

GENERAL ORDER



Title		
Juvenile Curfew Enforcement		
Topic	Series	Number
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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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I. PURPOSE

The District of Columbia has a juvenile curfew to protect the welfare of minors by reducing the likelihood of criminality and victimization during curfew hours and aiding parents and guardians in carrying out their responsibility to exercise reasonable supervision of their minors. The purpose of this general order is to provide Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) members with procedures for enforcing the juvenile curfew as well as procedures for establishing temporary extended youth curfew zones.

II. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. The citywide juvenile curfew shall apply to any person under the age of 18 who remains in any public place or on the premises of an establishment within the District during the hours of 11:00 pm through 6:00 am on the following day on any Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday and during the hours of 12:01 am until 6:00 am on any Saturday or Sunday; except during the months of July and August when the curfew is from 12:01 am until 6:00 am on all days.
2. By issuance of an order, the mayor or the chief of police may designate any part of the District as an extended youth curfew zone after determining that such a designation is appropriate to protect public safety or public or private property. Within the extended youth curfew zone, the mayor or chief of police may extend youth curfew hours beyond the citywide juvenile curfew.
 - a. Extended youth curfew hours shall not begin earlier than 8:00 pm on any day or extend past 6:00 am the following day.

- b. Within extended youth curfew zones, juveniles are prohibited from gathering **in a group of nine or more** in any public place or on the premises of any establishment within the zone.
- 3. Juvenile curfew hours and extended youth curfew zones apply to juveniles (i.e., persons under the age of 18 years with the exception of individuals who are judicially emancipated or married).
- 4. Juveniles are exempt from curfew requirements when:

Curfew Exemptions	
Accompanied by a parent or legal guardian	Involved in an emergency
Engaged in or in transit to lawful employment, without any detour or stop	In a motor vehicle, train, or bus involved in interstate travel
On a sidewalk that abuts the juvenile's or a next-door neighbor's residence, provided the neighbor does not complain to MPD about the juvenile's presence	Attending or traveling to or from without any detour or stop an official school, religious, or other recreational activity sponsored by the District or other civic and/or community-based entity that takes responsibility for the juvenile
On an errand at the direction of a parent or legal guardian, without any detour or stop	Exercising First Amendment rights protected by the United States Constitution

B. Designating Extended Youth Curfew Zones

- 1. In determining whether to designate extended youth curfew zones, the chief of police shall consider the following:
 - a. Within the preceding 30 days, the occurrence of:

Extended Youth Curfew Zone Considerations
(1) Youth curfew violations in the proposed zone;
(2) Police reports of disturbances of the public peace pursuant to DC Official Code § § 22-1301 , 22-1307 , 22-1309 , 22-1312 , 22-1318 , 22-1321 , or 22-1322 involving minors in the proposed zone;
(3) Police reports of dangerous crimes as defined in DC Official Code § 23-1331(3) involving minors in the proposed zone;
(4) Police reports of crimes of violence as defined in DC Official Code § 23-1331(4) involving minors in the proposed zone; or
(5) Police reports of destruction of or damage to public or private property involving minors in the proposed zone.

- b. Intelligence or verifiable information indicative of an intent of nine or more juveniles to gather in the proposed zone in such a manner that is likely to result in substantial harm to the public safety, or the safety of those gathering, or substantial damage to public or private property; and

- c. Any other verifiable information from which the chief of police may ascertain that public safety or public or private property in the proposed zone is likely to be endangered by the presence of unaccompanied juveniles in the zone.
2. To request designation of extended youth curfew zones, district commanders shall submit a written request to the chief of police through the chain of command. The written request shall include:

Extended Youth Curfew Zone Requests
a. Detailed street and aerial maps outlining the boundaries of the proposed zone;
b. Plan specifying resources used to mark the area as a zone;
c. Complete, objective justification for the determination based on the considerations included in this order; and
d. Justification of emergency circumstances, when applicable.

