

Based on the results from a one-day survey reporting motorists who passed stopped school buses, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) organization estimates more than 43.5 million school bus passing violations within the 2022-2023 year among America’s motoring public. This is up from an estimated 41.8 million the previous year. Illegal passing of stopped school buses continues to be a **GROWING** and **DANGEROUS** problem. [Annual Stop Arm Violation Survey](#)

Each state has different laws concerning when it is appropriate to pass a stopped school bus. This information is compiled from state driver license manuals and/or actual laws. This is ONLY a guide. Laws are subject to change. If you have ANY questions about the laws/regulations below, contact your local DMV.

Do you know the law for passing a stopped school bus in your State?

| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
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| Alabama | <p>A complete stop is required for the following: When you are following or meeting a school bus or church bus stopped on the road while the stop signal arm is extended and displaying flashing red lights. Remain stopped until the stop signal is retracted and red lights are turned off. You should also stop when meeting or following a school or church bus which is stopped on a four to six lane undivided highway. A stop is not required on a divided highway having four or more lanes which permits at least two lanes of traffic to travel in opposite directions when meeting a school or church bus which is stopped in the opposing roadway or if the school or church bus is stopped in a loading zone which is a part of or adjacent to such highway and where pedestrians are not permitted to cross the roadway. School Buses use both amber flashing lights and red flashing lights as part of the loading and unloading procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flashing amber Lights are a pre-warning that the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. In rural areas, the lights are used at least 300 ft. before stopping and in municipalities at least 100 ft. • Flashing red Lights and extended stop area means that the bus is stopped to either load or unload school children. <p>Many school buses activate amber flashing lights well in advance of the stop to warn other drivers. Coming from either direction you must stop when you see these (red flashing lights & stop sign) signals displayed. Stop at least 20 feet from the bus.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Alabama Driver Manual, February 2021 Version – pages 61-62. Law: AL Code § 32-5A-154 (2022).</p> |
| Alaska | <p>Drivers approaching a school bus from the rear may not pass the school bus when red signal lights are flashing and shall bring their vehicles to a complete stop before reaching the school bus when it is stopped. The vehicles shall remain stopped until the stop sign is retracted, the flashing red lights are discontinued, and the school bus resumes motion, or until signaled by the driver to proceed. Drivers approaching a school bus on which the yellow/amber warning signal lights are flashing shall reduce the speed of their vehicles and shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop when school bus stops, red lights flash, and stop sign is extended. The vehicles shall remain stopped until stop sign is retracted and the red lights are discontinued after which they may proceed with due caution. Driver upon a highway with separated roadways providing two or more lanes in each direction need not stop when approaching a school bus which is headed in the opposite direction even though the bus is stopped, and the stop arm is extended and the red flashing lights are activated. If a school bus is stopped on a two lane road without a hard median, vehicles from BOTH directions must stop.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: State of Alaska Driver Manual, rev. 01/23 – page 75. Law: AK Stat § 28.35.145 (2022).</p> |
| Arizona | <p>When approaching a school bus that is picking up or dropping off passengers, you must come to a complete stop before reaching the bus, regardless of your direction of travel. A school bus will have alternating flashing lights and a mechanical stop-sign arm extended while passengers are entering or leaving the bus. You must remain stopped until the school bus moves ahead or until the stop-sign arm and flashing lights are no longer shown. Watch for children crossing the road in front of, or behind the school bus. You are not required to stop for a school bus on a divided roadway when traveling in the opposite direction. A divided roadway is one in which the road is separated by physical barriers such as a fence, curbing or separation of the pavement. Roadway striping by itself does not constitute a physical separation of the roadway. CAUTION: Motorists should exercise extreme care when in the vicinity of any stopped school bus, as a child may dart from the front or the rear of the bus.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Arizona Driver License Manual and Customer Service Guide, rev. 10/23 – page 30. Law: AZ Rev Stat § 28-857 (2022); AZ Rev Stat § 28-857.01 (2022).</p> |

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| <p>Arkansas</p> | <p>When approaching a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing, a driver is required to make a complete stop until the lights are turned off. No matter where your vehicle is positioned with the bus whether it's in the same lane of traffic, the opposing lane, or at an intersection, YOU MUST MAKE A COMPLETE STOP!</p> <p>The driver must never attempt to pass in any direction until the school bus has finished receiving or discharging its passengers and begins moving without its red lights flashing.</p> <p>Drivers are not required to stop if the school bus is approaching along an opposite lane of travel separated by a median twenty (20) feet or more in width. If the median is less than twenty (20) feet, all lanes of traffic must stop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-lane roadway: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop. • Two-lane roadway with a center turning lane: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop. • Four-lane roadway without a median separation: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop. • Divided highway of four lanes or more with a median separation: When school bus stops for passengers, only traffic following the bus must stop. <p>Drivers passing a stopped school bus with red lights flashing upon conviction will be charged as a Class A misdemeanor. A fine of a minimum of \$500 not to exceed \$2500, up to one year in jail and/or both.</p> <p>Drivers who fail to obey this law and cause the death of a person will be charged with a felony.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Arkansas Driver License Study Guide, Vol. 1, Ed. 8, 07/23 – pages 12-13. Law: AR Code § 27-51-1004 (2020); AR Code § 27-51-1005 (2020).</p> |
| <p>California</p> | <p>The speed limit is 25 mph within 500 feet of a school while children are outside or crossing the street. Some school zones may have speed limits as low as 15 mph. When near schools, look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicyclists and pedestrians. • School safety patrols or crossing guards. Be sure to obey their directions at all times. • Stopped school buses and children crossing the street. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some school buses flash yellow lights when preparing to stop to let children off the bus. The yellow flashing lights warn you to slow down and prepare to stop. ○ When the bus flashes red lights (located at the top, front, and back of the bus), you must stop from either direction until the children are safely across the street and the lights stop flashing. Remain stopped while the red lights are flashing. If you fail to stop, you may be fined up to \$1,000 and your driving privilege could be suspended for one year. ○ If the school bus is on the other side of a divided or multilane highway (two or more lanes in each direction), you do not need to stop. <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: California Driver's Handbook, 2024 – Pages 50-51. Law: CA Veh Code § 22454 (2022); CA Veh Code § 22454.5 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Colorado</p> | <p>You must stop your vehicle at least 20 feet before reaching a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road, or at an intersection you are approaching. You must remain stopped until the flashing red lights are no longer operating. Watch carefully for children near the school bus and children crossing the roadway before proceeding. You are not required to stop if the school bus is traveling toward you on a roadway that is separated by a median or other physical barrier.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Colorado Driver Handbook, rev. 04/17 – Page 20. Law: CO Code § 42-4-1903 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Connecticut</p> | <p>You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road, or at an intersection you are approaching. You are not required to stop if the bus is traveling towards you and a median or other physical barrier separates the roadway. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing, watch for children along the side of the road and do not proceed until they have completely left the roadway and it is safe to proceed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Driver's Manual, State of Connecticut, DMV, rev. 03/23 – Page 37. Law: CT Gen Stat § 14-279. (2022).</p> |

