# AAA School Safety Patrol

## OPERATIONS MANUAL

# CONTENTS


## 3 Overview

3 A Proud Tradition
4 A Legacy of Leadership and Safety
5 Role of the AAA/CAA School Safety Patrol
5 Benefits

## 6 Forming Your Patrol

7 Partnerships
8 Securing Official School Authorization
8 Limiting Liability
8 Parental Permission

## 9 Organizing Your Patrol

10 Selecting the Patrol Advisor
11 Adult Volunteers
11 Determining Patrol Size
11 Selecting Patrollers
12 Length of Service
12 Recruitment and Application Process
13 Training
14 Installation
14 Squads and the Patrol Platoon
15 Officer Selection and Duties

## 17 Operating Your Patrol

18 Safety Patrol Equipment
18 Equipment Storage
19 Proper Wear and Care of Equipment
20 Communication
21 Crosswalk Assessment
22 Crosswalk Patrollers
23 Safe Gap
23 Search Pattern
24 Patrol Situations
26 Working Together
27 Valet Service in Drop-Off Zones
28 School Bus Patrol
30 Safety Concerns
31 Problem Solving
32 Emergencies
33 Record Keeping
33 Meetings
34 Squad Reports
36 Supervision

## 37 Supporting Your Patrol

38 Morale Building and Recognition
38 Fundraising
39 Recognition Programs

## 40 Resources

41 Related Programs
43 Top Tips
43 Safety Patrol Materials



AAA coordinates the School Safety Patrol program on a not-for-profit basis as a public service. The recommended practices developed for this program are simply recommended practices. AAA assumes no responsibility or liability for any consequences, losses or injuries, foreseen or unforeseen, which may result from the use of the AAA School Safety Patrol program, equipment or from the implementation and/or use of the practices recommended in the SSP program materials.

17-0031

# MESSAGE FROM AAA

## A Proud Tradition

AAA School Safety Patrols play an important role in helping young pedestrians learn and fulfill responsibilities regarding traffic safety.

Millions of American and Canadian boys and girls have honorably served their classmates since the AAA School Safety Patrol program began in the U.S. in 1920. Interest in the program has spread around the world; at least 30 other countries, including New Zealand, the Netherlands, England, Germany and France, have emulated the AAA School Safety Patrol program. The experience is the same — a reduction in traffic death rates. Boys and girls who contribute their time as AAA School Safety Patrollers deserve special thanks for their efforts. AAA recognizes the AAA School Safety Patrol program as an outstanding school safety activity, and we commend school personnel who administer the programs and law enforcement officials who contribute to the success of programs in their communities.

For nearly a century, AAA clubs have proudly sponsored, promoted and aided AAA School Safety Patrol programs as a community service in the interest of safety for all schoolchildren. AAA clubs have been the leading non-school civic agencies active in patrol work in most communities. During its long and distinguished history, the AAA School Safety Patrol program has provided a safer pedestrian environment and a wide spectrum of educational opportunities for millions of children, and AAA has provided the means for the patrol to succeed.

This manual will serve as a resource to community organizations, school administrators and advisors who are coordinating AAA School Safety Patrol programs. The policies and practices presented in this manual are the result of the combined efforts of several national educational, law enforcement and safety organizations. It represents the cumulative experience of AAA School Safety Patrol operations across North America.

Motorists and pedestrians look to AAA to set consistent identification and operating procedures for School Safety Patrols. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration even refers to AAA's school crossing supervision procedures in its Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

On behalf of our clubs across North America, we thank you for your continued support of the AAA School Safety Patrol program.

Marshall L. Doney

**Marshall L. Doney**
**AAA President and CEO**

# HISTORY

## A Legacy of Leadership and Safety

As members of AAA School Safety Patrols, students have protected their classmates since 1920.

In the 1930s, three national organizations — the American Automobile Association (AAA), the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National Safety Council — collaborated on Standard Rules for the Operation of School Boy Patrols. Frequently updated over the years, these guidelines eventually became the operating standards for AAA School Safety Patrols.

The largest safety program in the world, the AAA School Safety Patrol has more than 654,000 Patrollers in 34,500 U.S. schools and 70,000 Patrollers in Canada. Education and safety groups around the world have praised the program for reducing injuries and fatalities among schoolchildren ages 5 to 14. In 1949, AAA established the AAA Lifesaving Medal to recognize Patrollers who saved a life in the course of duty. To date, 428 Patrollers have received this award. For more information on awards, refer to page 39.

AAA School Safety Patrols have grown up to be U.S. presidents, governors, members of Congress, Supreme Court Justices, astronauts, Olympic medalists, educators, executives and community leaders. See the list of famous former Patrollers.

The AAA School Safety Patrol program belt color may have changed dramatically over the years — from white to neon orange to today's fluorescent green called 'Lectric Lime — but the mission remains the same: to provide a safer environment and leadership opportunities for millions of schoolchildren.

# OVERVIEW

## Role of the AAA School Safety Patrol

AAA School Safety Patrollers are school-sponsored student volunteers from upper elementary, middle and junior high schools. **Patrollers direct children, not traffic.** As school-age leaders in traffic safety, Patrollers teach other students about traffic safety on a peer-to-peer basis. They also serve as role models for younger children. Typically, teachers and principals appoint Patrollers, who participate with parental approval. A teacher usually serves as Patrol Advisor.

### School Safety Patrollers:

- Complete traffic safety training
- Protect students from the hazards of crossing roads and highways on their way to and from school
- Assist bus drivers in safely transporting students to and from school
- Teach fellow students about traffic safety
- Serve other leadership functions under the direction of school officials

## Benefits

### To Students

**Students gain:**

- Safety awareness
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Pride
- Citizenship
- Respect for law enforcement

### To Schools

**Schools benefit from opportunities to promote:**

- Traffic safety awareness
- Peer-to-peer education
- Character-building opportunities
- A constructive outlet for students' energy
- A positive relationship with parents, law enforcement and the overall community

### To Communities

**Communities benefit from:**

- Safer environments for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists
- A spirit of a connected community, volunteerism and civic-mindedness
- A positive collaboration between students, parents, schools and law enforcement

# FORMING YOUR PATROL

Partnerships
Securing Official School Authorization
Limiting Liability
Parental Permission

# FORMING YOUR PATROL

## Partnerships

The most effective Patrol programs come from a strong partnership between AAA, schools, parent-teacher groups, law enforcement and the community.

### The Role of AAA

**AAA/CAA provides:**

- Sponsorship
- Traffic safety education, logistical support and awareness presentations
- Public outreach and recognition
- Resources, including equipment and program guidelines

### The Role of the School

Principals appoint teachers to serve as Patrol Advisors. Advisors implement AAA School Safety Patrols within the school and meet with other area Advisors to exchange best practices.

### The Role of the Parent-Teacher Group (Where Applicable)

**The PTA or PTO:**

- Supports the school's Patrol program
- Sponsors equipment and training
- Implements recognition programs
- Serves as the liaison between the school and community

### The Role of Law Enforcement or Traffic Engineering Officials

**Law enforcement or traffic engineering officials:**

- Serve as a program consultant
- Advocate on the Patrol's behalf to motorists and the community
- Contribute to the Patrol's training and development

### The Role of the Community

Civic organizations — such as police auxiliaries, women's clubs, school booster organizations, American Legion posts or other safety or civic groups — may provide recognition and community awareness programs.

# FORMING YOUR PATROL

## Securing Official School Authorization

Before school principals institute the AAA School Safety Patrol program, they must obtain approval from the school superintendent or school board. The approval process will vary according to community and school system requirements. In some cases, principals may seek support for the program from community organizations. Although most superintendents are familiar with Patrol programs in general, they may not understand the details of operation.

**To gain support in the community and in the school system, a principal introducing a School Safety Patrol program should be prepared to:**

- Identify the community's unique needs
- Present the program's objectives
- Explain operational requirements
- Outline available resources to support the program

The school principal may choose to use the AAA School Safety Patrol School Registration Form. An outline of the school's specific roles and responsibilities can be found on page 7.

