



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item No.: 25A-EDT-02

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

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Edit Committee
ITEM NUMBER: 25A-EDT-02
TOPIC: Unique Font for Support Statements
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: Co-Chairs for 12th Edition Visioning
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD: Entire MUTCD

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by Edit Committee: 01/08/2025
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:

Currently, both Option Statements and Support Statements in the MUTCD are shown in the same font. This proposal would change the font used for Support Statements to be different from Option Statements.

DISCUSSION:

The year 2000 edition of the MUTCD was the first full Manual to be formatted in the form of Standard, Guidance, Option, and Support statements. Each type of statement is labelled at its beginning as "Standard", "Guidance", "Option", or "Support". The year 2000 Edition also began the use of bold font for Standard statements to distinguish Standard statements from Guidance, Option, and Support Statements. In addition, Standard and Guidance statements were shown in "large" type and Option and Support statements were shown in "small" type.

The 2003 Edition showed all types of statements in the same size of type.

The 2009 Edition introduced the use of unbold italic type to distinguish Guidance statements. The 11th Edition (2023) continues the use of different fonts. Thus, to quote Section 1C.01:

- 37 “All Standard statements are labeled, and the text appears in bold type.”
- 38 “All Guidance statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold italic type.”
- 39 “All Option statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type.”
- 40 “Support statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type.”

41 The Manual appears to use Times New Roman as the font for all statements – **Standards in bold**, *Guidance in unbold italic*, and Option and Support both in unbold type.

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44 Both Option Statements and Support Statements are shown in the same type of font. This proposal is to use different fonts for Option and Support statements to make a more obvious distinction between the two. It is proposed that unbold Times New Roman type continue to be used for Option statements and that Tahoma font (unbold) be used for Support statements.

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49 Several different fonts were considered for Support statements. Internet searches identified fonts that are most readable in printed form and on electronic devices. From among those fonts, the fonts that are available in Microsoft Word were further considered. Tahoma was selected as the font that would be most easily distinguished from the Times New Roman font that is used for Option statements.

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55 Tahoma font also has the advantage of being very readable when it is a smaller font size than Times New Roman. The Edit Committee recommends a 9 point font because 10 point and 11 point Tahoma sizes appear large in comparison to 11 point Times New Roman. The examples below show Times New Roman in 11 point font and Tahoma in 9 point font. Based on a review of Section 508 compliance information, the Edit Committee believes that Tahoma font in 9 point size is acceptable for Section 508 compliance.

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62 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:**

63 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 or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in ~~highlighted red strikethrough and Helvetica text~~. Additions made by a technical committee or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in underline blue and Helvetica text.

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[Example text as it currently appears in 11th Edition]

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Standard:

- 13 The Speed Limit (R2-1) sign (see Figure 2B-3) shall display the limit established by law, ordinance, regulation, or as adopted by the authorized agency based on an engineering study. The speed limits displayed shall be in multiples of 5 mph.
- 14 Speed Limit (R2-1) signs, indicating speed limits for which posting is required by law, shall be located at the points of change from one speed limit to another.
- 15 At the downstream end of the section to which a particular speed limit applies, a Speed Limit sign showing the next speed limit shall be installed.
- 16 Speed Limit signs indicating the statutory speed limits shall be installed at entrances to the State and, where appropriate, at jurisdictional boundaries in urban areas.

Guidance:

17 Additional Speed Limit signs should be installed beyond interchanges and major intersections and at other locations where it is necessary to remind road users of the speed limit that is applicable.

Support:

18 The “Traffic Control Devices Handbook” contains suggested criteria on the spacing of speed limit signs.

Option:

19 If a jurisdiction has a policy of installing Speed Limit signs in accordance with statutory requirements only on the streets that enter a city, neighborhood, or residential area to indicate the speed limit that is applicable to the entire city, neighborhood, or residential area unless otherwise posted, a CITYWIDE (R2-5aP), NEIGHBORHOOD (R2-5bP), or RESIDENTIAL (R2-5cP) plaque may be mounted above the Speed Limit sign and an UNLESS OTHERWISE POSTED (R2-5P) plaque may be mounted below the Speed Limit sign (see Figure 2B-3).

Support:

20 Section 2C.40 contains information about the use of speed zone signs to inform road users of a reduced or variable speed zone to provide advance notice to comply with the posted speed limit ahead.

Option:

21 If a W3-5b sign is posted to provide notice of a variable speed zone, an END VARIABLE SPEED LIMIT (R2- 13) sign (see Figure 2B-3) may be installed at the downstream end of the zone to provide notice to road users of the termination of the speed zone.

[Example text as it would appear if proposal is adopted]

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17 Additional Speed Limit signs should be installed beyond interchanges and major intersections and at other locations where it is necessary to remind road users of the speed limit that is applicable.

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Support:

20 Section 2C.40 contains information about the use of speed zone signs to inform road users of a reduced or variable speed zone to provide advance notice to comply with the posted speed limit ahead. [Support text displayed in 9 point Tahoma]

Option:

21 If a W3-5b sign is posted to provide notice of a variable speed zone, an END VARIABLE SPEED LIMIT (R2- 13) sign (see Figure 2B-3) may be installed at the downstream end of the zone to provide notice to road users of the termination of the speed zone.