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| <p><u>Delaware</u></p> | <p>You must always stop before reaching any school bus from either direction when it is stopped to load or unload school children except when you are on the opposite side of a highway having four or more lanes, even then proceed slowly.</p> <p>Yellow Lights School buses have two overhead alternately flashing yellow lights both front and rear. They will be activated approximately 10 seconds prior to the overhead flashing red lights to warn drivers of approaching vehicles that a stop to load or unload school children is about to be made. Approach a bus flashing these yellow lights with caution and anticipate a stop. Children may be waiting for the bus or may be running to board it.</p> <p>Red Lights The overhead alternately flashing red lights and stop arm will be activated when the bus is stopped to pick up and discharge pupils. You must not proceed until the red lights have stopped flashing, and the stop arm has been retracted, and then proceed cautiously.</p> <p>Identification of Violators If any vehicle is witnessed by a police officer, school bus operator, or school crossing guard to be in violation of the school bus stop law and the operator is not otherwise apparent, it shall be assumed that the person in whose name the vehicle is registered committed such violation.</p> <p>Penalties and Suspension of License for Passing a Stopped School Bus with Red Lights Flashing Whoever is convicted of passing a stopped school bus with overhead and stop arm red lights flashing shall, for the first offense, be fined not less than \$115.00 nor more than \$230.00, or imprisoned not less than 30 days nor more than 60 days, or both. For each subsequent like offense occurring within three years, such person shall be fined not less than \$115.00 nor more than \$575.00, and imprisoned not less than 60 days nor more than six months.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Delaware Driver Manual, rev. 07/23 – Pages 86-87. Law: 21 DE Code § 4166 (2022).</p> |
| <p><u>Florida</u></p> | <p>You Must Not Pass: When a school bus is stopped and has its warning flashers on and stop sign extended. It is against the law for any driver to pass a school bus when the school bus displays a stop signal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a two-way street or highway, all drivers moving in either direction must stop for a stopped school bus that is picking up or dropping of children. You must remain stopped until the stop signal is withdrawn and all children are clear of the roadway. • If the highway is divided by a raised barrier or an unpaved median at least five feet wide, you do not have to stop if you are moving in the opposite direction of the bus. Painted lines or pavement markings are not considered barriers. You must always stop if you are moving in the same direction as the bus and you must remain stopped until the stop signal is withdrawn. <p>Penalties for passing a stopped school bus include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving violation subject to citation; • Must complete a basic driver improvement course; • Four points on your driver license; and • Minimum fine of \$265, if you pass on the side where children enter and exit, you will receive a minimum fine of \$465. <p>When passing results in the serious injury or the death of another person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve 120 community service hours in a trauma center or hospital; • Participate in a victim’s impact panel session or driver improvement course; • Six points on your driver license; • Suspension of license for a minimum of one year; and • A \$1,500 fine. <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Official Florida Driver License Handbook, rev. 06/22 – Pages 34, 43, 65. Law: FL Stat § 316.172 (2022).</p> |

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| <p>Georgia</p> | <p>When a school bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children, the driver of the bus will activate flashing yellow lights. When these flashing yellow lights are activated, all drivers approaching the school bus should slow down and be prepared to stop. All drivers should pay special attention to children who may be walking along or crossing the roadway. Once the flashing lights have turned red and the stop signs have extended from the side of the bus, it is unlawful for any vehicle to pass the stopped school bus while it is loading or unloading passengers. On a highway divided by a median, cars traveling on the opposite side from the stopped school bus are not required to stop, however drivers should remain attentive for children walking along or crossing the roadway.</p> <p>Passing is prohibited on two-lane roads: When a school bus is stopped to load or unload passengers.</p> <p>Sharing the Road With School Buses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most cases, all drivers are required to stop when approaching or meeting a stopped school bus that has its lights flashing and is loading or unloading passengers. The exception to this rule is when highways are separated in the center by median strips. In this situation, only vehicles following or traveling alongside a school bus in the same direction must stop. A warning will be given in advance by the flashing red or amber lights on the front and rear of the bus. After stopping, you must remain stopped until the bus resumes motion or deactivates its warning signals AND all loading or unloading passengers have cleared the roadway. <p>Operation Stop Arm: Know the Law. Obey the Law. Georgia School Bus Stop Law.</p> <p>Two-lane roadway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When school bus stops for passengers, ALL traffic from both directions must stop. <p>Two-lane roadway with a center turning lane:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When school bus stops for passengers, ALL traffic from both directions must stop. <p>Divided highway of four lanes or more with a median separation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When school bus stops for passengers, only traffic following the bus must stop. <p>Four-lane roadway without a median separation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When school bus stops for passengers, ALL traffic from both directions must stop. <p>Roadway of four lanes or more with a center turning lane:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When school bus stops for passengers, ALL traffic from both directions must stop. |
| <p>Hawaii</p> | <p>Do NOT pass under the following conditions: When there is a school bus on the same roadway when the flashing lights are operating.</p> <p>STOPPING FOR A SCHOOL BUS: Whenever a school bus is stopped on a highway with alternating red signal lamps flashing, the driver of any motor vehicle on the same highway in the lane occupied by the school bus and all lanes adjacent to the lane occupied by the school bus shall stop the driver's vehicle before reaching the school bus and shall not proceed until the school bus resumes motion or the flashing red signal lamps are turned off. Failure to comply with this law (291C-95, HRS) can cost you \$1,000.</p> <p>However, vehicles proceeding in the opposite direction on a divided highway are not required to stop. A divided highway is two roadways separated by a strip of land or other space not intended for vehicular travel.</p> <p>Motorists travelling at the time school buses make their runs should be on the alert. The presence of school children waiting along the roadway in the morning indicates a school bus is in the area. In addition, there is a possibility of waiting children darting in front of traffic.</p> |

Reference: Georgia Department of Driver Services, Driver's Manual 2023-2024.
Law: GA Code § 40-6-163 (2022).

Reference: Official Hawaii Driver's Manual, 2006 – Pages 31, 96.
Law: HI Rev Stat § 291C-95 (2022).

