



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item No.: 25A-SIG-02

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

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Signals Technical Committee
ITEM NUMBER: 25A-SIG-02
TOPIC: Clarification of Same Section Flashing Yellow Arrow Display
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: Signal Features Task Force
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD: 4F.02, 4F.09

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by Signals TC: 01/09/2025
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:

This proposal allows for the flashing YELLOW ARROW display to occur in the same section as the steady YELLOW ARROW or steady GREEN ARROW as part of a bi-modal section.

DISCUSSION:

The 2009 MUTCD provided for the use of a bi-modal section in limited situations, allowing the use of a flashing YELLOW ARROW and steady GREEN ARROW to be displayed in the same section, known as a bi-modal display. Interim Approval 14 allowed an additional option of a bi-modal display where the flashing YELLOW ARROW and the steady YELLOW ARROW were displayed in the same section. In addition to the above bi-modal displays being used in a 3-section head (in place of a 4-section head), the bi-modal display was also allowed as part of a 5-section signal head to provide additional display options.

The 11th Edition of the MUTCD stated a bi-modal display could still be used as part of a 5-section head, but it only allowed the steady (right or left) YELLOW ARROW and flashing YELLOW ARROW displays to be in the same section. This change provides for an alternative

37 display, consistent with other sections of Part 4, by allowing the flashing YELLOW ARROW and
38 steady GREEN ARROW to be displayed in the same section.

39
40 These changes will clarify the allowance of displays that are otherwise specifically mentioned in
41 other Sections of Part 4 that are not specifically mentioned in these sections.

42 43 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:**

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

54 55 **PART 4**

56 57 **HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SIGNALS**

58 59 **CHAPTER 4F. STEADY (STOP-AND-GO) OPERATION OF TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS**

60 61 **Section 4F.02 Signal Indications for Left-Turn Movements – General**

62 **Support:**

63 01 In Sections 4F.03 through 4F.08, provisions applicable to left-turn movements and left-turn lanes are
64 also applicable to signal indications for U-turns to the left that are provided at locations where left turns
65 are prohibited or not geometrically possible.

66 02 Left-turning traffic is controlled by one of four modes as follows:

- 67 A. Permissive Only Mode—turns made on a CIRCULAR GREEN signal indication, a flashing left-
68 turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication, or a flashing left-turn RED ARROW signal
69 indication after yielding to pedestrians, if any, and/or opposing traffic, if any.
- 70 B. Protected Only Mode—turns made only when a left-turn GREEN ARROW signal indication is
71 displayed.
- 72 C. Protected/Permissive Mode—both modes can occur on an approach during the same cycle.
- 73 D. Variable Left-Turn Mode—the operating mode changes among the protected only mode and/or
74 the protected/permissive mode and/or the permissive only mode during different periods of the
75 day or as traffic conditions change.

76 **Option:**

77 03 In areas having a high percentage of older drivers, special consideration may be given to the use of
78 protected only mode left-turn phasing, when appropriate

79 **Standard:**

80 04 **During a permissive left-turn movement, the signal faces for through traffic on the opposing**
81 **approach shall simultaneously display green or steady yellow signal indications. If pedestrians**
82 **crossing the lane or lanes used by the permissive left-turn movement to depart the intersection are**
83 **controlled by pedestrian signal heads, the signal indications displayed by those pedestrian signal**
84 **heads shall not be limited to any particular display during the permissive left-turn movement.**

85 05 During a protected left-turn movement, the signal faces for through traffic on the opposing
86 approach shall simultaneously display steady CIRCULAR RED signal indications. During a
87 protected left-turn movement, a GREEN ARROW or a YELLOW ARROW signal indication shall
88 not simultaneously be displayed to right-turning traffic on the opposing approach, except where a
89 separate departure lane is available for each left-turn and right-turn lane with moving traffic and
90 pavement markings or raised channelization clearly indicate which departure lane to use (see Item
91 H.1 in Paragraph 3 in Section 4F.01). If pedestrians crossing the lane or lanes used by the protected
92 left-turn movement to depart the intersection are controlled by pedestrian signal heads, the
93 pedestrian signal heads shall display a steady UPRAISED HAND (symbolizing DONT WALK)
94 signal indication during the protected left-turn movement.

95 06 If a combined left-turn/through lane exists on an approach, a left-turn GREEN ARROW or
96 left-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication or a flashing left-turn RED ARROW signal
97 indication shall not be displayed to the approach simultaneously with a CIRCULAR RED signal
98 indication for the through movement, and a left-turn RED ARROW signal indication shall not be
99 displayed to the approach simultaneously with a CIRCULAR GREEN or CIRCULAR YELLOW
100 signal indication for the through movement.

101 07 A yellow change interval for the left-turn movement shall not be displayed when the status of
102 the left-turn operation is changing from permissive to protected within any given signal sequence.

