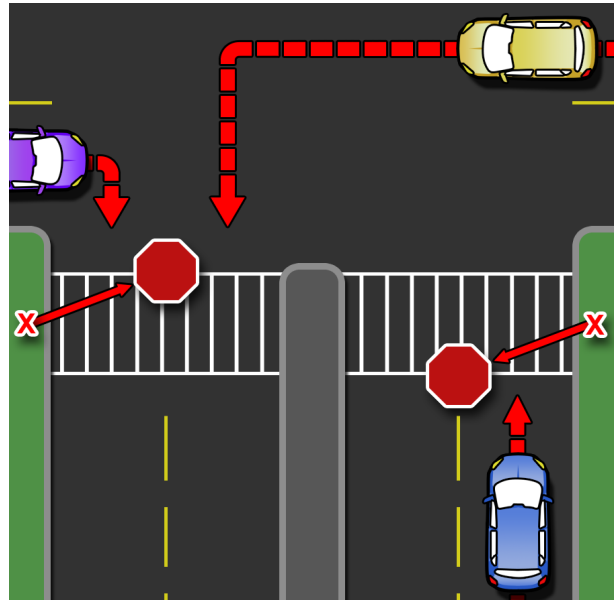
The lead guard makes the final visual check and gives the verbal direction to children to make their searches for traffic (section 3A) and to cross when clear. Children cross in the crosswalk between the two guards.

#### 4D. Other crossing configurations

More than two guards may be needed at an intersection of two multilane arterials where children must cross two or more legs of the intersection.

For a crossing on a leg of a roundabout, the procedure for an unsignalized midblock crosswalk can be used. Crosswalks at a roundabout are usually located a short distance from the circulatory roadway, so that if one or more vehicles stop at the entrance to wait for an opening to enter the roundabout, pedestrians can cross behind them. A splitter island provides a median refuge so a crossing pedestrian can concentrate on one direction of traffic at a time.

Crossings at locations with heavy turning movements or other challenging conditions may require adjustments to the procedures described above.



**Figure 7. Positions taken by two guards to conduct a multilane crossing**



**Figure 8. Two guards on a multilane crossing return to their respective starting curbs.**

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