

ROADBLOCK PROCEDURES

STANDARD NO(S):

NYSLEAP 43.5 & 47.3

DATE:

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REFER TO:

John Fowler

I. OBJECTIVE:

To establish procedures for the use of roadblocks.

II. POLICY:

Seneca County has an area of 330 square miles containing 680.24 miles of roadways. It is bordered by five other county jurisdictions available by numerous routes of travel. The prospects for implementing, as a patrol technique, a fixed roadblock for the purpose of intercepting a vehicle containing a fleeing person has been carefully considered and is rejected as impractical on the basis of limited resources. At best, it may be effective as a screening device to enable a visual check of a vehicle's occupants or to conduct a routine traffic inspection.

III. DETAILS:

A. The purpose of a roadblock is to restrict or stop the flow of normal traffic on a roadway for the express purpose of attempting to identify a wanted person who may be traveling thereon; to perform a traffic check for valid operating documents, equipment violations, or a driver's sobriety ; or in the performance of other official valid law enforcement duties. As stated in "**Vehicle Operation**" in this Manual, roadblocks shall not be used as a means to stop a pursued violator.

1. It is expected that a roadblock operation will be preplanned to the extent possible. Members must be trained in roadblock techniques and be properly equipped to conduct the operation.
2. Factors to be considered in making the decision to set up a roadblock in an attempt to apprehend a wanted person or aiding the investigation of a criminal act are:
 - a. The seriousness of the crime;
 - b. The sufficiency of information concerning the description of the wanted person;
 - c. The elapsed time between the criminal act and its discovery; and,

d. The availability of manpower and equipment necessary to conduct an effective and safe roadblock.

B. Authorization for the implementation of a roadblock may be given by the shift Sergeant, with the approval of the Road Lieutenant. In any event the 911 Center will be aware that the procedure has been started and when finished.

C. Supervision at the scene of a roadblock will be by the shift Sergeant, unless more than one location is being manned in which case the Sergeant (or Road Lieutenant) may designate an experienced member to assume command at that site. In no case may a roadblock be implemented with less than two officers and two patrol cars.

D. Safety in the conduct of a roadblock is of paramount concern. Patrol vehicles should be placed along the shoulder of the roadway in the direction of travel with flashers and bar lights operating. Depending upon the speed of travel along the roadway, as well as topographical considerations such as curves, hills, bridges, etc., flares should be placed along the roadway sufficiently distant to insure that traffic can be brought to a safe stop. In all instances, there must be adequate warning to oncoming vehicles in either direction. Every SCSO member assigned to a road block or safety check point is required to wear his/her assigned High Visibility Vest during the entire time of such operation.

E. The manning of a roadblock requires extraordinary vigilance on the part of the members so engaged. This means that every vehicle must be approached with extreme care and each member must be aware of the activities of one's fellow officers at all times. Depending upon the reason for the roadblock, special weapons, if appropriate, should be in readiness if needed for self-defense.

F. Members participating in the implementation of a roadblock should realize that, although their actions are fully justified, they represent an impediment to the free travel of the citizenry. For this reason, each member should be aware that a word of explanation to the innocent can do much to gain the public's support and sympathy for the operation.

G. If practical, a written log should be maintained of each vehicle by license number, or if more practical the aid of the License Plate Reader (LPR) should be used, as it is cleared through the roadblock. This information could prove valuable in any subsequent investigation of the subject's movements, and should be included in an S.J.S. entry of the activity together with the date, location, reason, and time of operation.

H. In the event a vehicle attempts to avoid a roadblock, every attempt should be made to obtain the plate number, description, number of passengers and direction of travel. This information should be furnished immediately to the supervisor and, using good judgment, a determination made as to the advisability of initiating pursuit.