**Download the PDF**
(School Registration Form)

**A AAA School Safety Patrol program requires people and organizations to work together. AAA encourages your school to work with:**

- Parent-teacher groups
- Police
- Police auxiliaries
- Bus drivers
- Traffic engineering departments
- Community safety councils
- Service clubs
- Other community organizations

## Parental Permission

Students must have permission from parents or legal guardians to participate in the AAA School Safety Patrol program. When they understand the educational value, community service and character-building aspects of the program, most parents and guardians are proud to give their permission. The Patroller Application explains the goals, objectives and operational aspects of the AAA School Safety Patrol program. This form contains the membership application, the pledge that Patrollers take and a parental consent section. The application can be downloaded from page 12.

For information on Patroller safety concerns, see page 30.

## Limiting Liability

Although AAA is unaware of any legal liability cases involving patrol programs since the AAA School Safety Patrol program inception in 1920, schools can take steps to minimize perceived liability or liability concerns.

- Create a statement of purpose that outlines the objectives of a AAA School Safety Patrol program.
- Grant authority to principals or safety education or transportation officials to establish rules and regulations for Patrollers' supervision.
- Limit the age group from which Patrollers may be selected and determine any exclusions from participation, such as health concerns.
- Extend the same protection to AAA School Safety Patrollers, Advisors and others involved in the program that applies to other student volunteers.
- Provide guidelines to ensure consistency among patrol programs so students benefit equally.
- Develop a policy regarding when Patrollers should not be on post due to inclement weather.

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

Selecting the Patrol Advisor
Adult Volunteers
Determining Patrol Size
Selecting Patrol Members
Length of Service
Recruitment and Application Process
Training
Installation
Squads and the Patrol Platoon
Officer Selection and Duties

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Selecting the Patrol Advisor

The AAA School Safety Patrol Advisor is a responsible adult (typically a teacher) appointed by the school principal to oversee the Patrol. More than any other individual, the Advisor determines the program's success.

### The ideal Advisor demonstrates:

- A strong belief in the value of AAA's program
- Knowledge of traffic safety principles
- Leadership
- Organizational skills
- People and communication skills, including the ability to share praise and constructive criticism
- An ability to inspire confidence and respect
- Dependability
- An ability to establish rapport with students, school leaders, the community and law enforcement

### Advisors' duties include:

- Serving as the source of information on all aspects of the program
- Selecting Patrollers and assigning duties
- Training all Patrollers, including officers
- Supervising all Patrol operations
- Conducting training sessions, reviews and administrative meetings
- Advising sponsoring committees on the Patrol's activities
- Identifying and training an assistant or reserve Advisor

At the beginning of each new school year, Advisors must contact their local AAA club's School Safety Patrol contact to register their school as an official AAA School Safety Patrol participating school. In addition, the Advisor must be prepared to share all relevant information with anyone who may need to assume his or her Advisor responsibilities for any reason and to report the change to the local AAA club's School Safety Patrol contact.

### By participating in this program, Advisors agree to:

- Supervise Patrollers during the morning shift, from 20 minutes before the start of school to 10 minutes after
- Supervise Patrollers during the afternoon shift, from 10 minutes before the final bell to 20 minutes after the bell has rung
- Ensure all Patrollers have transitioned to class/program/parent-guardian care after each shift
- Ensure all student officer duties, including attendance, are being fulfilled
- Supervise the care and maintenance of the Patrol supplies and equipment
- Recruit, schedule and supervise parent volunteers to help supervise the Patrol
- Supervise all administrative duties including role sheets, officer reports and meeting agendas
- Plan, prepare and administer bimonthly Patrol meetings
- Support all Patrol leadership development and team-building events
- Promote student cooperation, pride and efficiency in the Patrol
- Collaborate with law enforcement as needed
- Report to the principal, school board or appropriate school administrator as deemed necessary

**'No Adult, No Patrol' rule:** This rule is without exception. If there is no adult present to supervise, the Patrol's duties will be canceled for that shift. The Captain should attempt to contact the principal as soon as possible to report the cancellation.

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Adult Volunteers

The Advisor is responsible for recruiting and training adult volunteers to help supervise and support the Patrollers.

**Adult volunteers may include:**

- Parents of Patrollers
- Teachers and school staff
- School neighbors
- Concerned citizens

**All volunteers must follow the school district's volunteer registration and screening requirements, which may include:**

- Background check
- Fingerprint clearance
- TB test
- Other requirment required by the school district

## Determining Patrol Size

Schools should work with their community's traffic engineering agency to determine the optimal number of Patrollers to assign at various intersections.

A traffic specialist can provide traffic data, conduct traffic studies, evaluate information about the school and help to implement safety procedures for students walking or biking to and from school. The analysis can be used to plan posts where Patrollers can operate safely. When determining the size of your patrol, keep in mind the age and developmental nature of your Patrollers. Busy crossings will require more than one Patroller. Occasionally, you may find that it is best to avoid using the same crossing place for going-to-school pupil traffic than is used for going-from-school traffic, due to changes in traffic volume and direction at various times of day.

## Selecting Patrollers

AAA and CAA encourage the formation of a diverse Patrol force that is just large enough to fulfill the needs of the school, as coordination is much easier with a smaller group. You may choose to select reserve Patrollers to ensure trained Patrollers are available at all times.

**After determining the optimal size of the Patrol, choose members based on demonstrated:**

- Leadership qualities
- Maturity level
- Reliability
- Ability to follow rules and actively listen
- Punctuality
- Health (in terms of ability to perform duties)
- Interest in traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Sound judgment
- Good attendance record
- Courtesy for others
- Respect for classmates, adults and others in the community
- Desire to help others

**Eligible students must:**

- Be enrolled in grades 4 through 8
- Successfully complete AAA School Safety Patrol training
- Submit a Patroller Application with parental consent
- Meet school's participation requirements

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Length of Service

AAA recommends that schools appoint a set number of Patrollers to serve the duration of the school year with a selection of alternates to fill in when regular members are absent. Assign only the necessary number of Patrollers to a single post.

Being a member of AAA's School Safety Patrol is — and should be — considered "special." For this reason, we ask that you do not make everyone in the class a member of the Patrol. Doing so not only can dilute the leadership element of being selected a Patroller, but also can limit resources.

## Recruitment and Application Process

Advisors and the principal should present the AAA School Safety Patrol program to upper-grade teachers optimally at a staff meeting or through other channels to disseminate information and garner support.

**When the staff is on board:**

- Announce the program with a brief description at an assembly
- Follow up with in-class recruitment presentations to upper-grade levels
- Conduct presentations early in the week to allow students to return their application by the end of the week
- Consider a spring recruitment of third- or fourth-graders so graduating Patrollers can train them for the following school year

**In the recruitment presentation, emphasize that Patrollers are expected to:**

- Arrive early to school or stay late after school on the days they are assigned to be at their post
- Stay on top of their schoolwork
- Commit to setting an example while on and off duty
- Review the application process

**Download the PDF**
(Patroller Application)

All students should have the opportunity to apply even if they don't meet the requirements in the eyes of their teachers or others. Doing so constitutes their desire to volunteer and serve their communities without promise of compensation. This is a great first step for all students.

**Each school is responsible for determining its application process and how Patrollers will be selected. The process may include:**

- Interested students taking home an informational package, including an application and a letter explaining how qualified applications will be selected and noting that space on the Patrol is limited
- Interested students returning the application by a due date
- The Advisor reviewing the applications and forwarding selections to the principal for final approval
- Informing selected students and notifying them of when their training and Patrol service will begin
- Distributing a list of Patrollers to teachers so they are aware of which students may arrive late to class or need to leave early
- Training reserve Patrollers to account for attrition

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Training

Thorough training is more than just recommended. It's an absolute necessity put in place to protect Patrollers, other students and the school. Safety always comes first at AAA.

When possible, train new Patrollers for the upcoming year before the end of the prior school year or during the summer. Trainers can be the Advisor, a representative from your local club, or a law enforcement or community resource officer. Training may take place in a variety of settings — at school, at a community center or even at summer training camps. Because Officers take on added duties and have more complex responsibilities, most schools provide additional training for them. Many Advisors schedule refresher training for both new and veteran Patrollers a few weeks before the school year begins.