103 08 If the operating mode changes among the protected only mode and/or the protected/permissive
104 mode and/or the permissive only mode during different periods of the day or as traffic conditions
105 change, the requirements in Sections 4F.03 through 4F.08 that are appropriate to that mode of
106 operation shall be met, subject to the following:

107 A. The CIRCULAR GREEN and CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indications shall not be
108 displayed when operating in the protected only mode.

109 B. The left-turn GREEN ARROW and left-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indications shall
110 not be displayed when operating in the permissive only mode.

111 Option:

112 09 When variable left-turn mode phasing is used for an approach that has a combined left-turn/straight-
113 through lane and a flashing yellow arrow is used as the permissive turn display, a five-section shared left-
114 turn signal face containing both circular and arrow indications may be used in combination with one or
115 more separate left-turn signal faces for the mandatory left-turn lane(s), if any are present, on the same
116 approach. ~~The steady left turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication and the flashing left turn YELLOW~~
117 ~~ARROW signal indication may be displayed in the same section of the five-section shared left turn signal~~
118 ~~face. The five-section shared left-turn signal face may include a bimodal signal section that is capable of~~
119 ~~alternating between the display of a steady left-turn YELLOW ARROW and flashing left-turn YELLOW~~
120 ~~ARROW or a steady left-turn GREEN ARROW and a flashing left-turn YELLOW ARROW, both~~
121 ~~pointing in the same direction, provided that both arrows are never displayed simultaneously.~~

122 10 Additional static signs or changeable message signs may be used to meet the requirements for the
123 variable left-turn mode or to inform drivers that left-turn green arrows will not be available during certain
124 times of the day.

125 Support:

126 11 Sections 4F.03 through 4F.08 describe the use of the following two types of signal faces for
127 controlling left-turn movements:

128 A. Shared signal face – This type of signal face controls both the left-turn movement and the
129 adjacent movement (usually the through movement) and can serve as one of the two required
130 primary signal faces for the adjacent movement. A shared signal face always displays the same
131 color of circular indication that is displayed by the signal face or faces for the adjacent
132 movement. If a shared signal face that provides protected/permissive mode left turns is mounted
133 overhead for an approach that includes a mandatory left-turn lane, it is usually positioned over or
134 slightly to the right of the extension of the lane line separating the left-turn lane from the

135 adjacent lane. If a shared signal face that provides protected/permissive mode left turns is
136 mounted overhead for an approach that does not include a mandatory left-turn lane, it is usually
137 positioned over the center of the combined left-turn/straight-through lane.

138 B. Separate left-turn signal face – This type of signal face controls only the left-turn movement and
139 cannot serve as one of the two required primary signal faces for the adjacent movement (usually
140 the through movement) because it displays signal indications that are applicable only to the left-
141 turn movement. This type of signal face is used only for an approach that has a mandatory left-
142 turn lane(s). If a separate left-turn signal face is mounted overhead at the intersection, it is
143 positioned over the extension of the mandatory left-turn lane. In a separate left-turn signal face, a
144 flashing left-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication or a flashing left-turn RED ARROW
145 signal indication is used to control permissive left-turn movements.

146 ¹² Section 4D.07 contains provisions regarding the lateral positioning of signal faces that control left-
147 turn movements.

148 ¹³ It is not necessary that the same mode of left-turn operation or same type of left-turn signal face be
149 used on every approach to a signalized location. Selecting different modes and types of left-turn signal
150 faces for the various approaches to the same signalized location is acceptable.

151 Option:

152 ¹⁴ A signal face that is shared by left-turning and right-turning traffic may be provided for a combined
153 left-turn/right-turn lane on an approach that has no through traffic (see Section 4F.16).
154

155 **Section 4F.09 Signal Indications for Right-Turn Movements – General**

156 Support:

157 ⁰¹ In Sections 4F.10 through 4F.15, provisions applicable to right-turn movements and right-turn lanes
158 are also applicable to signal indications for U-turns to the right that are provided at locations where right
159 turns are prohibited or not geometrically possible.

160 ⁰² Right-turning traffic is controlled by one of four modes as follows:

- 161 A. Permissive Only Mode—turns made on a CIRCULAR GREEN signal indication, a flashing
162 right-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication, or a flashing right-turn RED ARROW signal
163 indication after yielding to pedestrians, if any.
- 164 B. Protected Only Mode—turns made only when a right-turn GREEN ARROW signal indication is
165 displayed.
- 166 C. Protected/Permissive Mode—both modes occur on an approach during the same cycle.
- 167 D. Variable Right-Turn Mode—the operating mode changes among the protected only mode and/or
168 the protected/permissive mode and/or the permissive only mode during different periods of the
169 day or as traffic conditions change.

