

(Specific agency name) Transportation
Sign Maintenance Policies and Procedures – Sample Document
Adopted by (____ County) Board: Date – Resolution _____

Purpose

The purpose of the Traffic Operations Policies and Procedures is to establish and maintain uniform definitions and practices concerning sign maintenance and operations on (specific agency name) highways. The county will provide such control in a safe and cost-effective manner balancing the needs of safety for highway users and county personnel, budget, social and environmental concerns. It is in the county's best interest to have traffic operation maintenance procedures. Because of variables in the weather, traffic issues, changing driver demographics, road design, standards and other factors, these procedures must remain flexible. The county may use county employees or other entities under contract to provide this service.

I. Procedure

The sign maintenance supervisor or designated lead worker will make decisions concerning scheduling and the procedures to be followed for daily traffic operation maintenance needs and subsequent yearly detailed condition inspections. Scheduling and the procedures to be followed will be based upon consideration of the following factors: significance of the traffic device to driver safety, condition and effectiveness of the device, standards compliance, and whether damage or condition creates an immediate safety hazard.

In every instance, the onsite Traffic Technician must assess the conditions of the traffic control device and rely on judgment and experience to determine the appropriate action to correct or maintain the device. Factors that may delay completion of traffic operation maintenance include other repair needs; utility locates needs, fabrication of necessary material, weather conditions including severe cold or significant winds, limited visibility, and other staff and field condition issues.

- II. **General Practices:** Subject to the factors set forth in Section II, Procedures, the county will maintain traffic control devices (signs, traffic signals and pavement markings) to ensure a safe and efficient operation. **Note: This example details sign practices but, can be expanded to pertain to all traffic operation practices.**

Sign Maintenance

- A. Sign Installation: Signs will be installed to meet federal standards set forth in the most recent Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MnMUTCD) in accordance to (specific agency name) guidelines and practices.
- B. Maintain Signing, Overall Responsibility: County sign maintenance practices are established to meet all requirements and ensure appropriate signing for the traveling public.
- C. Sign Retro-Reflectivity: (Specific name) county is currently creating a field sign inventory database. Once data collection is done and the system is in place, County will utilize the database for sign management through the expected sign life practice to meet federal sign retro-reflectivity standards. Expected sign life will

be conducted through a combination of review of signs that are at the sheeting warranty life and sample measurements to establish a base line life for each sign type.

Prior to completion of the database, County will utilize the Visual Inspection Method, following the general criteria of the calibrated sign procedure to conduct a nighttime inspection as outlined in the specific section below.

Once the sign management practice is fully implemented nighttime sign survey may be conducted periodically (up to every four years) to supplement the management program and monitor for sign replacement needs based on vandalism or other premature sign degradation.

- D. Sign Maintenance Responsibility: Maintain highway signs and street identification signs on all (specific agency name) highways, with the exception of:
- 1) All signing on approaches to county highways are not installed or maintained by the county other than street name signs and stop signs intersecting the county Highway which are maintained by the county.
 - 2) Stop signs at Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) controlled intersections and highway ramps with county highways;
 - 3) Specific signs installed by others (Mn/DOT, transit agencies, and Cities permitted to place signs on county highways) as outlined in the advanced signing guideline document.
 - 4) Signs along county Highway within Mn/DOT right of way, unless specific agreement with Mn/DOT stipulates a county maintenance responsibility for signing.
 - 5) Bike path and other pedestrian-control signs not pertaining to vehicle traffic.
- E. Response to Incident Report for Sign Repair Needs: Sign maintenance staff will respond after receiving notice of a repair need to determine appropriate action with the following priorities:
- 1) Stop sign: as soon as practical, no later than one business day, a temporary stop sign will be placed if required.
 - 2) Other regulatory signs: no later than three business days.
 - 3) Warning signs: within one scheduled workday.
 - 4) Informational/guidance signs: within two scheduled workweeks.
- F. Visual Sign Inspection: Traffic staff will perform a night time survey as follows:
- 1) Acceptable retro reflectivity will be determined by the technicians conducting the night time inspect.
 - 2) Staff will be given direction as training by the supervisor or take a night time sign inspection course if available in the area for conducting the study appropriately. The night of the inspection, staff will view each sign type mounted at the standard sign height (regulatory black/white, stop sign, warning sign and guidance sign) that are at or above minimum criteria from the standard county pick-up truck with low-beans to mimic field conditions as much as practical.

- 3) Written documentation of the location, sign type, size and reason for sign replacement will be recorded for each sign that is not in an acceptable condition and needs replacement.
- 4) Sign replacement will occur as follows:
 - a) Stop signs – within three working days
 - b) All other signs – by segment with the entire replacement program for signs identified through the survey being replaced within four months of completion of the review.

G. Miscellaneous Sign Practices:

- 1) Sign staff is not directly on-call after normal working hours. After hours phone numbers for traffic operation sign staff is provided to the Communications Center (911 response) so staff can be contacted in case of an emergency. In addition, a signal maintenance and highway maintenance person is on-call at all times after normal working hours and can respond to emergency situations in case traffic operation staff cannot be contacted.
- 2) Training is provided to ensure traffic staff can perform sign maintenance duties in an efficient, effective and responsive manner. Such training shall consist of, at a minimum, appropriate signing and traffic control seminars (when available and funds are available in the county training budget), appropriate available training videos or website trainings, and yearly training by supervisors.
- 3) Unauthorized signs will be removed from county right of way consistent with the (specific agency name).
- 4) Support staff will be informed and updated regarding sign maintenance operations (e.g., schedules and other priority needs or equipment failures) to ensure accurate information is available to respond to telephone inquiries.
- 5) Sign staff may park a sign maintenance vehicle against traffic flow in order to perform necessary emergency and routine maintenance duties.
- 6) Sign staff may drive or park maintenance vehicles on the center medians or boulevards in order to perform necessary emergency and routine maintenance duties.