

FLAGGER'S HANDBOOK



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NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

You have been chosen to be a flagger because your supervisor feels you are physically able, mentally alert and sufficiently commanding in appearance to properly control traffic through construction, maintenance and utility work areas. As a flagger, your chief duties are:

- Guide traffic safely through work areas.
- Protect your fellow workers.
- Prevent unreasonable delays for road users, and
- Answer motorists' questions politely and knowledgeably.

This handbook will help you carry out these important duties. Study it carefully to learn proper flagging procedures and keep it handy for quick reference.

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Rules of Conduct

Flagging is an important responsibility and should be carried out with authority and dignity. Courtesy and a professional attitude are vital in gaining the respect of the traveling public. The image you project can affect the public's attitude toward the whole project and your organization. The following guidelines will make you a more effective flagger and make your job easier.

Before beginning your flagging duties, do the following:

- Park your vehicle outside the work zone, well off the roadway.
- Make sure your apparel and equipment are not faded, and are clean and neat.
- Make sure proper signs are in place.
- Become familiar with the work activities so you can answer motorists' questions.
- Discuss a reasonable relief schedule with your supervisor or crew leader.
- When two or more flaggers will be working together, make sure one flagger is designated as the flagger in charge (the other flaggers will coordinate their activities accordingly). Also, make sure you:
 - are positioned so you can see each other;
 - have two-way radios for communicating; or
 - are utilizing a pilot car.

While you are flagging:

- Be neat in appearance.
- Do not turn your back to approaching traffic.
- Do not leave your position to talk with the work crew.
- Be friendly and polite to the public, but do not engage in small talk. Do not leave your position to visit with motorists or pedestrians.
- Never argue with road users. Be courteous, but be brief and factual in your conversation with them.
- If a road user refuses to obey instructions, report the following information to your supervisor as soon as possible without deserting your post.
 - General description of the road user.
 - Vehicle license number and description.
 - Circumstances involved in the incident.
- Be alert to the needs of emergency vehicles. They should be given priority of passage, but only when their safety will not be compromised.

Flagging Equipment

Clothing

In addition to being neatly dressed, a flagger must be dressed for safety. To be easily visible to traffic, you must wear the following items when flagging, even when you are serving as a replacement for a short period. **(Figure 1)**

- Flaggers shall wear high-visibility safety apparel that meets the Performance Class 2 or 3 requirements of the ANSI/ISEA 107 publication entitled *“American National Standard for High-Visibility Apparel and Headwear”* and is labeled as meeting the ANSI 107 standard performance for Class 2 or 3 risk exposure.
- For nighttime activity, high-visibility safety apparel that meets the Performance Class 3 requirements may be worn.
- Faded or soiled vests will not be allowed.
- An orange or yellow/green cap or hard hat.
- A shirt with sleeves, pants and shoes (tank tops, shorts or sandals shall not be worn.)

Tools

You will be equipped with the standard combination “STOP/SLOW” pole-type sign described below.

Specifications for “Stop/Slow,” two-sided sign

Size: Minimum 18" x 18" octagon sign with a 5' rigid handle.

Color: STOP sign – Red background with white letters (6" series C) and border, fully reflectorized.

SLOW sign – Orange diamond-shape background with black letters (6" series B) and black border outside of diamond shape.

Nighttime flagging requires proper illumination of flagger and equipment. (See page 14 for list of equipment required.)

In **emergencies** when the standard sign is not available, a red flag may be used (for daytime operations) instead. During the night the flag should be reflectorized.

In nighttime emergencies, at a non-illuminated flagger station, a flagger may use a flashlight with a red glow cone to supplement the STOP/SLOW sign or flag.

