



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item Number: 26A-TTC-02

NCUTCD PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO THE MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Temporary Traffic Control Technical Committee
ITEM NUMBER: 26A-TTC-02
TOPIC: Staff Height for STOP/SLOW Paddle
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: TTC Technical Committee – Ch. 6D/6E Task Force
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD: 6D.02

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by TTC TC:01/07/2026
Approved by NCUTCD Council:

This is a proposed change to the MUTCD that has been developed by a technical committee, joint committee, or joint task force of the NCUTCD. The NCUTCD is distributing this to its sponsoring organizations for review and comment. Sponsor comments will be considered in revising the proposal prior to NCUTCD Council consideration. This proposal does not represent a revision of the MUTCD and does not constitute official MUTCD standards, guidance, options, or support. If approved by the NCUTCD Council, the recommended changes will be submitted to FHWA for consideration for inclusion in a future MUTCD revision. The MUTCD can be revised only through the federal rulemaking process.

SUMMARY:

This proposal adds a Guidance statement for a minimum staff height for the STOP/SLOW paddle, along with Option statements to use a hand-held STOP/SLOW paddle for short-duration or emergency traffic control situations and for school crossing guards.

DISCUSSION:

The TTC Technical Committee proposes this change to address flagger fatigue during prolonged operations by encouraging a more ergonomic posture, reducing the need to hold the paddle aloft for extended periods. By recommending that the paddle be mounted on a staff tall enough to rest on the ground while still maintaining visibility to approaching or stopped traffic, this change promotes both flagger comfort and traffic safety. The 5-foot minimum height ensures that the paddle remains visible to road users, consistent with current visibility expectations, while improving working conditions for flaggers.

In instances where the use of a full-length staff may be impractical or unnecessary, the option to use the hand-held paddle provides a practical, portable solution without compromising the effectiveness of traffic control in the short term.

The proposal includes the recommended changes from 25A-TTC-05 previously approved by NCUTCD Council in June 2025.

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RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:

The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double underline for additions and ~~green double strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases, background comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated by bracketed white text in shaded green. Deletions made by a technical committee, joint committee, or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in ~~highlighted red strikethrough and sans-serif text~~. Additions made by a technical committee, joint committee, or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in underline blue and sans-serif text.

PART 6

TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CONTROL

CHAPTER 6D. FLAGGER CONTROL

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Section 6D.02 STOP/SLOW Paddle for Hand-Signaling

Guidance:

The STOP/SLOW paddle (see Figure 6D-1 and Table 6G-1) should be the primary and preferred hand-signaling device because the STOP/SLOW paddle gives road users more positive guidance than red flags.

[Paragraph 02 below was relocated to a new Section within Chapter 6G in 25A-TTC-05, June 2025]

~~**Standard:**~~

~~**The STOP/SLOW paddle (R1-1 and W20-8) shall have an octagonal shape on a rigid handle. When used at night, the STOP/SLOW paddle shall be retroreflectorized.**~~

Option:

A STOP/STOP or a SLOW/SLOW paddle may be used in certain situations (see Section 6D.05), provided the device meets the size and shape requirements for the STOP/SLOW paddle.

Guidance:

The STOP/SLOW paddle should be mounted on a rigid staff a minimum of 5 feet long from the bottom of the sign to the ground.

[Paragraph 04 below was relocated to a new Section within Chapter 6G in 25A-TTC-05]

~~*Guidance:*~~

~~*The STOP/SLOW paddle should be fabricated from light semi-rigid material.*~~

Support:

The optimum method of displaying a STOP or SLOW message is to place the STOP/SLOW paddle on a rigid staff that is tall enough that when the end of the staff is resting on the ground, the message is high enough to be seen by approaching or stopped traffic.

Option:

For short-duration or emergency traffic control situations, a hand-held STOP/SLOW paddle with a staff or handle length of less than 5 feet may be used by a flagger.

Adult crossing guards (see Section 7D.02) may use a hand-held STOP paddle.

[Paragraphs 06 through 09 below were relocated to a new Section within Chapter 6G in 25A-TTC-05]

~~The STOP/SLOW paddle may be modified to improve conspicuity by incorporating either white or red flashing lights on the STOP face, and either white or yellow flashing lights on the SLOW face. The flashing lights may be arranged in any of the following patterns:~~

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- 89 ~~A. Two white or red lights, one centered vertically above and one centered vertically below the STOP~~
90 ~~legend; and/or two white or yellow lights, one centered vertically above and one centered vertically~~
91 ~~below the SLOW legend;~~
92 ~~B. Two white or red lights, one centered horizontally on each side of the STOP legend; and/or two white or~~
93 ~~yellow lights, one centered horizontally on each side of the SLOW legend;~~
94 ~~C. One white or red light centered below the STOP legend; and/or one white or yellow light centered below~~
95 ~~the SLOW legend;~~
96 ~~D. A series of eight or more small white or red lights no larger than ¼ inch in diameter along the outer edge~~
97 ~~of the paddle, arranged in an octagonal pattern at the eight corners of the border of the STOP face; and/ or~~
98 ~~a series of eight or more small white or yellow lights no larger than ¼ inch in diameter along the outer~~
99 ~~edge of the paddle, arranged in a diamond pattern along the border of the SLOW face; or~~
100 ~~E. A series of white lights forming the shapes of the letters in the legend.~~

101 **Standard:**

- 102 ~~07 If flashing lights are used on the STOP face of the paddle, their colors shall be all white or all red. If~~
103 ~~flashing lights are used on the SLOW face of the paddle, their colors shall be all white or all yellow.~~
104 ~~08 If more than eight flashing lights are used, the lights shall be arranged such that they clearly convey the~~
105 ~~octagonal shape of the STOP face of the paddle and/or the diamond shape of the SLOW face of the paddle.~~
106 ~~09 If flashing lights are used on the STOP/SLOW paddle, the flash rate shall be at least 50, but not more~~
107 ~~than 60, flashes per minute.~~