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| <p>Idaho</p> | <p>Idaho law requires you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STOP for a school bus that is loading or unloading students. Traffic must stop and remain stopped as long as the red lights near the top of the bus are flashing and/or the stop arm on the left side of the bus is extended. • You must stop when approaching a school bus that is displaying flashing red lights while stopped to pick up or drop off children. You must remain stopped until all children are clear of the roadway and the bus. • You do not have to stop if you are traveling in the opposite direction on highways with four or more lanes if two lanes are going in each direction. <p>Passing is prohibited when you are in or approaching the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a school bus is stopped to load or unload passengers <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Idaho Driver’s Handbook, July 2023 – Pages 69, 76. Law: ID Code § 49-1422 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Illinois</p> | <p>Passing on a two-lane, two-way roadway is not allowed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a school bus has stopped to load or discharge passengers. <p>A vehicle is not required to stop for a school bus when both vehicles are on a four-lane roadway and the bus is stopped in the opposite direction from which a driver is traveling. Any other time, you must stop before meeting or overtaking (passing) a school bus that is stopped and loading or unloading passengers. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any two-lane roadway, in rural areas and within city limits. • Any roadway, highway or private road. • Any parking lot located on school property. <p>A warning will be given by the school bus at least 100 feet (200 feet in rural areas) in advance of a stop. The bus driver will flash lights on the front and rear of the bus. The school bus stop signal arm will be extended after the school bus has come to a complete stop. When approaching a school bus from the opposite direction, you must come to a complete stop and remain stopped until the stop signal arm is no longer extended and the flashing lights are turned off or the school bus driver signals vehicles to pass.</p> <p>A conviction for passing a stopped school bus with flashing lights and the stop arm extended will result in the suspension of your driver’s license. If convicted of this violation, you will be subject to a mandatory fine of \$300.00 and community service in an amount set by the court. If the owner(s) of the vehicle were not driving when the offense occurred, they must provide the State’s Attorney’s Office with the name of the person driving the vehicle or their vehicle registration will be suspended for three months.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Illinois Rules of the Road 2024 – Page 26-27, 32-33. Law: 625 ILCS 5/11-1414.</p> |
| <p>Indiana</p> | <p>School buses are equipped with both amber and red flashing lights. When the school bus driver activates the amber lights, he or she is warning other drivers that the bus is slowing and is going to load or unload children. Once the bus stops, the red lights and stop arm will be activated.</p> <p>You must stop when you approach a school bus with flashing red lights activated and stop arm extended. If you are driving on a roadway divided by a barrier or unimproved median, you are required to stop only if you are traveling in the same direction as the school bus.</p> <p>The biggest threat to children who ride a bus to school is not the bus ride but approaching or leaving the bus. When approaching a bus stop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for children playing or congregating near bus stops • Be aware that children arriving late for the bus may dart into the street without looking • Be prepared to stop when yellow flashing lights appear on the bus, which warn drivers the bus will be coming to a stop <p>Disregarding a school bus stop arm can result in a Class A misdemeanor, a Level 6 felony if the offense results in bodily injury, or a Level 5 felony if the offense results in death.</p> <p>Take note that school buses stop at railroad crossings. Rear-end collisions involving school buses stopped at railroad crossings have increased in recent years.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Indiana Driver’s Manual, January 2024 – Pages 51-52. Law: IN Code § 9-21-8-52 (2022).</p> |

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| Iowa | <p>SCHOOL BUS SCENARIO 1: You are driving on a two- or three-lane road Approaching the bus from the rear - When you see flashing red or amber warning lights, you are not permitted to pass the school bus and should be prepared to stop. Stop behind the school bus when the school bus stops and the stop arm is extended. Stop no closer than 15 feet from the rear of the bus, and remain stopped until the stop arm is retracted and the school bus starts moving again. Proceed with caution. Meeting the bus from the front - When you see amber warning lights flashing, you must slow your vehicle to no more than 20 mph and be prepared to stop. Stop in front of the school bus when the school bus stops and its stop arm is extended. Remain stopped until the stop arm is retracted. Proceed with caution. Violating this law may result in your license being suspended for up to 180 days.</p> <p>SCHOOL BUS SCENARIO 2: You are driving on a road with four or more lanes Approaching the bus from the rear - When approaching from the rear, the rules are the same as for a two- or three- lane road. When you see flashing red or amber warning lights, you are not permitted to pass the school bus and should be prepared to stop. Stop behind the school bus when the school bus stops and its stop arm is extended. Stop no closer than 15 feet from the rear of the bus, and remain stopped until the stop arm is retracted and the school bus starts moving again. Proceed with caution. Meeting the bus from the front - When meeting the bus in one of the opposite two lanes (or more), you do not need to stop, even if the bus has stopped with lights flashing and stop arm out. This is the only time you may pass a school bus that is stopped and has its stop arm extended. Violating this law may result in your license being suspended for up to 180 days.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Iowa Driver’s License Manual, rev. 01/22/2024 – Page 19. Law: IA Code § 321.372 (2022).</p> |
| Kansas | <p>You must stop when meeting or overtaking a school bus, church bus or day care bus that is stopped to pick up or let off children. You must remain stopped until the STOP signal is retracted, and the red lights are turned off. Traffic approaching a school bus in the opposing roadway of a divided highway is not required to stop. You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing and/or stop arm extended. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm is no longer visible, watch for children along the side of the road and do not proceed until it is safe, after they have completely left the roadway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must stop for a school bus when there are two solid yellow lines between lanes of traffic whether the school bus is on your side of the road or on the opposite side of the road. • You must stop for a school bus when there is a center turning lane between the roadways, whether the school bus is on your side of the road or on the opposite side of the road. • You must stop for a school bus when you are on a multi-lane highway, whether the school bus is on your side of the road or on the opposite side of the road. • You must stop for a school bus when you are at an intersection, whether the school bus is on your side of the road or on the opposite side of the road. • You are not required to stop if the bus is traveling towards you and the roadway is separated by a median or other physical barrier. <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Kansas Driving Handbook, rev. 02/22 – Page 18, 50-51. Law: KS Stat § 8-1556 (2021).</p> |
| Kentucky | <p>Where there are school buses, there are usually children. Children are likely to do something unexpected, so be prepared. When you come to a school or church bus that is stopped on any roadway to load or unload passengers you must stop. By law you must remain stopped until all people are clear of the roadway and the bus is in motion. A stop is not required when approaching a stopped bus from the opposite direction upon a highway of four or more lanes. However, a stop is required when following a bus that is stopped on a two lane road or you are going in the opposite direction of the bus on a highway that has less than four lanes, as they are generally not divided. Do not attempt to pass any school or church bus when the bus is stopped upon a highway to receive or discharge passengers, with the stop arm and signal lights are activated. The operator of a vehicle approaching a school or church bus from any direction must bring the vehicle to a complete stop, and cannot proceed until the bus has completed receiving or discharging passengers and the bus is in motion. This requirement applies to all vehicles approaching a school or church bus.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Kentucky Driver Manual, 2022 – Page 44. Law: KY Rev Stat § 189.370 (2022).</p> |