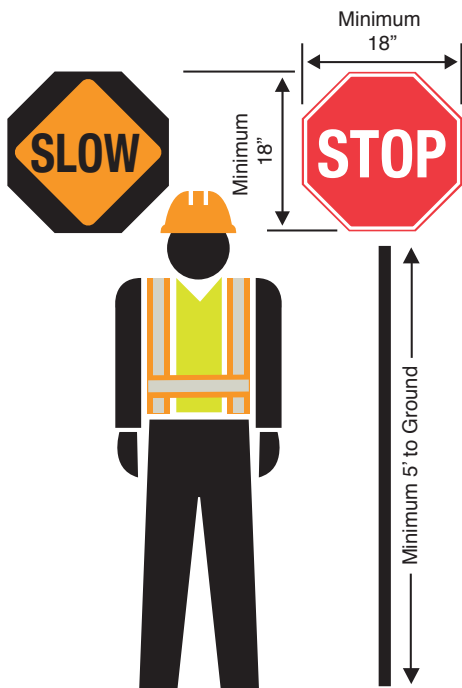


Figure 1
Flagging clothing and tools

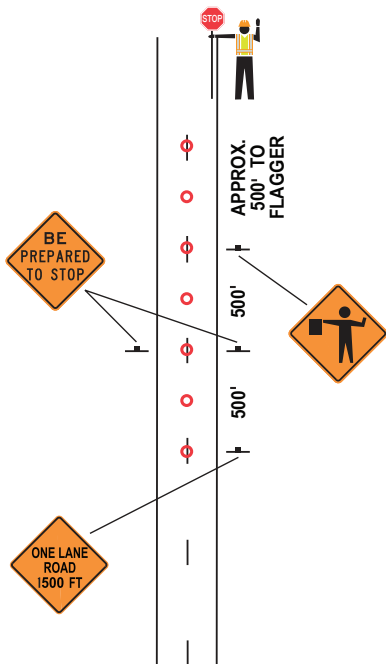
Advance Warning Signs

Advance warning signs are required. In emergencies it might be necessary to flag without them initially, but signs must be erected as soon as possible. See **Figure 2** for the typical rural flagger signing set-up.

Flagger's Position

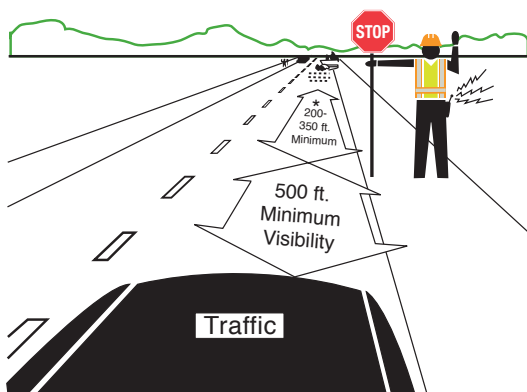
Follow these directions carefully to help keep you safe during flagging. They will also assist you in skillfully controlling traffic through the work area.

- Be alert at all times. Do not be distracted by the work operation.
- Be on your feet facing oncoming traffic.



- Stand where you will be highly visible at all times but **do not stand in the path of an approaching vehicle**. Do not stand in shadows or near parked vehicles or equipment which might hide you from approaching road users.

Factors such as visibility, speed and volume of traffic, condition of the road, and the work being done must be considered in determining the proper location of the flagger. Generally, flagger stations should be located about 200 - 350' in advance of the work site. In urban settings with reduced speed zones this may be reduced to 50 - 150'. (**Figure 3**)



*50-150 ft. in urban areas with reduced speed zone

Figure 3
Flagger's position

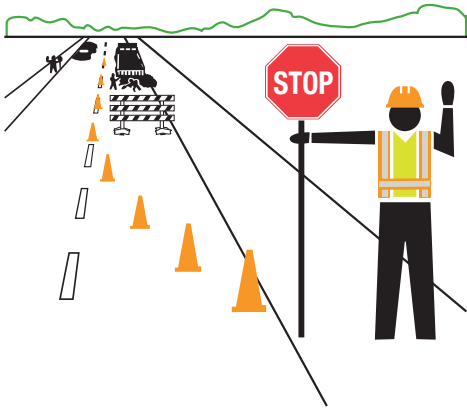


Figure 4
Stopping first vehicle from shoulder

- No vehicle shall be parked in the immediate area of the flagger.
- **Stand alone.** Do not mingle with the work crew, the traveling public or other people.
- When two flaggers are working together (one on either end of the work area), they should always be able to see each other or use two-way radios for proper communication.

Note: In such cases, one flagger is always in charge; the other flagger coordinates his or her activities accordingly.

- Stop the first vehicle in the closed lane from the adjacent shoulder using the STOP/SLOW sign. **(Figure 4)**
- Stop succeeding vehicles from the centerline position by using the STOP/SLOW sign.

