



LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN



CROSSING GUARDS: COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE FOR AGENCY-EMPLOYED AND VENDOR-SUPPLIED SERVICES

This bulletin identifies recently updated resources, including sample policies for agencies that directly employ crossing guards and for agencies that contract with a third-party vendor to provide crossing guard services. Agencies should establish clear and comprehensive policy guidance for crossing guard operations, regardless of whether crossing guards are employed by the local government or supplied through an outside vendor. N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.1 requires school crossing guards to serve under the supervision and direction of the Chief of Police or the Chief's designee.

Pedestrian safety remains a persistent public safety concern. In 2025, 6,732 pedestrians were reportedly struck and killed in the United States, an average of approximately 18 deaths per day.¹ Crossing guards perform an essential public safety function by helping students and other pedestrians safely cross roadways at assigned posts; however, this responsibility also exposes them to significant traffic-related hazards. Each year, crossing guards across the country are seriously injured or killed while performing their duties. In New Jersey, sixteen crossing guards were killed after being struck by vehicles between 1993 and 2016, and 390 crossing guards were injured in motor vehicle-related incidents during the same period.² The deaths of three New Jersey crossing guards between 2024 and 2026 further underscore the need for clear, comprehensive, and enforceable policy guidance.²

Accordingly, this bulletin is intended to assist agencies that employ crossing guards in developing and maintaining a comprehensive Crossing Guard Program that addresses hiring, training, supervision, equipment, and operational procedures to promote the safety of students, crossing guards, and members of the public. It also provides critical guidance for agencies that contract with third-party vendors, emphasizing that the police department should maintain overall program oversight even when crossing guards are supplied by a vendor.

Guidance concerning agency-employed crossing guards is immediately below, and guidance concerning vendor-supplied crossing guards begins on page 3.

Essential Actions for the Chief of Police – Agency-Employed Crossing Guards

- Implement a policy or update an existing policy governing the crossing guard function. An updated Sample Policy, *Crossing Guards – Employed by the Agency*, is now available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#). This updated sample policy now includes:
 - Key definitions.
 - Establishment of a Crossing Guard Coordinator with defined responsibilities.
 - After-Action Review considerations.
 - Weather-related risk mitigation.
 - Injury reporting.
- Review the [New Jersey School Crossing Guard Manual for Supervisors](#).

- Develop a training program or modify it annually to reflect current trends, legislative changes, identified near-miss incidents, preventable past injuries, and more. Utilize the [Crossing Guard Infographic](#) as part of the training program.
- Document required and other training. Sample forms are available.
- Provide mandated and recommended equipment.
- Ensure there is a process to review crossing guard post locations for needed maintenance, hazards, signage, and more. Watch the three-minute video, [Crossing Guard Post Inspection](#), and review [Determining the Placement of Crossing Guards](#).
- Ensure there is a specific job description for the crossing guard position, and that it is accurate.
- Ensure Job Safety Observations and Job Hazard Assessments are completed, documented, and discussed at the agency's safety committee meeting.
- Establish a medical review program, as well as a comprehensive background investigation process.
- Increase public awareness and develop a community-wide pedestrian bicycle safety program.

The [MEL Safety Institute Crossing Guards Resources](#) webpage contains many resources, including sample forms, brief videos for crossing guards, and other resources to assist the Chief of Police or their designee in meeting the above necessary actions and requirements.

Additional Considerations – Agency Employed Crossing Guards

- Implement the Weather-Related Risk Mitigation Policy, available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#), as dangerous weather can significantly impact crossing guards.
- Implement the After-Action Review Policy, available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#), to assist in identifying near-miss incidents involving crossing guards or pedestrians.
- Review the six-minute video [Crossing Guard Safety Resources](#), which describes the many resources available to improve safety.
- Establish and maintain an agency review program of the crossing guard post locations and utilize the *Annual Review of School Crossing Guard Program and Post Form* available from the [MEL Crossing Guard Resource Page](#) to help ensure crossing guard posts are free of hazards and have adequate signage, highway markings, and more.
- Direct designated members of the agency to complete the New Jersey Safe Routes to [School Crossing Guard Train-the-Trainer Program](#).
- Use this opportunity to learn about the many PEOSH requirements concerning law enforcement, which can be found [here](#).
- Review the New Jersey Department of Labor [Statewide Initiative to Bolster the Safety Standards for School Crossing Guards](#) and the New Jersey Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) Alert, [Preventing Crossing Guard Injuries and Deaths](#).