170 **Standard:**

171 ⁰³ **During a permissive right-turn movement, the signal faces, if any, that exclusively control U-**
172 **turn traffic that conflicts with the permissive right-turn movement (see Item H.1 in Paragraph 3 in**
173 **Section 4F.01) shall simultaneously display steady U-turn RED ARROW signal indications. If**
174 **pedestrians crossing the lane or lanes used by the permissive right-turn movement to depart the**
175 **intersection are controlled by pedestrian signal heads, the signal indications displayed by those**
176 **pedestrian signal heads shall not be limited to any particular display during the permissive right-**
177 **turn movement.**

178 ⁰⁴ **During a protected right-turn movement, a GREEN ARROW or a YELLOW ARROW signal**
179 **indication shall not simultaneously be displayed to left-turning traffic on the opposing approach,**
180 **except where a separate departure lane is available for each left-turn and right-turn lane with**
181 **moving traffic and pavement markings or raised channelization clearly indicate which departure**
182 **lane to use (see Item H.1 in Paragraph 3 in Section 4F.01). Signal faces, if any, that exclusively**
183 **control U-turn traffic that conflicts with the protected right-turn movement shall simultaneously**

184 display steady RED ARROW signal indications. If pedestrians crossing the lane or lanes used by
185 the protected right-turn movement to depart the intersection are controlled by pedestrian signal
186 heads, the pedestrian signal heads shall display a steady UPRaised HAND (symbolizing DONT
187 WALK) signal indication during the protected right-turn movement.

188 05 If a combined right-turn/through lane exists on an approach, a right-turn GREEN ARROW or
189 right-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication or a flashing right-turn RED ARROW signal
190 indication shall not be displayed to the approach simultaneously with a CIRCULAR RED signal
191 indication for the through movement, and a right-turn RED ARROW signal indication shall not be
192 displayed to the approach simultaneously with a CIRCULAR GREEN or CIRCULAR YELLOW
193 signal indication for the through movement.

194 06 If the operating mode changes among the protected only mode and/or the protected/permissive
195 mode and/or the permissive only mode during different periods of the day or as traffic conditions
196 change, the requirements in Sections 4F.10 through 4F.15 that are appropriate to that mode of
197 operation shall be met, subject to the following:

198 A. The CIRCULAR GREEN and CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indications shall not be
199 displayed when operating in the protected only mode.

200 B. The right-turn GREEN ARROW and right-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indications
201 shall not be displayed when operating in the permissive only mode.

202 Option:

203 07 When variable right-turn mode phasing is used for an approach that has a combined right-
204 turn/straight-through lane and a flashing yellow arrow is used as the permissive turn display, a five-
205 section shared right-turn signal face containing both circular and arrow indications may be used in
206 combination with one or more separate right-turn signal faces for the mandatory right-turn lane(s), if any
207 are present, on the same approach. ~~The steady right turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication and the~~
208 ~~flashing right turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication may be displayed in the same section of the five-~~
209 ~~section shared right turn signal face. The five-section shared right-turn signal face may include a bimodal~~
210 ~~signal section that is capable of alternating between the display of a steady right-turn YELLOW ARROW~~
211 ~~and flashing right-turn YELLOW ARROW or a steady right-turn GREEN ARROW and a flashing right-~~
212 ~~turn YELLOW ARROW, both pointing in the same direction, provided that both arrows are never~~
213 ~~displayed simultaneously.~~

214 08 Additional static signs or changeable message signs may be used to meet the requirements for the
215 variable right-turn mode or to inform drivers that right-turn green arrows will not be available during
216 certain times of the day.

217 Support:

218 09 Sections 4F.10 through 4F.15 describe the use of the following two types of signal faces for
219 controlling right-turn movements:

220 A. Shared signal face – This type of signal face controls both the right-turn movement and the
221 adjacent movement (usually the through movement) and can serve as one of the two required
222 primary signal faces for the adjacent movement. A shared signal face always displays the same
223 color of circular indication that is displayed by the signal face or faces for the adjacent
224 movement.

225 B. Separate right-turn signal face – This type of signal face controls only the right-turn movement
226 and cannot serve as one of the two required primary signal faces for the adjacent movement
227 (usually the through movement) because it displays signal indications that are applicable only to
228 the right-turn movement. If a separate right-turn signal face is mounted overhead at the
229 intersection, it is positioned over the extension of the mandatory right-turn lane. In a separate
230 right-turn signal face, a flashing right-turn YELLOW ARROW signal indication or a flashing
231 right-turn RED ARROW signal indication is used to control permissive right-turn movements.

232 10 Section 4D.07 contains provisions regarding the lateral positioning of signal faces that control right-
233 turn movements.

234 11 It is not necessary that the same mode of right-turn operation or same type of right-turn signal face
235 be used on every approach to a signalized location. Selecting different modes and types of right-turn
236 signal faces for the various approaches to the same signalized location is acceptable.
237 Option:
238 12 A signal face that is shared by left-turning and right-turning traffic may be provided for a combined
239 left-turn/right-turn lane on an approach that has no through traffic (see Section 4F.16).