Flagging to Stop Traffic

- Hold the stop sign erect and away from your body.
Never wave the sign.
- Look directly at the approaching road user.
- Raise your free arm with the palm of your hand exposed to the road user.
- Bring the vehicle to a full stop.
- **After** the first vehicle has stopped, move to a spot (near the centerline of the roadway) where you can be seen by other approaching vehicles.
- Stop all remaining cars, following the above instructions.

Caution – Never turn your back on traffic.

- Remain in this position with the “STOP” sign facing traffic until you can permit travel through the work area.

A single flagger may be used for minor pavement repair, guardrail installation or other work where the length of the work area is less than 100 feet, traffic approaching in the closed lane can easily see the flagger, and the traffic volume is less than 1,000 vehicles per day. Traffic approaching in the open lane shall be allowed to flow freely. The flagger shall stop the first vehicle in the closed lane, then cross the traffic lane to stop other vehicles. **(Figure 5)**

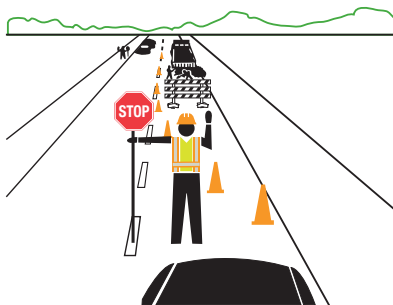


Figure 5
Flagging to stop traffic

Flagging to Release Traffic

To Release Traffic Into Left Lane (Figure 6)

- Remain standing near the centerline and turn the “SLOW” side of the sign to face the stopped vehicles.
- With your free arm, signal the road users to proceed in the left lane. **Never wave the sign.**
- After all vehicles have passed, return to your original position on the shoulder to await the next vehicle.

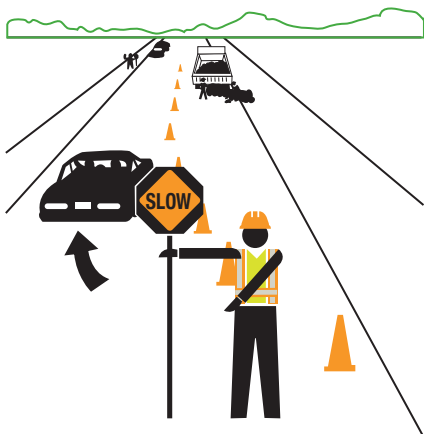


Figure 6
Releasing traffic into left lane

To Release Traffic Into Right Lane (Figure 7)

- Return to your position on the shoulder and turn the “SLOW” side of the sign to face the stopped vehicles.
- With your free arm, motion the road users to proceed. **Never wave the sign.**

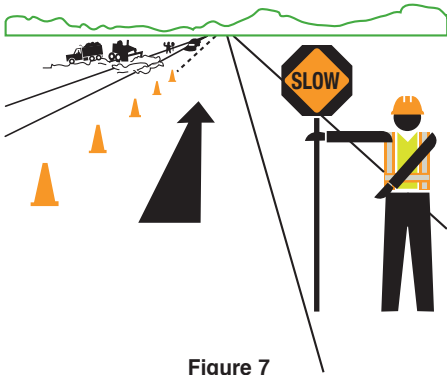


Figure 7
Releasing traffic into right lane

To Release Traffic On Right Lane (two-way traffic)

When releasing traffic on a two-way highway where traffic is stopped temporarily in only one lane (such as for loading or unloading operations), care must be taken not to confuse continuous traffic traveling the opposite direction.

Turn the sign so that neither “STOP” nor “SLOW” can be read by motorists approaching from either direction. The legend “STOP” should face the flagger. **(Figure 8)**



Figure 8
Releasing traffic on right lane (two-way)

Flagging at Haul Road Intersections

Generally, traffic control procedures are the same for haul road intersections as for other work areas. (See Flagging Procedures for Stopping, Releasing and Slowing Traffic, pages 9-11)

When trucks are making a right turn onto the highway, only one flagger is required. **(Figure 9)**

When trucks have the right-of-way and are crossing the highway or making a left turn, two flaggers are required to control traffic, one from each direction. **(Figure 10)**



Figure 9
Flagging for right-turning trucks at haul road



Figure 10
Flagging for trucks turning left or crossing highway

Flagging for Pilot Car Operation

Work is often performed over a long section of highway. When a flagger at the opposite end is not visible to you, a pilot car may be used to escort vehicles through the work area. Use the following directions when a pilot car is being used. **(Figure 11)**

- Stop vehicles in the approved manner.
(See Flagging to Stop Traffic on page 9)
- Detain all vehicles until the pilot car arrives from the opposite direction.
Note: Be alert to prevent vehicles from pulling out of line and trying to pass other waiting vehicles.
- After the pilot car arrives, has pulled into position at the head of your column of vehicles and the opposing traffic has cleared, step back onto the shoulder.
- With the “SLOW” sign facing traffic, motion the pilot car driver and others to proceed.