AAA offers training resources, including the NEW **At Your Post video**.

**Vital information to cover in training:**

- Fundamentals of traffic safety
- Duties of each Patrol post
- Identifying sufficient gaps in traffic to allow for a safe crossing
- Special hazards
- Dealing with pedestrians and bicyclists
- School bus safety procedures
- Safety procedures on school grounds
- Maintaining records (for officers)
- Uniform wear and equipment care

**School training may be conducted via:**

- Classes
- On-the-job personal direction
- Written guidelines and oral or written quizzes
- Joint clinics held in cooperation with other schools and involving new and veteran Patrollers
- Training videos from your local AAA club or the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, followed by discussion
- Diagramming a duty corner and highlighting hazards and a plan for the specific crossing
- School bus drills
- Any combination of the above

### Training Camps

Camps are ideally scheduled just before the school semester begins so the training information is fresh in the Patrollers' minds on the first day at their post. Camps provide an opportunity to combine traffic safety education with fun activities that students enjoy. Classes at camps have been taught by law enforcement, local safety experts and representatives from your local AAA club. Veteran Patrollers and older alumni are also good resources to lead discussion sessions, conduct role-playing exercises and answer questions.

Most camps end with an exam and "graduation" ceremony in which successful trainees receive a certificate, pin and training camp T-shirt. Be creative! Reach out to your parent-teacher group or community and civic organizations, as they may be willing to provide donations or cover camp fees.

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Installation

A formal installation ceremony can instill pride and reinforce the importance of your Patrol's service to the school and community. Many schools make the installation part of a school assembly or parent-teacher group meeting. Some schools broadcast their installation ceremony on educational or public-access TV stations. Your school district's information officer may help to promote your ceremony. Consider inviting the mayor, city officials, school officers, representatives from law enforcement and representatives from your local AAA club. Visiting dignitaries can be invited to lead the pledge and present badges.

Reciting the AAA School Safety Patrol Pledge is an easy but powerful way to create a spirit of shared responsibility and teamwork. AAA can provide an ID card that includes the standard pledge. These cards can be presented at installation, along with badges, belts and other equipment.

### AAA School Safety Patrol Pledge

**I promise to do my best to:**

- Report for duty on time
- Perform my duties faithfully
- Strive to prevent traffic crashes, always setting a good example myself
- Obey my teachers and officers of the Patrol
- Report dangerous student practices
- Strive to earn the respect of fellow students

### Golden Rules of Service

1. Treat others as you would like to be treated
2. Patrollers, including officers, will perform post duties as needed to ensure the integrity of service and the safety of the community
3. No Patroller is above performing any duty as circumstances dictate

## Squads and the Patrol Platoon

To assist with the duties and responsibilities of maintaining a robust AAA School Safety Patrol program, Patrollers can be arranged into squads and asked to take on officer roles. There can be multiple squads in a platoon as may be necessary to operate the posts safely at the school.

### Each school typically has one platoon consisting of:

- One commanding Captain
- One or more Lieutenants
- One or more Squad Sergeant
- One Staff Sergeant
- One Supply Sergeant
- Multiple Patrollers

### A squad typically consists of:

- One Squad Sergeant in command
- As many Patrollers as needed to control a specific post

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Officer Selection and Duties

The Advisor selects Officers either individually or by overseeing an election by the Patrollers. Officers generally serve for one semester, but some serve for the entire school year.

**The next two pages provide recommendations for the various Officer duties. These are suggested best practices, but duties will vary among schools and patrols.**

### Captains

**As the commanding officer of the school's AAA School Safety Patrol, the Captain is responsible for:**

- The efficiency and conduct of the School Safety Patrol at all times
- Through the Lieutenants and Sergeants, observing and supervising the activities of all squads
- Through the Lieutenants and Sergeants, overseeing that Patrollers are posted and remain at their posts
- Consulting with the Supply Sergeant to see that all equipment is being properly cared for
- Preparing agendas for meetings, requesting reports from all Lieutenants and Sergeants, and preparing own reports
- Coordinating with the Staff Sergeant to ensure that attendance is being kept and attendance problems are addressed
- Assisting in assigning posts and arranging for substitutes as needed
- Awarding merit or demerit points, per the discipline policy, based on Lieutenant reports
- Maintaining familiarity with all AAA School Safety Patrol program rules and regulations
- Reporting all violations directly to the Advisor, principal or teacher in charge
- Maintaining the **Captain's Record Book**

### Lieutenants

**As second in command, Lieutenants are responsible for:**

- Assuming the Captain's duties in the event of the Captain's absence
- The efficiency and conduct of the Sergeant/squads during the periods assigned to them
- Observing and supervising the squad's activities as the Captain, Advisor, principal or teacher/parent in charge directs and, in this effort, providing training and guidance to Sergeants under their command
- Ensuring that squads are properly posted and remain at their posts
- Submitting Sergeants' disciplinary reports to the Captain
- Substituting for absent Patrollers as needed
- Maintaining familiarity with all AAA School Safety Patrol program rules and regulations
- Reporting all violations directly to the Captain, Advisor, principal or teacher/parent in charge

# ORGANIZING YOUR PATROL

## Squad Sergeants

**Assigned to lead the day-to-day assignments at the school, Squad Sergeants are responsible for:**

- The efficiency and conduct of their assigned squad during the periods assigned to them
- Performing daily uniform inspections of the Patrollers assigned to their squad and leading Patrollers in their daily activities under their assigned Lieutenant's supervision
- Recommending merit or demerit points, per the discipline policy, for Patrollers assigned to their squad to their supervising Lieutenant
- Substituting for absent Patrollers as needed
- Maintaining familiarity with all AAA School Safety Patrol program rules and regulations
- Reporting all violations directly to the supervising Lieutenant, Captain, Advisor, principal or teacher/parent in charge

## Staff Sergeant

**Typically assigned special duties — such as taking attendance, filing reports and taking minutes — the Staff Sergeant is responsible for:**

- Assuming the Captain's duties in the event no Captain or Lieutenant is present
- Taking daily attendance of the Patrollers and parent volunteers and keeping an archive of attendance for the school year
- Reporting prolonged absences or repeated tardiness to Lieutenants
- Completing the daily activity log and keeping it in a file the Advisor can access
- Substituting for absent Patrollers as needed
- Maintaining the Patrol bulletin board
- Maintaining familiarity with all AAA School Safety Patrol program rules and regulations
- Reporting all violations directly to the supervising Lieutenant, Captain, Advisor, principal or teacher/parent in charge

## Supply Sergeant

**The custodian of the AAA School Safety Patrol's equipment, the Supply Sergeant is responsible for:**

- Monitoring the program's supply locker or supply room at the school
- Ensuring that all equipment is in its proper place at all times, except when in use
- Reporting on the care and condition of the equipment at each Patrol meeting
- Reporting any abuse or defacing of the equipment to the Captain or Advisor
- Informing the Captain or Advisor of equipment shortages or any needed replacements
- Keeping a record of all equipment issued to Patrollers

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL


Safety Patrol Equipment
Equipment Storage
Proper Wear and Care of Equipment
Communication
Crosswalk Assessment
Crosswalk Patrollers
Safe Gap
Search Pattern
Patrol Situations
Working Together
Valet Service in Drop-Off Zones
School Bus Patrol
Safety Concerns
Problem Solving
Emergencies
Record Keeping
Meetings
Squad Reports
Supervision

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Safety Patrol Equipment

AAA School Safety Patrollers shall be in full uniform — with a belt or vest (or a combination of the two), and a Patroller or Officer badge — at all times while on duty. A baseball cap is also part of the uniform for some schools. Only properly trained Patrollers participating in the AAA School Safety Patrol program may use the equipment. The Supply Sergeant should monitor all equipment (see Supply Sergeant responsibilities on page 16).