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| <p>*Louisiana</p> | <p>You can lose your driving privilege for the following: Failure to stop for a school bus loading or unloading children.</p> <p>STOPPED SCHOOL BUSES</p> <p>You must stop at least thirty feet from a stopped school bus that is loading or unloading children. All 50 states have a law that makes it illegal to pass a school bus that is loading or unloading children. Always be prepared to stop when lights are flashing. Bus drivers will activate the flashing yellow lights of the bus at least 100 feet but no more than 500 feet before the school bus stop. As the bus comes to a complete stop, the flashing red lights and stop signs will activate. Wait for the vehicle to move and scan before starting to drive again. This is required by law whether you are meeting the bus or traveling behind it.</p> <p>You do not have to stop when the bus is stopped in a loading zone completely off the roadway and where the pedestrians are not allowed to cross the roadway. If you are following a bus, increase your following distance in order to get a better view. Anticipate the bus stopping at its' pickup and drop off points. Never pass a bus with its red lights flashing on the right or on the left. Buses typically travel at lower rates of speed and make frequent stops. During the school year school buses are most likely to be on the road during a three-hour period in the morning and a three-hour period in the afternoon. When a school bus is stopped in opposite lanes on a roadway separated by a ditch, grassy median, elevated concrete barrier or any obstacle that prevents traffic from driving thereon, you are not required to stop. Drivers on the opposite side of the roadway are also not required to stop for a stopped school bus when traveling on four lane or five lane roadways which are separated by a dedicated two-way left turn lane. Drivers must stop on a four lane roadway when it is not separated by a barrier. A roadway with one lane in each direction and with a dedicated two-way left turn lane is not considered a divided highway and drivers must stop for the school bus.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Class D & E Driver's Guide, 2021 – Pages 12, 88-89. Law: LA Rev Stat § 32:80 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Maine</p> | <p>Persons convicted of the following offenses may have their licenses suspended for a period of 30 days: Passing a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing Where there are school buses, there are usually children. And children are likely to do the unexpected.</p> <p>It is illegal to pass a stopped school bus with red lights flashing on school property, on any undivided highway or parking area in Maine. If you are approaching a stopped school bus from either direction, with its red lights flashing, you must bring your vehicle to a complete stop to the front or to the rear of the school bus and wait while children are getting on or off the bus. You must not proceed until the bus resumes motion or until signaled by the school bus driver to do so. Violations carry severe penalties.</p> <p>Multi-lane Divided Highway: You must stop for a school bus with red lights flashing and/or stop arm extended. After the red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm is no longer visible you may go ahead slowly while watching for children. If the roadway has a solid divider between you and the bus, you do not have to stop.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Maine Driver's License Manual, Rev. 11/23 – Pages 1-8; 7-8 thru 7-9. Law: 29-A ME Rev Stat § 2308 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Maryland</p> | <p>Drivers must stop for school buses</p> <p>If a school bus has stopped on the road with its flashing red lights on, as you approach it you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop at least 20 feet from the back of the school bus, if you are behind it. • Stop at least 20 feet from the front of the school bus, if you are in front of it. <p>You may not start moving again until the school bus starts moving or turns off its flashing red lights.</p> <p>If you are on a multiple lane road divided by a physical barrier, do not stop if the bus is on the other side of the barrier.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Maryland Driver's Manual – Pages 38-39. Law: MD. Transportation Code § 21-706 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Massachusetts</p> | <p>Yellow school buses have flashing red lights and stop signs that fold out from the driver's side. School pupil transport vehicles, like vans, station wagons, or family sedans, have flashing red lights and SCHOOL BUS signs on top. Drivers use these warning signals when letting pupils on and off.</p> <p>If a school bus or a school pupil transport vehicle has its lights flashing and a stop sign extended, you must stop. It is the law. It does not matter which side of the road you are traveling on. Remain stopped until the lights stop flashing or the stop sign folds back.</p> <p>A first violation of this law can cause a license suspension and a \$250 fine.</p> <p>Even after the warning signals have stopped, you should proceed slowly and continue to look for children.</p> <p>The only exception to this law is if a school bus has stopped on the other side of a divided highway with a barrier between travel directions. In this case, you do not have to stop.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Sharing the Road: A User's Manual for Public Ways, Rev. 07/23 – Pages 87-88. Law: MA Gen L ch 90 § 14 (2022).</p> |

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| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
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| <p>Michigan</p> | <p>Use extra care around buses and in school zones. Children may dart into the street or out from around parked vehicles. Stop at least 20 feet from a school bus with its red overhead lights flashing; it is picking up or dropping off passengers. It is not necessary to stop for a school bus stopped on the other side of a highway divided by a barrier such as a concrete or grass median, island or other structures that separate the flow of traffic.</p> <p>Fines for failing to stop for a school bus are double what would normally be assessed for a moving violation. Increased fines and imprisonment may result for violations resulting in injury or death.</p> <p>School bus signals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the YELLOW hazard lights are flashing, proceed with caution. • When the YELLOW overhead lights are flashing, be prepared to stop. • When the RED overhead lights are flashing, stop at least 20 feet from the school bus. Remain stopped until the flashing red lights are turned off or the bus resumes its travels. <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: What Every Driver Must Know, January 2022 – Pages 28-29. Law: MI Comp L § 257.682 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Minnesota</p> | <p>School buses are equipped with yellow and red lights that flash alternately to warn drivers that they are stopping to load or unload students.</p> <p>Flashing yellow lights will be activated at least 100 feet before a school bus stops in a speed zone of 35 mph or less, and at least 300 feet before it stops in a speed zone of more than 35 mph. It is against the law to pass on the right side of a school bus while it is displaying red or yellow flashing lights.</p> <p>Flashing red lights warn motorists that the school bus is loading or unloading students. When a school bus is stopped with its red lights flashing and its stop arm extended, you must stop your vehicle at least 20 feet from the bus. Oncoming traffic and motorists approaching the bus from behind may not move until the stop arm is retracted and the red lights are no longer flashing. You can be charged with a misdemeanor if you violate either of these laws.</p> <p>The penalty for this violation is a fine of not less than \$500, and withdrawal of your driving privileges.</p> <p>It is illegal to pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing and its stop arm is extended. You are not required to stop for a school bus with its red lights flashing if it is on the opposite side of a separated roadway. A law enforcement officer with probable cause to believe a driver has violated this law may arrest the driver within four hours of the violation.</p> <p>When a vehicle is used to violate the school bus stop arm law, the owner or lessee of the vehicle is guilty of a petty misdemeanor. However, if the owner or lessee of the vehicle can prove that another person was driving the vehicle at the time of the stop arm violation, the driver — not the owner or lessee — will be charged with the violation.</p> <p>When you apply for a driver’s license, you must certify, by signing the application, that you understand that you must stop for a school bus and are aware of the penalties for violating this law.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Minnesota Driver’s Manual – Page 51-53. Law: MN Stat § 169.444 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Mississippi</p> | <p>Be especially careful when sharing the road with school buses. Each time you encounter a school bus with its red lights flashing and/or with its stop sign extended, Mississippi law states that YOU MUST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COME TO A COMPLETE STOP at least ten (10) feet away from the bus. • REMAIN STOPPED until the children have crossed the roadway AND the bus has resumed motion, its red lights no longer flash, and its stop sign is retracted. • You must stop for the school bus regardless of your direction of travel. <p>One exception to the procedures above is for drivers traveling on a DIVIDED HIGHWAY. If you are traveling on a highway with FOUR or more lanes, with at least TWO lanes of travel in opposite directions, then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are traveling in the SAME direction as the stopped school bus you must still follow the procedures above. Come to a complete stop. Proceed only AFTER the children have exited the roadway AND the bus has resumed motion, its red lights no longer flash, AND the school bus stop sign is retracted. • If you are traveling in the OPPOSITE direction as the stopped school bus you may continue travel on your side of the divided highway without stopping. <p>If the school bus is stopped in a loading zone that is part of the highway or adjacent to the highway, and where pedestrians are not allowed to cross the roadway, you do not have to stop.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Mississippi Driver’s License Manual – Page 46. Law: MS Code § 63-3-615 (2020).</p> |