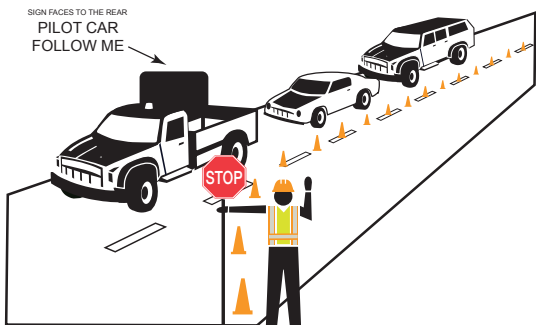


Figure 11
Flagging for Pilot Car

Nighttime Flagging

Clothing and Equipment (Figure 12)

Effective nighttime flagging requires a well-lighted flagging station and the following items:

- Reflectorized STOP/SLOW signs and advance signs.
- Flashlight with a red glow cone.
- High-visibility safety apparel that meets the Performance Class 2 or 3 requirements of the ANSI/ISEA 107 publication entitled *“American National Standard for High-Visibility Apparel and Headwear”* and is labeled as meeting the ANSI 107 standard performance for Class 2 or 3 risk exposure.
- An orange or yellow/ green cap or hard hat.
- Reflectorized pants (optional).

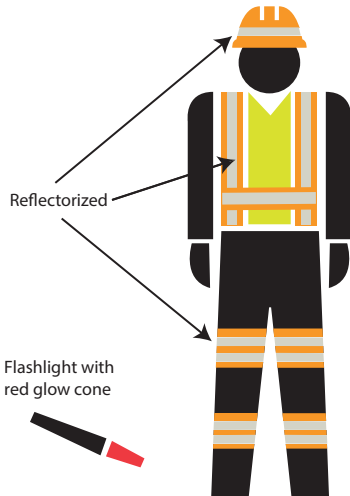


Figure 12
Clothing and tools for nighttime flagging

Flagging to Stop Traffic at Night

When flagging at night, it is doubly important that you use utmost care in guiding traffic through the area and that you protect yourself from injury by confused road users. Follow these directions carefully:

- Standing in a safe position on the shoulder of the road next to approaching traffic, hold the STOP/SLOW sign in your right hand, erect and away from your body, with STOP facing the approaching traffic. Hold the red flashlight in your left hand. (**Figure 13**)



Figure 13
Flagging to stop traffic at night

- After the first vehicle has stopped, move to a position near the centerline so that your lantern or flashlight can be seen by road users approaching from the rear.
- Request the first road user to activate vehicle flashers.

Do not abandon your post at the head of the traffic line to advise other road users.

Flagging to Release Traffic at Night

- Follow the procedure for daytime flagging, except to inform road users to proceed. The flagger shall point the flashlight at the vehicle's bumper, slowly aim the flashlight toward the open lane, then hold the flashlight in that position. The flagger shall not wave the flashlight.

Flagging in Emergency Situations

An emergency situation may arise where immediate action to protect the safety of the public requires work to be done on a street or highway where full compliance with the procedures in this handbook cannot be immediately provided. Nothing in this handbook shall be interpreted as requiring a person or agency to delay such immediate action.

Proper traffic control shall be provided as soon as possible.

Using Red Flags (Emergency Only)

When the STOP/SLOW sign is not available, a red flag (preferably having minimum dimensions of 24"x24") shall be used in regulating traffic in emergency situations.

To Stop Traffic During the Day

- Stand in a safe position on the shoulder facing traffic.
- Extend the flag into the traffic lane. **(Figure 14)**
- Look directly at the approaching road user, establish eye contact.
- Raise your free arm with the palm of your hand exposed to the road user and bring the vehicle to a stop.
- After the first vehicle has been stopped, move to a spot where you can be seen by other approaching vehicles, preferably near the centerline of the roadway. Don't cross the centerline.
- Stop other approaching vehicles.
- Remain in this position **with the flag extended** until you can safely permit traffic through the emergency area.