3. When recommending designated extended youth curfew zones, district commanders shall ensure that their district has the necessary personnel, material resources, and logistical capabilities to effectively concentrate law enforcement efforts in these areas.
4. The chief of police, in consultation with the Office of General Counsel (OGC), shall review and approve or disapprove all extended youth curfew zone designation requests.
 - a. OGC shall ensure that the proposed zone meets legal sufficiency with consideration given to the recommendation criteria.
 - b. The chief of police or designee shall ensure that the request meets the requirements of this order.
5. To designate the extended youth curfew zone, the chief of police shall issue an order that includes:

Designation Order
a. The basis for the designation of the zone;
b. The boundaries of the zone; and
c. The days and hours the zone shall be in effect.
d. The basis for an emergency, if one exists.

6. Extended curfew zones shall not take effect until at least 24 hours after the designation order, except in emergency circumstances as determined by the mayor or the chief of police.
7. The Executive Office of the Chief of Police (EOCOP) shall forward designation orders to the Office of Communications director and the Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) commanding official. Any disapproved requests shall be returned to the requesting district commander.
 - a. The Office of Communications director shall ensure the public is notified. Digital notices shall include a plain language description of

lawful activities that remain permitted for minors in the extended youth curfew zone as well as the locations, days, times, and transportation options for alternative youth events, if known or applicable.

- b. The RTCC commanding official shall ensure affected law enforcement partners are notified.
8. District commanders shall ensure that each block within the zone is marked by multiple conspicuous signs secured to available objects (e.g., lamp post) or on wooden stakes around the borders, as soon as practical and prior to implementation. Each block shall be marked by using the most practical and available resources. Signs shall include:
- a. A statement that during curfew hours, any person under the age of 18 congregating in a group of nine or more juveniles in any public place or on the premises of any establishment within the perimeter of an extended youth curfew zone must leave the area unless engaged in certain exempted activities and that failure to do so may result in arrest;
 - b. The boundaries of the zone;
 - c. The extended juvenile curfew times and effective dates; and
 - d. Any other information needed to inform the public.
9. At the beginning of each shift, watch commanders shall ensure that block markings and warning signs are still posted.
10. The chief of police may extend the duration of the zone to 30 days by issuing subsequent orders extending the duration of the designation.
11. Upon expiration of the declared extended youth curfew zone, district commanders shall ensure that block markings and warning signs are removed and prepare a report to the chief of police through the chain of command within 10 business days of the expiration. The report shall include:

After Action Report
a. Location including the exact boundaries;
b. Date and time the zone was declared;
c. Allocated personnel and resources;
d. Dates and approximate times of distribution of notices within the zone boundaries;
e. Dates, approximate times, and locations of hanging and removing posters (including approximate number of posters used);
f. Manner in which each block in the zone was marked;
g. Total number of curfew violations;
h. Any significant arrest, events, or unusual incidents which occurred in the zone during the declared period of time; and
i. Evaluation of the enforcement action.

12. EOCOP shall retain records related to extended youth curfew zone activities.

C. Investigation and Enforcement

1. Pursuant to [GO-PER-201.26 \(Code of Conduct\)](#), members shall maintain a calm, courteous, and professional demeanor when engaging with the community during juvenile curfew enforcement.
2. Members may issue verbal warnings of the start of curfew hours to juveniles beginning no more than thirty minutes before the start of curfew hours.
3. Members shall not stop, question, disperse, or transport juveniles based solely on their presence in a designated curfew zone prior to the beginning of curfew hours, presence in a group fewer than nine juveniles, or any other factor that, on its own, does not constitute a curfew violation under the law.
4. Members investigating or enforcing a curfew violation shall initiate a stop pursuant to [GO-OPS-304.10 \(Field Contacts, Stops, and Protective Pat Downs\)](#) in order to determine if the individual is a curfew violator. Members shall conduct a Washington Area Law Enforcement System (WALEs) check to determine if the juvenile is the subject of an outstanding custody order or missing person report.
5. Members shall release juveniles who are not in violation of curfew, provided there are no other valid reasons to detain them. Members encountering any other violations of law shall take appropriate police action. When juveniles are in violation of curfew, members shall first attempt to release them to their parent or guardian. When a parent or guardian cannot be reached or is unavailable:
 - a. When operational, transport juveniles to a Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) curfew center.
 - b. If a DYRS curfew center is not operational, notify the watch commander and:
 - (1) Transport violators aged 12 and under directly to the district station and notify the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA).
 - (2) Transport violators aged 13 and older home unless circumstances indicate a lack of parental care and a need for close supervision. In these cases, members shall transport juveniles to CFSA and report the unsafe conditions to YFED. Members shall request permission from the watch commander prior to transporting the juvenile

to a location in another district.