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| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
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| <p>Missouri</p> | <p>When a school bus stops to load or unload school children, the driver activates the mechanical and electrical signaling devices to notify other drivers of an impending stop. Amber warning lights will flash 500 feet before the bus comes to a designated stop. When the school bus is stopped, the alternate flashing red lights and the stop signal arm are activated. Oncoming and following traffic must stop before they reach the bus when these signals are activated.</p> <p>You must stop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a two-lane road where the vehicles travel in either direction. • On a two-lane road that is a one way street. <p>No driver of a school bus shall take on or discharge passengers at any location upon a highway consisting of four or more lanes of traffic, whether or not divided by a median or barrier, in such a manner as to require the passengers to cross more than two lanes of traffic. The following are situations when you do not have to stop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you are traveling the opposite direction of a school bus on a highway divided by a median where the vehicles traveling one direction are on a totally separate road from the vehicles traveling the opposite direction; • When you are traveling the opposite direction of a school bus on a highway containing four or more lanes of traffic; or • When a school bus is stopped in a loading zone (at a school) where students are not permitted to cross the roadway. <p>After stopping for a school bus that is unloading school children, watch for school children walking along the side of the road. You must remain stopped until the bus moves or the bus driver signals for you to proceed. Proceed with caution.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Missouri Driver Guide, Rev. 08/23 – Page 23-24. Law: MO Rev Stat § 304.050 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Montana</p> | <p>Upon meeting or passing from either direction any school bus stopped with its red lights flashing, the driver of a vehicle must stop at least 30 feet from the bus and cannot proceed until the red lights are turned off (Diagrams 1 and 2). If you approach a bus from either direction that is slowing down in preparation to stop to load passengers, or a bus displaying a yellow flashing light, you must slow down and proceed carefully. Keep in mind that the bus is about to stop and children may be in the road. You do not need to stop if meeting or passing a school bus that is on a different road (Diagram 3) or is stopped in an adjacent loading zone where pedestrians are not allowed to cross the road.</p> <p>When driving past a school slow down and watch for children DAY and NIGHT. Kids go back to use the playground at all hours. Develop the habit of checking your speed when nearing any school. BE ALERT.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Montana Driver Manual, Rev. October 2018 – Page 40. Law: MT Code § 61-8-351 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Nebraska</p> | <p>It is unlawful to: Pass a school bus with flashing red lights and stop arm extended. Always be alert for students on or near the roadway when a school bus is stopped.</p> <p>Overhead Amber Warning Lights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a school bus is about to stop and load or unload children, the bus driver activates amber warning lights. • When meeting or overtaking a bus, slow to 25 MPH and prepare to stop. • The amber warning lights will stay on until the bus door opens. <p>Overhead Red STOP Lights/STOP Arm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the bus driver opens the bus door, the red stop lights and STOP arm activates. • Stop and remain stopped until the bus driver retracts the stop arm and deactivates the red warning lights. • Stop a reasonable distance from the bus. <p>When You Must Stop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not stopping when approaching or overtaking a school bus which has stop lights on and the stop arm extended is unlawful. The only exception occurs when approaching a school bus in the opposite direction on a roadway divided by a median. <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Nebraska Driver’s Manual – Page 53, 70. Law: NE Code § 60-6,175 (2022).</p> |

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| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <p>Nevada</p> | <p>You are required to stop for school buses that are loading or unloading students. NRS 484B.353 requires a driver to stop at any location for a school bus displaying a flashing red signal. You may not attempt to overtake or proceed past the school bus until the bus driver has turned off the flashing red lights. There is one exception to this rule: on divided highways, you are only required to stop when you are traveling in the same direction as the school bus.</p> <p>Nevada law allows school bus drivers to report violations to the school district and the Department of Motor Vehicles. When this occurs, the registered owner of the vehicle will be sent a warning letter explaining the seriousness of the violation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Nevada Official Driver Handbook, July 2023 – Page 64. Law: NV Rev Stat § 484B.353 (2022).</p> |
| <p>New Hampshire</p> | <p>Drivers must stop at least 25-feet in any direction for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing and/or the stop arm extended at all times unless the roadway is separated by a physical barrier. Drivers shall remain stopped until the school bus resumes motion or until the flashing red lights cease to operate. Proceed slowly while always watching for children.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: State of New Hampshire Driver Manual, Rev. 7/22 – Page 27. Law: NH Rev Stat § 265:54 (2022).</p> |
| <p>New Jersey</p> | <p>A motorist must stop: When a school bus is picking up or letting off children and/or the red lights are flashing.</p> <p>A motorist must stop for a school bus with flashing red lights. State law requires a motorist to stop at least 25 feet away if he/she is traveling on a two-lane road or on a multi-lane highway where lanes are only separated by lines, or on a privately maintained road. When traveling on a dual-lane highway, a motorist should slow to 10 mph if on the other side of a safety island or raised median. School buses are equipped with yellow (or amber) and red flashing lights. The yellow (or amber) lights go on before the bus stops and the red lights go on when the bus has stopped. However, a motorist should not depend on these lights, if driving behind a school bus. They could be malfunctioning.</p> <p>When a school bus stops, all motorists traveling behind or approaching the bus must stop their vehicles at least 25 feet away. A motorist should only proceed after the bus signals have been turned off and even then, he/she must watch for children or persons who have developmental disabilities. If a school bus has stopped directly in front of a school to pick up or let off children or persons with developmental disabilities, a motorist may pass from either direction at a speed of no more than 10 mph.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: The 2023 New Jersey Driver Manual – Page 76-77. Law: NJ Rev Stat § 39:4-128.1 (2022).</p> |
| <p>New Mexico</p> | <p>You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road or at an intersection you are approaching. You are not required to stop if the bus is traveling towards you and the roadway is separated by a median or other physical barrier. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing, watch for children along the side of the road and do not proceed until they have completely left the roadway and it is safe to proceed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: New Mexico Driver Manual, 2020 – Page 12. Law: NM Stat § 66-7-347 (2021).</p> |