- Review the bulletins below, available in [MSI Law Enforcement Bulletins](#), as these will be helpful when developing the agency Crossing Guard Training Program:
 - E-Bikes: Essential Policy and Enforcement Considerations
 - Safe Passing Bill
 - Vehicle Ramming Attacks: Essential Considerations
 - Employment Practices and Litigation
- Review the bulletins below, available in [MSI Bulletins](#), as these will be helpful when developing the agency Crossing Guard Training Program:
 - Job Hazard Analysis
 - Protection and Safety Treatment of Minors Best Practices
 - Road, Sign, Walkway Program Best Practices
 - Slip and Trip Prevention Best Practices
- Review the [Vision Zero Program](#) and collaborate with local government leaders to develop a long-term pedestrian safety strategy and plan.
- Utilize the resources available from the [New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety](#).
- Review the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) with special attention to Part 7, [Traffic Control for School Areas](#).

VENDOR SUPPLIED Crossing Guards - Essential Actions for the Chief of Police

Local communities that use a private contractor to staff crossing guard positions should review any such agreement with the municipal attorney. Communities should also recognize that [NJS Title 40](#) assigns oversight responsibility for crossing guards to the Chief of Police. Accordingly, agencies should take appropriate steps to ensure that crossing guard post assignments, training requirements, supervision, communications, and other essential program elements are incorporated into the agency's Crossing Guard Program.

- Implement a policy or update an existing policy governing the crossing guard function. An updated Sample Policy, *Crossing Guards – Vendor Supplied*, is now available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#). This new sample policy includes:
 - Key definitions
 - Establishment of a Crossing Guard Coordinator with defined responsibilities.
 - Establishment of a Crossing Guard Vendor Liaison to collaborate with the agency Crossing Guard Coordinator.
 - After-Action Review considerations.
 - Weather-related risk mitigation.
 - Chain of command considerations.
 - Training record retention guidance.
 - Staffing call-out and communication procedures.
 - Agency vs. vendor responsibilities.
 - Injury reporting procedures.
- Remain collaboratively engaged in the process of determining appropriate crossing guard post locations by communicating with school officials and the vendor. Although a vendor might be staffing the positions, local

law enforcement should continue to play an essential role in keeping community members safe, including crossing guards, parents, and children.

- Establish and maintain an agency review program of the crossing guard post locations and utilize the *Annual Review of School Crossing Guard Program and Post Form* available from the [MEL Crossing Guard Resource Page](#) to help ensure crossing guard posts are free of hazards and have adequate signage, highway markings, and more.
- Implement a safety campaign in the community concerning school transportation safety, including crossing guard safety.
- Determine how crossing guards will report an emergency at their post while ensuring each crossing guard has a cell phone or other communications equipment.
- Determine how complaints will be handled concerning a crossing guard's performance or demeanor, including how such issues are reported, the investigation process, and how the final outcome is conveyed to the police department.
- Discuss with the municipal attorney the development of an appropriate contract or agreement with the vendor that is approved by the governing body. Some considerations when developing a contract or agreement:
 - Include a requirement that copies of the training records of any crossing guard working in the municipality are provided to the Chief of Police.
 - Include a provision that all crossing guards must meet the standards of the Job Description and include the Job Description in the contract. A sample Job Description is available from the [MEL Crossing Guard Resource Page](#).
 - Require the crossing guard to have a cell phone, and if they do not have a personal cell phone, the vendor must supply a cell phone.
 - Describe in detail the types and frequency of completed employee background checks, including queries of the sex offender registry as permitted. For example, consider ensuring background checks are completed not only at the onset of employment but at agreed-upon predetermined intervals. Chiefs of Police should also consider querying their own internal records, as appropriate, in addition to the background checks completed by the vendor.
 - Determine the appropriate costs of the program and ensure this is well defined in the contract.
 - Determine and delineate the specific tasks that are required of crossing guards as codified in a job description. A sample job description is available from the [MEL Crossing Guard Resource Page](#).
 - Discuss and define what medical testing will be required and who is responsible for any costs. Sample medical requirements are available from the [MEL Crossing Guard Resource Page](#).
 - Include in the agreement that all crossing guards must complete the [MEL Safety Institute Protecting Children From Abuse](#) training.
 - Define the locations that a crossing guard shall staff, how they will be supervised, and who is responsible for when a guard is unable to report to a post.
 - Delineate the type, quantity, and style of apparel and equipment, including a reflective safety vest, inclement weather gear, hat, badge, and stop paddle, that meet or exceed current PEOSH standards.