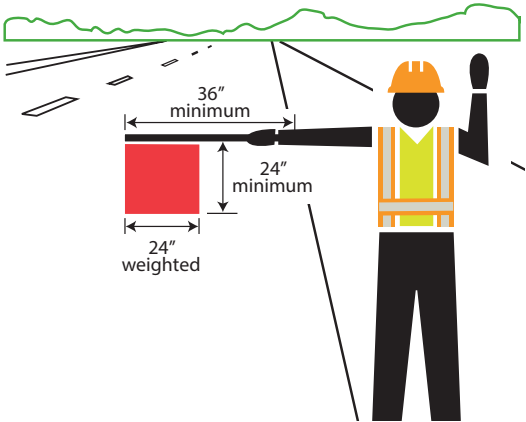


Figure 14

Using a flag to stop traffic in emergency situations

Flagging in an Emergency Situation at Night at a Non-illuminated Flagger Station

When a flashlight is used for flagging in an emergency situation at night at a non-illuminated flagger station, the flagger shall hold the flashlight in the left hand, hold the sign or flag in the right hand, and use the flashlight in the following manner to control approaching road users:

- To inform road users to stop, the flagger shall hold the flashlight with the left arm extended and pointed down toward the ground, and then slowly wave the flashlight in front of the body in a slow arc from left to right such that the arc reaches no farther than 45 degrees from vertical.
- To inform road users to proceed, the flagger shall point the flashlight at the vehicle's bumper, slowly aim the flashlight toward the open lane, then hold the flashlight in that position. The flagger shall not wave the flashlight.
- To alert or slow traffic, the flagger shall point the flashlight toward oncoming traffic and quickly wave the flashlight in a figure eight motion.

To Slow Traffic During the Day with a Flag

- Stand in a safe position on the shoulder.
- Slowly wave the flag in a sweeping motion from the 6 o'clock position to the 9 o'clock position and back again. Do not raise your arm above the horizontal position. Keep the free arm down. *(Figure 15)*

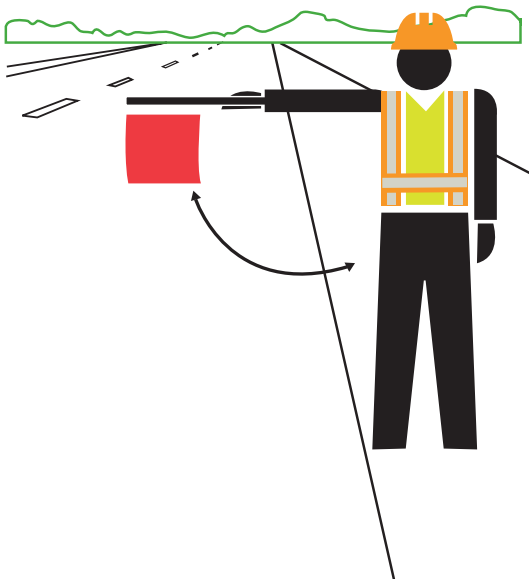


Figure 15
Using a flag to slow traffic in a
daytime emergency situation

To Release Traffic During the Day

- Move to a safe position on the shoulder, keeping the flag in a 9 o'clock position in view of road users. **(Figure 15)**
- Lower the flag to a 6 o'clock position. With your free arm, motion the road users to proceed. **(Figure 16)**

Do not use the flag to signal the road user to proceed.

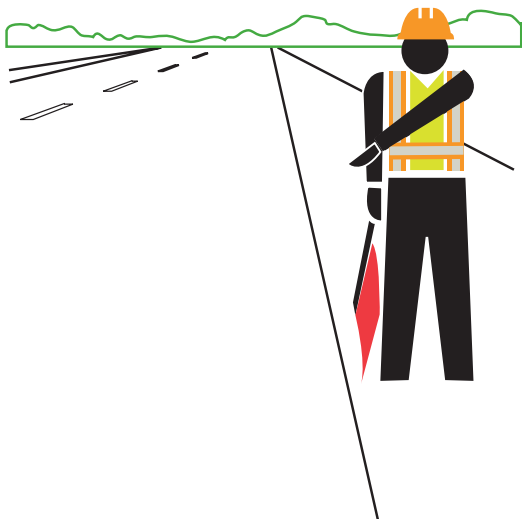


Figure 16
Using a flag to release traffic during the day