At the end of the Patroller's service, belts, vests and badges must be returned to the Advisor. Service pins and caps may be kept. At the beginning of each school year, the Advisor will inventory all equipment, destroy all worn-out equipment and submit an equipment order to AAA. Equipment details and order information can be found in the AAA School Safety Patrol Program Catalog and in information provided by local AAA clubs.

**The Advisor may assign additional equipment based on the school's needs:**

- Caps
- Ponchos
- Flags
- Whistles on lanyards
- Walkie-talkies
- Stop signs

**Download the PDF**
(Program Catalog)

**Patroller must:**

- Dress appropriately for the weather
- Wear the belt over any jacket or hoodie, but not wear it while wearing a poncho
- Keep hands free for signaling — no umbrella, food, cell phone, etc.
- Ensure wet ponchos and caps are hung up to dry
- Treat all equipment with proper care and respect

* The safety of AAA School Safety Patrollers is of the utmost importance. To increase roadside visibility for approaching motorists, many states issue both the 'Lectric Lime belt and a retroreflective safety vest.

## Equipment Storage

Uniforms and equipment are to be stored at school. There should be no reason for them to be taken home. Each school shall provide a room, closet or cabinet locker with sufficient size and adequate space to store and maintain the patrol equipment properly. The storage space must:

- Be secure and accessible to Patrollers
- Include space for Patrollers to store their backpacks, jackets and other personal items while on duty
- Be close enough to allow Patrollers to reach their post reasonably quickly

The Advisor must have a key so the principal need not be tracked down before each shift.

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Proper Wear and Care of Equipment

### Belts and Vests

- Belts and badges are to be worn at all times when a Patroller is on duty, except when a poncho is needed.
- The belt should fit snugly across the waist and chest.
- In cooler weather, it should be adjusted to wear over outerwear.
- Belts should be rolled up and kept in a designated place when Patrollers are off duty.
- Belts must be returned to the Advisor at the end of the year and reused the following school year if their condition is acceptable.
- Belts should be cleaned regularly with a damp cloth, cold water and mild soap and line dried.
- For patrols that use a vest in place of or in combination with a belt, the vest should be cared for in the same fashion.

**Do not**:

- Machine wash
- Use abrasive cleaners
- Machine dry
- Iron

### Caps

- Caps provide an additional level of safety for Patrollers by raising their visibility but are not mandatory.
- Caps sit straight on the head with the bill facing forward.
- A jacket or sweater hood should never be worn over the cap.
- For health and sanitary reasons, caps should never be shared. Caps can be labeled inconspicuously on the interior with each Patroller's name.
- Each Patroller may keep his or her cap at the end of service.

### Badges

- Badges are worn only on the Patrol belt.
- They are pinned on the shoulder strap of the belt at chest level.
- Badges are not to be removed except when the belt is being cleaned. Repetitive removing and replacing the badge can cause the pin to break.
- Badges must be returned to the Advisor at the end of the year and reused the following school year if their condition is acceptable.
- Do not use polish that contains abrasive chemicals on the badges.

### Ponchos

- Hang the poncho on a wooden hanger, with shoulders centered on the hanger arms, or on a hook covered by a tennis ball.
- Hang it in a place that is cool and away from direct sunlight and heat.
- Make certain the sleeves are straight. Turned-back cuffs hold water and may cause cracking or mildew.
- If dirty, wipe clean with a damp cloth.

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Communication

It is important to set up efficient communication between the Advisor, principal, administrative staff, teachers and parents. Many schools can achieve this through emails or social media groups. Where this does not work, another system must be devised.

### Things to be communicated include:

- Patroller attendance at assigned shifts
- Upcoming meetings and special testing dates that would preclude Patrol participation
- Disciplinary problems

Systems should be put into place to integrate a culture of road and pedestrian safety in all facets of school culture including safety messaging at large school functions, at assemblies and in newsletters. Whenever possible, recognize the contribution made by the AAA School Safety Patrol. The greater importance and visibility the school gives to the AAA School Safety Patrol, the more the potential benefit.

### The program deserves recognition as:

- A safety measure
- A character-building program
- A leadership development program
- Citizenship and volunteerism in action
- A real-world "lab" that teaches life skills such as teamwork, responsibility, problem-solving and effective communication
- A means to enhance rapport between students and authority figures (e.g. school officers, law enforcement)
- A program that creates positive role models for younger students
- An opportunity for students to learn about traffic safety and the rules of interfacing with traffic

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Crosswalk Assessment

Your school and school board is responsible for assessing and evaluating the safety of crosswalks that students will patrol. The crosswalk must be in an appropriate location where the nature of the traffic will permit a safe environment for students to monitor. Review this coverage annually. New roads or subdivisions and changes in bus or walking patterns may change needs.

**In selecting crosswalks for Patrollers, gather recommendations from:**

- School personnel
- Parent advisory councils
- Parents
- Police
- Bus drivers
- Area businesses
- Other traffic-related individuals and organizations

**For schools with multiple crossing locations, choose which crosswalks to monitor based on factors such as:**

- Traffic volume
- Number of people crossing
- Proximity to school
- Availability of crosswalk lights
- Number of Patrollers
- Patrol team schedule
- Nearness of the post to Patrollers' homes

**The patrolled crossing must:**

- Be a single crosswalk — students are not to monitor multiple crosswalks at one time (e.g., three- or four-way intersections), intersections with traffic lights, crosswalks with lights or parking lot entrances/exits unless they are working with an adult crossing guard
- Be located within the 15-mph to 25-mph school zone
- Be a marked, legal pedestrian crossing point
- Have unobstructed sight lines, for both Patrollers and drivers
- Be within a reasonable proximity to the school

## Crosswalk Patrollers

### Patrollers should:

- Before arriving at their post, place their backpacks and other belongings in the designated safe place at the school so they do not interfere with their duties
- Arrive at their post early
- Determine how to judge a safe gap for each posted position
- Take a position ***at least*** one foot back from the curb or edge of the street, arms down at a 45-degree angle, palms facing back
- Check all directions for traffic
- Keep students a safe distance from traffic
- Keep arms and palms positioned to hold all students from traffic until there is a safe gap
- Never allow students to walk in front of a car that stops unless the Patrollers gives an appropriate signal or sign to allow them to cross
- Step aside and motion students across the street
- Continue to monitor traffic until the safe gap ends, then hold students back on the curb
- Step into the street only far enough to see around an obstruction

### Holding Position

- Patrollers use the holding position when students arrive at their post. This will keep them back safely from the road until they allow them to cross.
- The Patroller should stand ***at least*** one foot back from the curb.
- They stand with their arms out to their sides at a 45-degree angle with palms facing back.
- Patrollers should check all ways for approaching traffic and hold students in this position until they find a safe gap in traffic.

### At Ease Position

- At their post, Patrollers stand ***at least*** one foot back from the curb in a comfortable position.
- Patrollers should look around for cars and students that may approach.
- It is not safe to play near the street, and Patrollers should take the responsibility seriously.
- Patrollers are role models and should set a good example for other students.

## Safe Gap

Neither Patrollers nor their Advisors direct traffic. AAA School Safety Patrol squads help their peers cross the street safely by establishing a safe gap in traffic. When operating at a post, the Squad Sergeant should ascertain that the vehicular traffic has stopped or there is a safe enough gap before any schoolchildren are allowed to step off the curb into the street. The Sergeant must pay close attention to parked cars that may enter traffic and vehicles that may come from driveways or alleys. The Sergeant shall arrange for the orderly and prompt passage of children across the street when such movement is properly indicated. The Sergeant shall allow only the immediate group to cross, and all latecomers should wait for the next crossing cycle.

**Prior to assigning a shift at a post, the Captain (under the Advisor's guidance) should establish a safe gap at each post by:**

- Walking across the street at normal speed when there is no traffic
- Counting the seconds to cross safely and adding five seconds to allow for students who start across later than the lead student
- Picking a fixed point — such as a mailbox or signpost — about 1,000 feet from the student crossing point
- When a vehicle passes this point, counting the seconds until the vehicle reaches the crossing

**To determine safe gaps at intersections with signals:**

- On average, it takes 10 seconds for a child to cross.
- If the signal remains green for 30 seconds, count 20 seconds, then stop students from crossing until the next green light.