- Determine and detail who is responsible for the repair or replacement of damaged uniforms or equipment.
- Require the contractor to maintain an on-call pool of trained crossing guards or supervisors who can respond to unexpected absences within a defined timeframe.
- Establish a contractual requirement that the contractor notify the Crossing Guard Coordinator or other designated person(s) immediately upon becoming aware that a post cannot be staffed. Early notification provides the greatest opportunity to implement contingency measures.
- Consider provisions requiring the contractor to reimburse the local government entity for documented costs incurred when municipal employees must cover an unstaffed crossing post. Alternatively, the contract could include service credits or fee reductions for repeated staffing failures.
- Include measurable expectations, such as maintaining a 98-99% staffing rate for scheduled crossing assignments, with corrective action required if performance falls below the established threshold. If staffing deficiencies recur, require the contractor to submit a written corrective action plan outlining the cause, proposed solutions, and an implementation timeline.
- Require all crossing guards, including substitutes, to receive consistent training and meet any municipal or state requirements before assignment.
- Require the contractor to document every missed assignment, late arrival, or vacancy, including the reason, notification time, and corrective actions taken. This allows the police department or local government entity to monitor trends over time.
- When requested by the Crossing Guard Coordinator, the Chief of Police or their designee attend periodic meetings (quarterly or semi-annually) to review staffing performance, address concerns, and identify opportunities for improvement before issues become systemic. Such meetings may also include a required local orientation of newly hired crossing guards with designated agency personnel present.
- The municipal attorney should review the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund [Third Party Provider Insurance Guidelines](#) and consult with their Risk Management Consultant to determine and define appropriate insurance coverages in the agreement.

VENDOR SUPPLIED Crossing Guards - Additional Considerations

- Implement the Weather-Related Risk Mitigation Policy, available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#), as dangerous weather can significantly impact crossing guards.
- Implement the After-Action Review Policy, available in the [Law Enforcement Accreditation Plus Portal](#), to help identify near-miss incidents involving crossing guards or pedestrians.
- Direct designated members of their Agency to complete the New Jersey Safe Routes to [School Crossing Guard Train-the-Trainer Program](#).
- Review the New Jersey Department of Labor [Statewide Initiative to Bolster the Safety Standards for School Crossing Guards](#) and the New Jersey Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) Alert, [Preventing Crossing Guard Injuries and Deaths](#).
- Review the bulletins below, available in [MSI Law Enforcement Bulletins](#):

- E-Bikes: Essential Policy and Enforcement Considerations
- Safe Passing Bill
- Vehicle Ramming Attacks: Essential Considerations
- Employment Practices and Litigation
- Review the bulletins below, available in [MSI Bulletins](#):
 - Job Hazard Analysis
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 - Road, Sign, Walkway Program Best Practices
- Review the [Vision Zero Program](#) and collaborate with local government leaders to develop a long-term pedestrian safety strategy and plan.
- Utilize the resources available from the [New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety](#).
- Review the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) with special attention to Part 7, [Traffic Control for School Areas](#).

If you have any questions, please contact your Law Enforcement Risk Control Consultant.

¹ Governors Highway Safety Association. (2026). *Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State: 2025 Preliminary Data*. Governors Highway Safety Association.

² New Brunswick, E. J.-R. (2026, May 21). *3 Crossing Guards Killed in Three Years: How a Nice Job for Retirees Became Frighteningly Dangerous*. Retrieved from Rutgers New Brunswick: <https://vtc.rutgers.edu/3-crossing-guards-killed-in-3-years-how-a-nice-job-for-retirees-became-frighteningly-dangerous/>