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| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
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| <p>New York</p> | <p>Before a school bus stops to load or discharge passengers, the driver will usually flash yellow warning lights, which are located on the front and back of the bus near the roof. When you see them, decrease speed and be prepared to stop.</p> <p>When a stopped school bus flashes its red light(s), traffic that approaches from either direction, even in front of the school and in school parking lots, must stop before it reaches the bus. You should stop at least 20 feet (6 m) away from the bus. You can identify this bus by a "SCHOOL BUS" sign, the red lights on the top and its unique yellow-orange color.</p> <p>Before a school bus stops to load or discharge passengers, the driver will usually yellow flash warning lights, which are located on the front and back of the bus near the roof. When you see them, decrease speed and be prepared to stop. When you stop for a school bus, you cannot drive again until the bus starts moving again or when the bus driver or a traffic officer signals that you can proceed. This law applies on all roadways in New York State. You must stop for a school bus even if it is on the opposite side of a divided highway.</p> <p>After you stop for a school bus, look for children along the side of the road. Drive slowly until you have passed them.</p> <p>Safety Tip: Most school bus-related deaths and injuries occur while children cross the street after being discharged from the bus, not in collisions that involve school buses.</p> <p>Remember that vehicles that transport people with disabilities can be equipped as school buses and you must stop for them as you would for other school buses.</p> <p>The fine when you pass a stopped school bus ranges from a minimum of \$250 for a first violation to a maximum of \$1,000 for three violations in three years. If you are convicted of three of these violations in three years, your driver license will be revoked for a minimum of six months.</p> <p>Vehicle Owners - A law was passed in 2019 that authorizes school districts and municipalities to use stop-arm cameras on school buses to impose penalties on the owners of vehicles which pass a school bus while the school bus is stopped for the purpose of dropping off or picking up passengers and red lights on the school bus are flashing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First violation - penalty of \$250 • Second violation within 18 months – penalty of \$275 • Third violation (or more) within 18 months - penalty of \$300 <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: New York Driver’s Manual, 2018 – Page 40. Law: NY Veh & Traf L § 1174 (2022).</p> |
| <p>North Carolina</p> | <p>The maximum speed limit for a school bus is 45 mph. School bus drivers travel more than half a million miles and transport almost three quarters of a million children each school day. During the hours that school buses are operating (generally 7 – 9 a.m. and 2 – 4 p.m.), drivers should be especially careful. When a school bus displays its mechanical stop signal or flashing red lights to receive or discharge passengers, the driver of any other vehicle approaching the school bus must stop and not attempt to pass the school bus until the mechanical stop signal is withdrawn, the flashing red lights are turned off and the bus has started to move.</p> <p>Children waiting for the bus or leaving the bus might dart out into traffic. Even when the school bus is not in sight, children at a bus stop sometimes will run into the street unexpectedly. Always be careful around school buses and school bus stops. Below are specific rules for a variety of situations involving stopped school buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-lane roadway: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop. • Two-lane roadway with a center turning lane: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop. • Four-lane roadway without a median separation: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop. • Divided highway of four lanes or more with a median separation: When school bus stops for passengers, only traffic following the bus must stop. • Roadway of four lanes or more with a center turning lane: When school bus stops for passengers, only traffic following the bus must stop. <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: North Carolina Driver Handbook, Rev. 10/22 – Page 45-46. Law: NC Gen Stat § 20-217 (2022).</p> |
| <p>North Dakota</p> | <p>When a school bus is stopped and flashing its red lights, drivers approaching from both directions must stop. This is because children are being loaded or unloaded. The drivers cannot proceed until 1) the bus begins moving; or 2) the bus driver signals to let vehicles pass; or 3) the red lights are no longer flashing. When a school bus is equipped with yellow caution lights, these lights may be used as a warning that the school bus is about to stop and that the red flashing lights will soon come on. Be especially alert every time you see a school bus.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: 2023-2025 Noncommercial Driver License Manual – Page 20. Law: ND CC § 39-10-46 (2022).</p> |

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| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
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| <p>Ohio</p> | <p>STOPPING FOR A SCHOOL BUS – ORC 4511.75 A driver must stop for a school bus when the school bus is dropping off or picking up students. When a school bus driver is preparing to stop the bus, he or she activates four amber (yellow) warning lights, two on the front and two on the rear of the bus. The warning lights continue to flash until the bus is fully stopped. Other vehicles are not required to stop during the amber flashing lights, but should prepare to stop as soon as the bus comes to a full stop. When the bus comes to a complete stop, the amber lights stop flashing and four red lights—two in front and two in back—start flashing while the children enter or leave the bus. In addition, the bus may be equipped with a stop arm with flashing red lights that automatically extends beneath the window on the left side of the bus. If there is no stop arm, you are still required to stop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the bus is stopped on a street or road with fewer than four lanes, all traffic approaching the bus from either direction must stop at least 10 feet from the front or rear of the bus and remain stopped until the bus begins to move or the bus driver signals motorists to proceed. • If the bus is stopped on a street or road with four or more lanes, only traffic proceeding in the same direction as the bus must stop at the rear of the bus and remain stopped until the bus begins to move. <p>School bus drivers believing a motorist has unlawfully passed the stopped bus, if possible, will report the license plate number and location to the law enforcement agency, who will attempt to determine the identity of the driver.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Ohio Driver Manual, 04/23 – Page 22. Law: OH Rev Code § 4511.75 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Oklahoma</p> | <p>Drive carefully and be ready to slow down and stop when you are near a school bus. If you approach a bus with flashing red lights and/or showing a red “STOP” sign, it means that children are getting on or off the bus and you must stop. You must stop and remain stopped until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bus has started moving, OR • the driver motions for you to proceed, OR • the red flashing lights go off and/or the sign is pulled back. <p>You DON'T have to stop for a school bus when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bus is on a different roadway, OR • the bus is stopped in a loading zone by a controlled-access highway where pedestrians are not allowed to cross. <p>It is mandatory revocation of driver license for one year for failing to stop for a school bus with red loading/unloading lights flashing.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Oklahoma Driver Manual 2023 – Page 30. Law: 47 OK Stat § 11-705 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Oregon</p> | <p>School buses have flashing amber and red lights near the top of the bus on the front and rear. They may be equipped with a stop arm that extends from the bus near the driver’s window when the red lights begin to flash. Flashing amber lights warn traffic that the bus is about to stop on the road to load or unload children. Prepare to stop. When the red lights flash, stop before reaching the bus and remain stopped until the driver turns off the flashing red lights. If you are on a divided highway with two roads separated by an unpaved median strip or barrier, you must stop only if you are on the same side of the road as the bus. A painted median strip or turn lane does not create two separate roads. In this case, all lanes of traffic must stop.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Oregon Driver Manual 2022-2023 – Page 42. Law: OR Rev Stat § 811.155 (2021).</p> |
| <p>Pennsylvania</p> | <p>Pennsylvania has special rules you must follow when you drive near a school bus. These rules protect children and drivers. When a school bus is preparing to stop, its amber (yellow) lights will begin flashing. When the bus stops with its red lights flashing and its stop arm extended, you must stop at least 10 feet away from the bus whether you are behind it or coming toward it on the same roadway or approaching an intersection at which the school bus is stopped. Remain stopped until the red lights stop flashing, the stop arm has been withdrawn, and the children have reached a safe place. There is only one exception to the school bus stopping requirement. If you are approaching a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing and stop arm extended and you are driving on the opposite side of a divided highway, (i.e. concrete/metal barriers, guide rails or trees/rocks/streams/grass median), you do not have to stop. Reduce your speed and continue driving with caution. ALL VEHICLES MUST STOP! Failure to stop for a school bus with a flashing red light and extended stop arm will result in a 60-day suspension of your driver’s license, five (5) points on your driving record and a fine.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Pennsylvania Driver’s Manual, 04/21 – Page 58. Law: 75 PA Cons Stat § 3345 (2022).</p> |