**The Sergeant determines a safe gap in traffic by judging:**

- Speed of vehicles
- Traffic volume
- Road and weather conditions
- Time required for small children to cross the street

## Search Pattern

One of the most important roles of the AAA School Safety Patrol is to model and reinforce proper crossing behavior. To allow time to assess traffic conditions at a crossing, pedestrians need to recognize and pause at "traffic edges." Typically curbs are the traffic edges beyond which a pedestrian might encounter moving traffic. However, in some situations, where motor vehicles illegally park too close to the crosswalk or where there are stopped vehicles, the traffic edge would extend beyond the curb. At each traffic edge, pedestrians must search in the directions from which traffic might approach before proceeding into the roadway.

**A proper search pattern is as follows:**

- Stop at the curb or edge of the road.
- Look LEFT — RIGHT – then LEFT again for traffic.
- If at an intersection, look ahead and over one's shoulder for possible turning vehicles.
- Keep searching while crossing the road.
- If there are parked cars or other obstacles, walk to the edge of the obstacle to perform the search pattern before allowing children to enter the roadway.
- Perform this search pattern each time before allowing children to cross the street.

# Patrol Situations

## Generic Crossings

- After determining a safe gap in traffic, be sure to look left, right, in front and behind for approaching or turning vehicles.
- When the road is clear, step aside facing traffic and point one of your arms toward the intersection.
- Motion with your other arm for students to cross.
- Tell any other approaching students to stay behind the holding position while you check again for a safe gap in traffic.
- Bicycle riders should always walk their bikes across the street.
- Continue checking for approaching, turning or speeding cars.
- Warn students to hurry if a car approaches.
- Never tell students to stop in the middle of the street.

## Crossing at Stop Signs

- If your post is at a stop sign, never allow students to cross the street in front of a stopped car.
- Even if the driver of the car motions for the students to cross, do not allow them to cross the street.
- Make eye contact with the driver and shake your head "no."
- Once the car has driven away and it is safe to cross, you may then allow the students to cross the street.

## Obstructed View

**Sometimes, you may need to look around a parked vehicle. When you do, here are things to keep in mind:**

- Before entering the roadway, make sure the car is parked and not moving.
- Tell students to stay on the curb until you give the signal that it is safe to cross.
- Take just a few steps into the street, but not beyond the parked car, so you can check around it for approaching vehicles.
- Once the road is clear, step aside and motion for students to cross.
- Remember to continue using your visual reference points and look for turning vehicles.
- This is the only time you are allowed to step into the street.
- If cars are continually blocking your view, alert your Advisor.
- Sometimes, a tree, hill or curve may block your view. If this happens, you may need another Patroller, called a "spotter," to help you see beyond the obstruction.

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Inclement Weather

**Sometimes, bad weather such as rain, snow, sleet or fog makes it more difficult to see or for drivers to stop their vehicle.**

- Even on bad-weather days, Patrollers must show up for duty on time. The exception would be if school was canceled due to weather conditions.
- Allow extra time for students to cross by choosing visual reference points that are farther away.
- Remember that in bad weather, it takes cars more time to stop.
- Rain and fog make it harder for drivers to see traffic signs and pedestrians.
- If it is snowing or icy, Patrollers should listen to TV or weather announcements or call the school hotline to determine whether classes are canceled or starting later than usual.
- Watch for out-of-control vehicles when roads are wet or icy.

## Other Concerns

- If you see a student being unsafe at your post, ask him or her nicely to stop the unsafe behavior.
- If the behavior continues, report this activity to your Advisor.
- Adults may cross at your post, but remember, they do not have to follow your directions.
- If parents are there with children, they may cross along with the other students, but parents do not have to follow your instructions.
- Never argue with parents.
- Let your Advisor know about any issue.
- If you see a traffic violation, write down the vehicle's color and license plate number and report it to your Advisor. Your Advisor will alert the police of any recurring incidents. Numerous reports of offenses, such as speeding or ignoring the stop signs, at a particular post may require a traffic safety officer to monitor the intersection, conduct a crosswalk sting, or set up a speed check.
- If you witness a traffic collision, stay at your post, keep students out of the street, and send someone to the school to report it to an adult.

# Working Together

## Working with Other Patrollers

- If a Patroller is working at a post with another Patroller, both should stand in the holding position with one person facing the street and the other facing the approaching students.
- Both Patrollers check for traffic.
- When they both agree there is a safe gap in traffic, they step aside and motion for the students to cross.
- Both Patrollers continue looking all ways for approaching or turning vehicles.
- Remember, teamwork is essential!

***** Remember, only police officers and adult crossing guards can stop vehicles.

## Working with Adult Crossing Guards

- The adult crossing guard looks for oncoming traffic and helps find a safe time to cross.
- The Patroller holds students at the curb in the holding position until receiving the crossing guard's signal that it is safe to cross.
- Patrollers should never attempt to stop or direct traffic and should always follow the crossing guard's directions.
- Return to the holding position after students cross or the guard signals that it is no longer safe to cross.

## Working with Law Enforcement

In many communities, law enforcement officers work directly with Patrols. They serve not only as mentors but also as Safety Patrol coordinators who contribute to operations, training and development.

**Law enforcement can make an important contribution to the success of your program, including:**

- Promoting motorist awareness of Patrols
- Promoting community respect for Patrols
- Contributing to Patrol training

## Valet Service in Drop-Off Zones

Some schools place Patrollers at drop-off zones in front of the school to protect carpoolers. Typically, a drop-off zone is established by placing cones or painting lines strategically to allow vehicles to enter and exit a designated lane while allowing other vehicles to safely drive by without entering the drop-off zone.

### Set-up and operation of the valet service

- Adults supervise the Patrollers and monitor traffic.
- Patrollers are placed along the curb where the drop-off lane has been established and are evenly spaced a car's length apart.
- The Squad Sergeant stands at the furthermost segment of the curb nearest the exit of the drop-off zone.
- The Advisor, a teacher or an adult volunteer waves the lead vehicle through the lane to the exit point, then indicates for the vehicle to stop with a small hand sign.
- Once all vehicles have come to a full stop, the nearest Patroller opens the curbside vehicle door, greets the driver and student and allows the student to exit the vehicle.
- The Patroller thanks the driver, closes the door and gives a hand signal or verbal command to indicate he or she is clear of the vehicle.
- The vehicles are then waved through the exit.

### Duties of Patrollers assigned to valet service

- Helping students enter and exit vehicles safely
- Assisting small children and students whose arms are full
- Reminding students to stay on the sidewalk and cross only in designated areas
- Directing students to proceed in an orderly fashion from the drop-off area
- Prohibiting students from reaching under a vehicle to pick up an item for any reason
- Being conscientious about shutting doors firmly without slamming

The Advisor or supervising adult will courteously address drivers who park their cars in the drop-off lanes and attempt to exit their vehicles.

## School Bus Patrol

The objective of a School Bus Patrol is to assist in transporting students to and from school safely. If such transportation programs are properly organized, they provide students training in the safe practices applicable to all bus riders and pedestrian roadway users. When establishing a School Bus Patrol program, it is not enough to simply define a set of rules governing student conduct. To further support the program, there must be an educational effort emphasizing proper conduct for entering, riding and exiting the bus. Bus Patrollers are usually students from the first bus stops in the morning and the last bus stops in the afternoon. They provide assistance for the entire route. The School Bus Patrols handbook provides program guidelines and safety practices.