- (3) Transport violators who live outside the District of Columbia to the district station. If no parent or guardian is able to pick the juvenile up, members may request permission from the watch commander to transport the juvenile home if the juvenile resides within the DC metro area.
 - c. Prior to transport, curfew violators shall be searched. Curfew violators shall not be handcuffed unless they present a danger to themselves or others.
 - d. Curfew violators aged 12 and under shall be transported separately whenever practical.
 - e. Pursuant to [GO-RAR-901.07 \(Use of Force\)](#), members shall use de-escalation techniques whenever feasible, use force only when necessary, and ensure that any force used is proportionate to the situation.
6. When juveniles are in violation of curfew in extended youth curfew zones, members shall:
- a. Upon approval by an official, provide notice of the violation of curfew according to the warning format in the Juvenile Curfew Dispersal Warning Sheet and identify reasonable steps they can take to leave the area.
 - (1) Where there **is not** an imminent danger of bodily injury or significant damage to property, issue **at least two** clearly audible and understandable notices of violation of curfew; or
 - (2) Where there **is** imminent danger of bodily injury or significant damage to property, issue **at least one** clearly audible and understandable notice of violation of curfew;
 - b. Allow a reasonable and adequate time to disperse from the zone or into groups of fewer than nine juveniles;
 - c. Capture each component of all notices of violation of curfew on body worn camera (BWC); and
 - d. Absent exigent circumstances, document all warnings using the Juvenile Curfew Dispersal Warning Sheet which can be found on MPD Online Forms and upload the completed form into the records management system (RMS) report.
7. Curfew violations where juveniles are stopped and/or transported by MPD shall be documented by completing an incident report in RMS. Members

shall classify the incident report as a “Curfew Stop” and document the stop according to the requirements set forth in [GO-SPT-304.10 \(Field Contacts, Stops, and Protective Pat Downs\)](#). Members shall select “Curfew” for the reason for the stop only if that was the initial reason. When the curfew was not the initial reason for the stop, members shall select the original reason that the stop occurred in the stop section of the report.

- 8. Juveniles shall not be arrested for curfew violations without prior approval from the YFED watch commander. Members shall classify the arrest as “Curfew Arrest – Juvenile” in RMS and document the stop according to the requirements set forth in [GO-SPT-304.10 \(Field Contacts, Stops, and Protective Pat Downs\)](#). The same approval requirement applies to curfew-related arrests of parents, guardians, and establishment owners, which shall be classified accordingly.
- 9. YFED shall take follow up action in all juvenile curfew cases, including telephone or mail contact with parents or guardians. YFED shall conduct further investigation or make referrals to CFSA or the DC Superior Court Family Division, as appropriate.

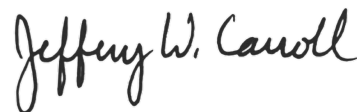
D. Advisory Neighborhood Commission Requests

An advisory neighborhood commission (ANC) may petition the chief of police to establish an extended youth curfew zone in an area within the bounds or jurisdiction of, or adjacent to the area within the bounds or jurisdiction of, the ANC. The Patrol Services South (PSS) assistant chief shall coordinate the review and submission of ANC requests to the chief of police for approval in accordance with the requirements of this order.

III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this directive, the following terms shall have the meanings designated.

	Term	Definition
1.	Notice of violation of curfew	Verbal warning, authorized by an official, that informs a group of juveniles that they are violating the terms of a curfew, that they may be arrested if they continue to violate the curfew, and identifies reasonable steps that they can take to leave the area to avoid arrest.
2.	Extended youth curfew zone	Designated area where the mayor or chief of police has determined that temporarily extending juvenile curfew hours in a specific geographical location is appropriate to protect public safety or public or private property.



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