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| STATE | DRIVER LICENSE MANUAL SUMMARIES |
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| Rhode Island | <p>If red lights are flashing on the school bus, Rhode Island requires that motorists approaching from either direction come to a full stop and remain stopped until the bus's red lights no longer flash. This requirement applies not only on public highways but also on private roads and in parking lots. A fine between \$250 to \$500 and/or suspension of your driver's license for a period up to thirty (30) days will be imposed for the first violation of this law. Penalties increase for subsequent violations. Motorists do not have to stop for the flashing red lights of the school bus when the bus is opposite your vehicle on a divided highway. A divided highway is any roadway with a Jersey barrier, guardrail, grass or cement median, trees, water, etc. between the lanes of travel in opposite directions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles Driver's Manual, September 2023 – Page 54. Law: RI Gen L § 31-20-12. (2022).</p> |
| South Carolina | <p>You must stop for the entire time a school bus is stopped or preparing to stop with its red or amber lights flashing or its stop arm extended. After the school bus's red and/or amber lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm is no longer visible, proceed slowly, watching for children. Law requires these actions whether you are meeting the school bus or traveling behind it under the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On any two-lane highway • On any four-lane or multi-lane highway only when traveling behind a school bus • When attempting to pass a school bus that has red or amber signals flashing <p>You are required to stop for a stopped school bus when driving on a two-lane road. You do not have to stop around a school bus in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the school bus is in a passenger loading zone completely off the main travel lanes and when pedestrians are not allowed to cross the roadway. • A driver of a vehicle does not have to stop upon meeting a stopped school bus when traveling in the opposite direction on a multi-lane highway or multi-lane private road. A multi-lane highway or multi-lane private road is defined as a highway or private road that consists of four lanes, having at least two traffic lanes in each direction. <p>You must always stop on any highway when you are behind the bus. When you have stopped, you must not proceed until the school bus moves or the red lights are no longer flashing.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: South Carolina Driver's Manual – Pages 7-8; 7-9; 7-10. Law: SC Code § 56-5-2770 (2022); SC Code § 56-5-2760 (2022).</p> |
| South Dakota | <p>You must always stop for a school bus that has its red lights flashing or its stop arm extended at all times unless the roadway is separated by a physical barrier or 2 or more lanes that are traveling in the same direction. After the school bus's red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm is no longer visible, proceed slowly watching for children.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: South Dakota Driver License Manual, Rev. 06/21 – Page 40. Law: SD Codified L § 32-32-6 (2022).</p> |

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| <p>Tennessee</p> | <p>Meeting A School Bus: Any driver meeting a school bus or church bus on which the red stop warning signal lights are flashing should reduce his speed and bring the vehicle to a complete stop while the bus stop signal arm is extended. The vehicle must remain stopped until the stop arm is pulled back and the bus resumes motion.</p> <p>Overtaking A School Bus: Any driver approaching a school bus or church bus from the rear shall not pass the bus when red stop warning signal lights are flashing. The vehicle must come to a complete stop when the bus is stopped. The vehicle must remain stopped until the stop arm is pulled back and the bus resumes motion.</p> <p>School Bus Warning Lights: It is illegal to pass a school bus that has stopped to load or unload students. Never pass on the right side of the bus, as this is where the children enter or exit. This is illegal and can have tragic results. You must stop and remain stopped until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bus has started moving, OR • The driver motions for you to proceed, OR • The visual signals are no longer activated such as the red flashing lights go off and/or the stop arm is pulled back. <p>YELLOW FLASHING: When the yellow lights on the front and back of the bus are flashing the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.</p> <p>A RED FLASHING: When the red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended this indicates that the bus HAS stopped and that children are now getting on or off the bus. Motorists must stop their cars and wait until the red flashing lights are turned off, the stop arm is withdrawn, and the bus begins moving before they start driving again.</p> <p>When a school bus is stopped at an intersection to load and unload children, drivers from ALL directions are required to stop until the bus resumes motion (as shown by the red vehicles in the diagram at right). It is a Class A misdemeanor and the driver can be fined between \$250 and \$1,000 for not stopping for a stopped school bus. When driving on a highway with separate roadways for traffic in opposite directions, divided by median space or a barrier not suitable for vehicular traffic, the driver need not stop, but should proceed with caution. A turn lane in the middle of a four-lane highway is NOT considered a barrier, but a fifth lane that is suitable for vehicular traffic. Drivers meeting a stopped school bus on this type of road would be required to stop in both directions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Tennessee Comprehensive Driver License Manual, December 2022 – Page 51. Law: TN Code § 55-8-151 (2021).</p> |
| <p>Texas</p> | <p>You must yield the right-of-way to school buses. Always drive with care when you are near a school bus. If you approach a school bus from either direction and the bus is displaying alternately flashing red lights, you must stop. Do not pass the school bus until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school bus has resumed motion; • You are signaled by the driver to proceed; or • The red lights are no longer flashing. <p>It is not necessary to stop when passing a school bus on a different road or when on a controlled-access highway where the bus is stopped in a loading zone and pedestrians aren't permitted to cross. A person who fails to obey the law regarding yielding the right-of-way to school buses displaying alternating, flashing lights is subject to penalties.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Texas Driver Handbook, January 2022 – Page 23. Law: TX Transp Code § 545.066 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Utah</p> | <p>You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing or stop arm extended at all times unless a physical barrier separates the roadway. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm is no longer visible, proceed, slowly watching for children.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Utah Driver Handbook, 2023-2024 – Page 33. Law: UT Code § 41-6a-1302 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Vermont</p> | <p>It is against the law to pass a school bus which has stopped and has its red warning lights on. Never pass from any direction when the red lights are on. When a school bus is on the highway and is about to pick up or discharge students, the school bus driver activates the alternately flashing yellow lights and begins slowing down. You should be preparing to stop. After the bus has stopped, the driver will activate the alternately flashing red warning lights. Once the red warning lights have been activated you must stop your vehicle.</p> <p>Remember, even in a school yard, you must not pass a stopped school bus with its alternately flashing red warning lights activated.</p> <p>There are a few exceptions where a stop is not necessary. You do not have to stop on a divided highway if the school bus is traveling in the opposite direction. A concrete barrier may be used to separate traffic from the bus, and you are not required to stop. In Vermont, if you are found guilty of passing a stopped school bus with its warning lights on, you will be subject to a substantial fine and five points on your driver's license.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Vermont Driver's Manual 2024 – Page 39-40. Law: 23 V.S.A. § 1075</p> |