**Basic rules governing the school's bus transportation program should be printed and distributed to teachers, bus drivers, parents and students. They should include:**

- Laws governing school bus operation
- Roles and responsibilities
- Procedures for walking to and from the bus stop
- Rules for student behavior while waiting at bus stops
- Procedures for students to follow when they must cross the roadway before entering/exiting the bus at designated stops
- How long the driver will wait for a student
- What to do in an emergency situation

### Role of the Principal

- Selects the Advisor
- Ensures bus drivers, Advisors, Bus Patrollers and all other school staff understand their joint responsibility for bus safety and work cooperatively

### Role of Advisor

- Selects Patrollers
- Begin the school year by riding on buses several times and discussing problems with the driver and Bus Patrollers on a continuing basis throughout the year
- Schedules Bus Patrol meetings once per month and encourages bus drivers to attend
- Considers School Bus Patrollers a branch of the regular Patrol and serves over all Patrollers
- Instructs Patrollers on the rules of operation, how emergency exits and fire extinguishers work, and first aid
- Assigns Bus Patrollers to a designated seat
- Arranges training sessions for those coming into service

### Role of the Bus Driver

- Is responsible for the safety of the bus and passengers
- Advises students who must cross the highway to board the bus to wait for the arrival of the bus before crossing
- Observes traffic from all directions
- When it is safe for the students to cross, directs a "go" signal to the Patroller
- Does not depend on the Patroller to decide when it is safe to cross
- Teaches students to cross only in front of the bus
- Is responsible for activating all warning devices and lights
- Should not back up the bus while pedestrians are in the vicinity, unless adults are present to guide the bus driver. Patrollers are not allowed to assist in the backing of a bus.
- Makes sure the bus is equipped with a fire extinguisher, fully equipped first aid kit, red flags and flares
- Should attend Bus Patrol meetings regularly and assist in training

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Role of the Front Bus Patrol Member

### When the bus stops to pick up students, the Patroller:

- Dismounts and takes a position beside and facing the step to help students entering the bus
- Remains off of the roadway, taking 10 to 15 giant steps from the front of the bus. This position will enable the Patroller to clearly see the driver's signal to cross and the driver to clearly see the students
- Signals students to cross when safe, after looking both ways to make sure all approaching vehicles have stopped and upon signal from the bus driver that it is safe to do so
- Is the last person to board the bus and sits in his or her assigned seat

### When arriving at school, the Patroller:

- Is the first person off the bus
- Stands beside and facing the bus step to be in position to help students exiting the bus

### When school is out, the Patroller:

- Helps students enter the bus when the bus door opens from a position beside and facing the steps
- Makes sure students enter the bus in an orderly and timely manner

Patrollers not riding the bus are responsible for keeping students who are not riding the bus away from the bus loading zone.

### When the bus stops to let students off, the Patroller should exit first and help students when needed. If students must cross the road, the Patroller:

- Remains off of the road, taking 10 to 15 giant steps from the front of the bus
- Makes sure students stay behind him or her until the bus driver and Patroller have checked both ways to make sure all traffic has stopped
- Motions students to cross upon a signal from the bus driver
- Gets back on the bus and sits in the assigned seat when the students have safely crossed

## Role of the Rear Bus Patrol Member

- Sits in the back of the bus
- Makes sure that students are seated before bus starts moving
- Helps check attendance
- Keeps the aisles clear
- Makes sure students do not forget personal items
- Assists in an emergency
- Reports damage to the bus by a passenger
- Enforces rules against throwing objects or trash on the floor
- Acts as a monitor

## Safety Concerns

### Safety of Patrols

Patrollers must be trained on traffic safety principles, operational procedures and each post's responsibilities. Dedicated adult supervision, ongoing communication and regular inspections protect Patrollers. While on duty, Patrollers must remain at their assigned posts and always properly display their badge and belt or vest.

**Patrollers are trained to seek the help of an adult in the following traffic situations:**

- Parked cars blocking the view of an intersection
- Parked cars blocking a school bus stop or student loading or unloading zone
- Failure of motorists to obey a traffic control device
- Suspicious activity by an adult or other students
- Vehicles turning at a T-intersection
- Wrong-way traffic on a one-way street
- Emergencies and injuries
- Electrical wires down near the patrol post
- Domestic or wild animal threats
- Student violence
- Emergency vehicle response near the post
- Any situation beyond the realm of the daily operation of a Patrol post

### "Stranger Danger"

Patrollers are trained to report problems with strangers to a Patrol Advisor, teacher, parent and/or law enforcement. These "Stranger Danger" precautions are part of Patrol training.

**Patrollers should never:**

- Approach cars or allow other students to approach unknown motorists
- Accept food, beverages or presents from strangers
- Help strangers with directions
- Help strangers search for a lost pet
- Allow their photo to be taken or a video to be recorded
- Divulge their name, address, phone number or other family or personal information

**Patrollers are trained to seek immediate help if they:**

- Encounter someone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Become suspicious of the behavior of other students or adults
- Are followed

* **Patrollers should be taught that if they are grabbed by a stranger, they should make as much noise as possible.**

# Problem Solving

## Traffic Law Violators

Patrol Advisors and Patrollers are not law enforcement officers, nor are they assigned for the purpose of enforcing traffic laws. However, they are sometimes in a good position to observe infractions that can endanger others. Safety Patrollers should not attempt to stop vehicles or adult pedestrians if they disregard the Patrol commands.

**Download the PDF** (Report Card)

**Although most drivers respond appropriately to a Patrol, some hazardous driver behaviors that may occur at a guarded crosswalk include:**

- Speeding
- Driving through a crosswalk
- Stopping within a crosswalk
- Encroaching on a crosswalk when making a left turn at a green light
- Encroaching on a crosswalk when making a right turn on red
- Failure to yield to pedestrians in an unmarked crosswalk, or failure to stop for pedestrians in a marked crosswalk

**How to report violators:**

- Two Patrollers must be able to accurately describe the vehicle and provide its license plate number
- The two Patrollers will complete traffic violation report cards independently of each other
- The report cards are turned into the Advisor, who verifies whether they match
- The Advisor forwards the report to local law enforcement
- Aggravated cases may be prosecuted to the extent of the law

## Conflict Resolution

- Not all motorists or pedestrians will welcome or be grateful for your service
- Do not engage angry motorists or pedestrians
- Do not swing your sign or strike others with it
- If a dangerous situation arises, the Advisor will have the squad retreat to the supply room
- Have all witnesses write a report of their version of any incident and submit to your local law enforcement

## Emergencies

Emergencies may include vehicle crashes, collisions involving vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists, sudden illness of pedestrians or motorists, or injury of pedestrians or bicyclists. In the event of a traffic crash or infraction, Patrollers may be asked to provide information to law enforcement personnel.

The Advisor should talk only to law enforcement personnel and not to the media or the parties involved in the incident. Any questions from the news media should be politely referred to the police department. Immediately after post time, the Advisor should contact the police department and principal to advise them of what occurred at their post.

**If an emergency has occurred, the patrol Advisor should ask multiple motorists to call 911 to report it.**

### Information Required for Reporting Vehicles

- Details about the vehicle, including color, body style, size, make and model
- License plate number
- Features of the driver
- Time and day of incident

### Information Required for Reporting Persons

- Gender
- Race
- Age
- Clothing description
- Hair color
- Height, weight, body build
- Direction of travel

**The same basic rules apply to each situation. Advisors should:**

- Remain at the post with the children. Group the children to maintain control.
- Stop crossing the children until the situation is under control, and then determine the best way to cross them safely. If practical, the Advisor may select another temporary crossing location.
- If able, report emergencies by calling 911. If not able, ask others to call 911. Instruct the callers to give the closest intersection or cross street and describe the situation to the 911 operator. The Advisor might also ask the callers to notify the school administration so they can assist with the children.
- If a victim is ambulatory, he or she should move out of the road. Otherwise, a victim should not be moved except by qualified emergency medical personnel.
- Always notify local law enforcement as soon as possible of any emergency that may have occurred at the post.

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Record Keeping

AAA provides two resources that help Captains standardize record keeping: the Captain's Record Book and the Monthly Patrol Record Form. The Captain maintains the Captain's Record Book. Patrol records should cover:

- Daily attendance
- Number of times a Patroller is late
- Number of times a Patroller fails to wear proper equipment

## Meetings

Meetings should take place once a month as scheduled by the Advisor at the beginning of each school year. It also may be appropriate to invite the principal, police, adult crossing guards, bus drivers and volunteers. Meetings are conducted and follow a set agenda based on parliamentary procedure, which is a set of widely accepted rules that give meetings structure and order. Officers should plan an agenda focused on both old and new Patrol business. The Captain presides at all meetings. The Lieutenant presides in the Captain's absence. Patrollers wear badges and belts or vests to meetings.