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| <p>Virginia</p> | <p>In the following pictures, the red vehicles must stop and remain stopped until all children are clear of the roadway and the bus moves again. You must stop for stopped school buses with flashing red lights and an extended stop sign when you approach from any direction on a highway, private road or school driveway. Stop and remain stopped until all persons are clear and the bus moves again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must also stop if the bus is loading or unloading passengers and the signals are not on. You do not have to stop if you are traveling in the opposite direction on a roadway with a median or barrier dividing the road and the bus is on the opposite side of the median or barrier. However, be prepared for unexpected actions by persons exiting the school bus. <p>Passing is unlawful and unsafe: when a school bus is stopped to load or unload passengers on a public road (unless a physical barrier or unpaved median separates traffic going in either direction) or on a private road.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Virginia Driver’s Manual, December 2023 – Page 14, 17. Law: VA Code § 46.2-844 (2022)</p> |
| <p>Washington</p> | <p>You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road or at an intersection you are approaching. You are not required to stop for a school bus with red lights flashing when the stopped school bus is traveling in the opposite direction and the roadway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has three or more marked traffic lanes, is separated by a median, or is separated by a physical barrier. <p>You should never pass a stopped school bus on the right hand side. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing, watch for children along the side of the road and do not proceed until they have completely left the roadway. The risk of injuring a child crossing the road is increased during the loading and unloading of a school bus. Be alert for children that may try to return to the bus after unloading. Fines are doubled for anyone that passes a stopped school bus. The penalty for failing to stop for a stopped school bus may not be waived, reduced, or suspended.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Washington Driver Guide, Rev. 03/23 – Page 3-26. Law: WA Rev Code § 46.61.370 (2022).</p> |
| <p>West Virginia</p> | <p>School buses are responsible for safely transporting children to and from school. When approaching a bus, please observe the following rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On all highways, streets, parking lots, private roads or driveways, traffic in both directions must stop before reaching a school bus that has its red lights flashing which is receiving or discharging students. You may not proceed until the bus resumes motion, or signaled by the school bus driver to proceed or the visual signals are no longer actuated. Only on Interstate Highways does traffic coming toward a school bus stopped on the other side of the median not have to stop. You must also stop for a stopped school bus which is receiving or discharging students on school property or private property. <p>The penalty for passing a stopped school bus is a minimum of 60 days driver’s license suspension and a minimum fine of \$500 or confinement in jail for not more than six (6) months for the first offense. Subsequent offenses have increased penalties. If the identity of the driver of a vehicle that passes a stopped school bus cannot be ascertained, the owner or lessee of the vehicle in violation is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, subject to fines.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Driver’s Licensing Handbook, Rev. 08/23 – Page 50. Law: WV Code § 17C-12-7 (2022).</p> |
| <p>Wisconsin</p> | <p>You must stop a minimum of 20 feet from a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing. You must stop whether the school bus is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road or at an intersection that you are approaching. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing, watch for children along the side of the road. Do not go until they have completely left the roadway. Divided highways (roadways): Unless signs say other-wise, you are not required to stop for a school bus if you are driving in the opposite direction on a divided highway.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Motorists’ Handbook Wisconsin Department of Transportation, April 2023 – Page 44-45. Law: WI Stat § 346.48 (2022).</p> |

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| <p><u>Wyoming</u></p> | <p>You MUST always stop your vehicle: When meeting or overtaking, from either direction, a stopped school bus with flashing red lights. The driver shall not proceed until the school bus resumes motion or the flashing red lights are no longer activated. Exception: You may pass a school bus with activated flashing red lights, only if there is a physical barrier or separate roadways between your vehicle and the school bus. You MUST use extreme caution, however, watching for pedestrians. On a two or four lane undivided highway, vehicles going each direction must stop when a school bus stops. However, on divided roadway, only vehicles on the same side of the separation as the bus must stop. DO NOT pass a school bus with flashing red lights, unless there is a physical barrier or separate roadways between you and the bus.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: Wyoming Rules of the Road (State of WY Driver License Manual, 2021 – Page 50-51; 54. Law: WY Stat § 31-5-507 (2022).</p> |
| <p><u>Washington, D.C.</u></p> | <p>When a school vehicle is stopping or has stopped on the roadway, and is operating the alternating flashing red lights, all vehicles must stop at least 20 feet from the front or rear of the school vehicle. No one can proceed until the alternating flashing red lights have been turned off. Drivers should continue to exercise caution once the flashing lights have been turned off. Drivers of other vehicles are not required to stop when they are on a divided highway and the school vehicle is on the other side of the divided highway.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Reference: District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles, Driver Manual, rev. 07/21 – Page 66. Law: D.C. Mun. Regs. 18-2209.</p> |
| <p>Puerto Rico</p> | <p>All drivers will follow the following rules when reaching or passing a bus or school bus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) It shall be the duty of every driver to stop when approaching or overtaking any bus or school bus that has stopped at the edge of a public road, to pick up or drop off students, even if the road has taxiways separated by a line painted on the pavement, if so directed by the driver of the bus or transportation by signs to that effect, and shall not resume the journey until the bus or transport has been set in motion, or the signals indicated above have ceased to operate, or the driver of the bus or transport so indicates by means of signs to that effect and, in the event that students are left, they have completely left the public road. Any driver who violates the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of an administrative offense and shall be punished with a fine of three hundred (300) dollars. (b) Every bus or transportation used in the transportation of students shall have clearly visible signs on the front and back with the words "SCHOOL BUS" or "SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION" in letters not less than eight inches (8") high in larger vehicles and six (6) inches in smaller vehicles. as defined by the Commission and signal lights installed as high and spaced laterally from each other as possible and at the same level. Such lights shall be capable of emitting alternating flashing red lights of such intensity that they are visible from five hundred (500) feet away. (c) Any driver of a vehicle traveling on a public highway with physically separated taxiways or controlled access areas shall not stop when encountering or passing a school bus or transportation that is in a different taxiway area, or when the school bus or transportation is stopped in a loading and unloading area that is part of or adjacent to that public highway and where it is not permitted the pedestrian crossing. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Translated to English</i> Law: PR Laws tit. 1, § 5289 (2020).</p> |

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