### Sample Agenda

- Call to order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Pledge of Service
- Roll call
- Staff Sergeant reads minutes of previous meeting
- Captain corrects or approves minutes
- Squad reports
  - Captain's report
  - Lieutenant's report
  - Staff Sergeant's attendance report
  - Supply Sergeant's report
  - Squad Sergeant's report
- Old business from previous meeting completed
- New business discussed
- Contributions from guests
- Training
- Captain requests motion to adjourn
- Captain asks for motion to be seconded
- Captain states the motion and asks for "ayes" and "nays"
- Captain officially adjourns the meeting
- Captain announces the time and date of next meeting
- Captain dismisses each squad

### Meeting Items Needed

- Agenda
- U.S. Flag
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Pledge of Service
- Table for Captain
- Chairs (some hold meetings standing in squads)
- Service pins

### Elements That Must Be in the Minutes

- School name
- Date and time of meeting
- Attendance
- Summary of old business
- Summary of new business
- Additional comments/contributions from guests
- Additional information (for example, training or recognitions)
- Time meeting was dismissed

## Squad Reports

Each officer will prepare a written report prior to the meeting and deliver an oral report to the Advisor in front of the Patrol, school staff and parent volunteers. Public speaking techniques are taught and emphasized. Reports are collected by the Captain, archived by the Staff Sergeant and available for review by the Advisor at all times. Each report states the date of the meeting, the school and name of the reporting officer.

### Recognizing "Bests"

All supervising Officers have the privilege of publicly acknowledging the good work of those over whom they have stewardship. The Officer should sincerely strive to recognize the efforts and diligence of their fellow students and offer specific reasons why they decided to recognize them. Every effort should be made to identify a "best" during the month, but if the Officer isn't able, he or she should simply state "none" in his or her report. Officers should refrain from naming the same person month after month unless truly deserved. It serves the Patrol well to try to find ways to help underperforming students work hard to achieve a "best" designation. Officers should check themselves if they are naming someone simply because that Patroller is a friend or relative. It is acceptable to name more than one person for this award if deserved. The Advisor bestows a service pin on each "best" and places it on the Patroller's uniform.

### General Concerns/Plans for Improvement

Most reports have sections titled "general concerns" and "plans for improvement." This section shouldn't be used to single out a Patroller for poor behavior or denote a vague, non-specific concern description like "people are being bad."

**General concerns may include:**

- A specific safety concern
- General failures by the patrol to follow protocol
- Missing equipment

**Plans for improvement should:**

- Offer a specific plan on how to resolve each general concern
- Be realistic
- Be achievable

# OPERATING YOUR PATROL

## Captain's Report

- Names and grades Lieutenants
- Designates the best Lieutenant and the reason for the selection
- Names the best Sergeant and squad and the reason they were chosen
- Gives a grade to the entire Patrol with a reason for the grade
- States general concerns and plans for improving

## Lieutenant's Report

- Names and grades all Sergeants
- Designates the best Sergeant and the reason for the selection
- Names the best Sergeant and squad and the reason they were chosen
- Gives a grade to each squad and chooses the best squad with a reason for the selection
- States general concerns and plans for improving

## Staff Sergeant's Reports

The Staff Sergeant prepares two reports: the minutes and the attendance report. The Staff Sergeant reports on the minutes from the previous meeting, including statements from all officers and guidance received from sponsors. The Staff Sergeant also takes minutes at the current meeting.

### The attendance report includes:

- The month and year being reported
- How many shifts were available in the month
- Attendance broken down into four categories:
  1. Perfect attendance — present at every shift
  2. Good attendance — missed fewer than four times
  3. Poor attendance — missed more than four times
  4. Withdrawn — quit the Patrol

## Supply Sergeant's Report

Accounting for all assigned equipment and what is needed for proper Patrol function, this report helps the Advisor know when to order more supplies. The Sergeant gives a grade to the supply room and a reason for the grade and states general concerns and plans for improving.

### Equipment

- Belts or vests
- Badges
- Caps
- Ponchos
- Flags
- Whistles on lanyards
- Walkie-talkies
- Stop signs

### All equipment is rated by its condition

- Good
- Fair
- Poor

## Squad Sergeant's Report

- Names all Patrollers in assigned squad
- Designates the best Patroller and the reason for the selection
- Gives a grade to his or her assigned squad
- States general concerns and plans for improving

## Supervision

Any Patroller who fails to maintain satisfactory school grades and citizenship or to perform any of their duties in a proper manner shall be dismissed from the service. The Advisor or principal shall be the judges in this matter. The internal discipline of Patrollers is the responsibility of the Advisor. Each school develops its own procedures for "probation" and "suspension." Suggested guidelines are below.

All Patrollers are expected to be responsible students and role models. If a Patroller consistently causes problems at school or in the classroom, the principal or Advisor has the option to place the student on probation. Teachers also may suggest that students be placed on probation. A Patroller on probation is removed from the Patrol during the probationary period. The Advisor will designate a Patroller to assume his or her duties. A letter can be sent to the Patroller's parents explaining the probation and the reason for taking the action.

The probation has a defined time period designed to give the student time to improve behavior, grades or whatever problems caused the probation. The Advisor, principal, teacher and administrators will monitor the probation period with the expectation that the student will improve and resume a responsible position.

If, after a second probationary period, a Patroller continues to demonstrate an inability to follow established guidelines, suspension from the patrol can occur. The administration, in cooperation with the Advisor, bus drivers and teachers, makes these decisions on a case-by-case basis.

**Examples of offenses:**

- Attempting to direct traffic
- Leaving the sidewalk
- Allowing children to cross without checking for a safe gap
- Leaving a post without permission
- Breaking safety rules
- Being tardy or absent without an acceptable reason
- Arriving for duty without a belt or badge
- Disobedience
- Excessive talking during service time

# SUPPORTING YOUR PATROL

**Morale Building and Recognition**
**Fundraising**
**Recognition Programs**

# SUPPORTING YOUR PATROL

## Morale Building and Recognition

A role of the Advisor is to maintain the enthusiasm and commitment of the Patrol team. The more a school community supports and recognizes the Patrollers' responsibilities, the higher their morale. A **Certificate of Recognition** and **merit pins** are available for students who complete service as a Patroller. These can be presented at school assemblies or patrol events. Schools can approach local businesses for contributions for Patrollers. Examples of donations may include gift cards or items from a restaurant, movie theater, bookstore, recreation complex, sports store or department store.

### Suggested activities to build pride and morale

- Hold bimonthly meetings to share information and resolve issues
- Reserve a section of the school newsletter or website for Safety Patrol news
- Designate a Safety Patrol bulletin board for news, photos, awards and safety messages
- Recognize a Patroller of the Week/Month
- Participate in any AAA-sponsored or AAA-hosted events, gatherings or celebrations that may be planned in your area
- Have the Patrol team perform a safety presentation or skit at a school assembly
- Create a Patrol honor guard/color guard and have them perform at school events
- Have Patrollers present safety messages or reminders during announcements
- Introduce and thank the patrol team at an assembly
- Host an annual Safety Patrol luncheon
- Involve the student council in Patrol recognition activities
- Proclaim "AAA School Safety Patrol Day" or "Patroller Appreciation Day"
- Provide free time in the gym or computer lab
- Eat lunch with a fellow Patroller
- Distribute coupons for special privileges
- Send a personalized note of appreciation to Patroller parents
- Allow Patrollers to sit on benches/chairs in a school assembly
- Offer refreshments such as hot chocolate or ice cream after a shift
- Host special events such as pizza parties, movie outings, sporting events or end-of-the-year celebrations

## Fundraising

### Schools across the country have raised funds for their Patrol by:

- Hosting a movie for students and selling popcorn
- Holding a bake sale
- Contacting fundraising companies that provide sale items
- Creating buttons or stickers for a small cost
- Offering a gift-wrapping service at the holidays
- Holding car washes
- Collecting recyclables
- Obtaining plants or seedlings from the parks department and selling them to the community
- Setting up a compost heap "fed" daily by classrooms and the cafeteria and selling bags of fertilizer in the spring
- Setting up a booth at a town street fair or similar community celebration and providing face-painting or simple goods or services
- Holding a safety fair and inviting AAA, the Red Cross or other safety organizations to participate
- Challenging students to a walk-a-thon, bike-a-thon (with helmets!) or bowl-a-thon and asking sponsors to pledge contributions

## Recognition Programs

Many AAA clubs makes available award certificates and a pin that can be presented at school assemblies or celebrations. Contact your local AAA club for details. **Certificates of Merit** are available for students who satisfactorily complete service as a Patroller. **Service Pins** recognize Patrollers' outstanding service. Two national awards programs recognize the efforts of AAA School Safety Patrollers: the Lifesaving Medal and the National Patroller of the Year.

### Lifesaving Medal

In 1949, AAA awarded the first Lifesaving Medals to recognize Patrollers who saved a life or prevented the injury of a fellow student while on duty. More than 422 students have received this prestigious honor. AAA Lifesaving Medals have been presented by U.S. Presidents Ford, Johnson, Kennedy and Eisenhower; Vice Presidents Mondale, Humphrey, Nixon and Barkley; First Lady Mamie Eisenhower; justices of the U.S. Supreme Court; cabinet officials; and other dignitaries.

**The Lifesaving Medal is awarded by an independent review board to a member of any authorized AAA School Safety Patrol when there is conclusive proof that:**

1. The life of the person saved was in imminent danger.
2. The act was performed while the Patroller was on duty, going to or from a duty post, or while on duty as a Bus Patroller.
3. No negligence on the part of the Patroller caused or contributed to the person rescued being in danger.

### National Patroller of the Year

In 2002, AAA/CAA introduced the National Patroller of the Year award to recognize Patrollers who best exemplify leadership qualities while performing their duties effectively and responsibly, without incident. Local AAA/CAA clubs select the National Patroller of the Year. Contact your local AAA club for details.

**School Safety Patrol Advisors may nominate one current-year Patroller who must:**

- Be enrolled in the highest participating grade level of the AAA School Safety Patrol
- Demonstrate leadership qualities, safety skills, school involvement and citizenship/volunteerism
- Value the Patrol experience

**Download the PDF** (Lifesaving Medal Application Form)

**Download the PDF** (Patroller of the Year Application Form)

# RESOURCES

**Related Programs**
**Top Tips**
**Safety Patrol Materials**

# RESOURCES

## Related Programs

### AAA's 'School's Open — Drive Carefully' Campaign

Launched in 1946, AAA's "School's Open — Drive Carefully" awareness campaign was created to help reduce child pedestrian fatalities and injuries. The campaign aims to reduce the number of traffic crashes involving school-age pedestrians and school bus riders by reminding drivers to be extra-cautious. Participating schools may obtain colorful posters for display and other "School's Open — Drive Carefully" items. Contact your local club for details.

### Best Route to School

Safety experts both inside and outside of AAA have developed rules that help parents and children determine the safest and best route to school. Use the following tips to aid AAA School Safety Patrols in the promotion of safe walking practices to fellow students.

- **Walk on sidewalks.** Watch out for cars pulling into and backing out of driveways.
- **Walk on the left, facing traffic, if there are no sidewalks.** Staying to the left allows you to watch oncoming traffic and get out of the way if necessary.
- **Cross only at corners.** Avoid the dangerous practice of "jaywalking." Cross at an intersection controlled by a traffic light wherever possible.
- **Stop and look all ways before crossing.** If there's no traffic light, ensure oncoming cars are at least a block away before crossing.
- **Watch for turning cars.** Children sometimes forget to look and unintentionally walk into the side of a turning vehicle.
- **Continue to look left, right and left again as you cross.** It's easy to miss an oncoming car.
- **Never cross between parked cars.** It's almost impossible for drivers to see youngsters who enter the roadway from between parked cars.
- **Play away from traffic.** Playgrounds, schoolyards and your own backyard are the safest places to play.
- **Be especially alert in bad weather.** Rain, snow, fog and even umbrellas can obstruct vision. Also, drivers may be unable to stop quickly. Children should wear brightly colored and retroreflective clothing.
- **Obey police officers, adult crossing guards, AAA School Safety Patrollers and traffic signals.** These "safety guardians" can greatly enhance a child's safety when going to and from school.

## Bike Safety

### Helmets

Head injuries are the cause of death in 80 percent of fatal bicycle crashes. To ensure you are off to a good start, you'll need a properly fitted helmet. Select a helmet approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), as noted on a sticker inside the helmet. Be a good role model and wear your helmet on every ride.

- Helmets should sit level and low on the forehead. You should see the front of the helmet when you look up. If the helmet is slightly large, insert extra padding provided with the helmet and adjust the helmet using the fit ring on the back.
- Straps should be adjusted to center the buckle under the chin, with side straps forming a "V" shape under and slightly in front of the ears. The fit should be snug with only one or two fingers able to fit under the chin strap.

**Replace your helmet if it:**

- Is involved in a crash
- Is dropped hard enough to crack the foam
- Has an outside of just foam or cloth instead of plastic
- Lacks a CPSC, American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or Snell sticker inside
- Cannot be adjusted to fit correctly

### How to Ride

With helmet secured, the rider's first task is learning to stay on the bicycle. Next is learning skills such as starting, stopping, turning, signaling and going up and down hills and around curves. Braking quickly must then be mastered. Here are some useful tips:

- Always wear a helmet.
- Stop and check for traffic before entering the roadway.
- Ride on the right, in the same direction as traffic.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Be cautious around parked cars; especially watch for opening doors.
- Use appropriate hand signals to communicate your intention to turn or stop.
- Learn vehicle rules and regulations.
- Never carry a passenger.

When a bicycle is operated in low-light conditions, such as inclement weather or after dark, the bike and rider should:

- Wear bright, reflective clothing
- Mount a white light on the front of the bike
- Mount a red light on the back of the bike
- Consider alternatives to riding after dark

## Sharing the Road

More than half a million collisions between motor vehicles and bicycles occur in the United States each year. Many of these incidents are the result of motorists' failure to properly yield to bicyclists. While motorists can take action to increase their overall awareness of bicyclists, bicyclists can increase their safety by:

- Remaining alert
- Clearly communicating their intentions to motorists by using proper signals
- Watching for both turning and parked motor vehicles
- Using helmets, visible clothing, lights and designated bike lanes and paths

Remember: We all have places to go. Let's get there safely and respect one another when sharing the road.

# RESOURCES

## Top Tips

- Solicit contributions and expertise from parent-teacher groups, bus drivers, teachers, traffic and safety experts, and law enforcement.
- Dedicate a section of the school newsletter, e-news or school website to AAA School Safety Patrol news, and highlight a Patroller each month.
- Encourage communication among Patrollers by arranging get-togethers, such as shared training or recognition events.
- Reward Patrollers with ice cream, hot chocolate or a meal hosted by a parent-teacher group.
- Dedicate an exhibit case or bulletin board to showcase AAA School Safety Patrol information and include a map of posts. Add photos of the Patrollers assigned to each post.
- Write a thank-you note to the members of your AAA School Safety Patrol and their parents.

## Safety Patrol Materials

Printed materials, awards, equipment and other resources are available to support your AAA School Safety Patrol program. Schools and municipalities should order from their local AAA club. For questions about how to place an order, email SchoolSafetyPatrol@national.aaa.com. Available materials may include:

**Download the PDF**
(Program Catalog)

### Printed Materials, Guides and Forms

- Handbooks
- Brochures
- Manuals
- Captain's Record Book
- Policies and Practices

### Recognition Awards

- Certificates
- Patches
- Pins

### Patrol Equipment

- Belts or vests
- Badges
- Caps
- Ponchos
- Flags