

General Overview

Pupil Transport Vehicles and Driver Licensing Requirements Abbreviated Summary - 5/10/17

Definition of a School Pupil Transport Vehicle:

A pupil transportation vehicle is a motor vehicle designed and constructed to seat not more than eight (8) passengers in addition to the operator, used by a school committee to provide the transportation services required by law or regulation to students being conveyed along a fixed school transportation route. [Definition found in DMV Pupil Transportation Guide] In particular, such vehicles may be used to provide the transportation services required by section 16-21-1, section 16-21.1-2, et seq. and section 16-24-4 on routes in which only small numbers of students are being conveyed. [See also RIGL 31-22.1]

Vehicle Requirements Summarized:

Vans, sport utility vehicles, and heavy automobiles as defined by applicable federal regulations, may be used as pupil transportation vehicles provided that these vehicles meet the highest federal crashworthiness standards for these categories of vehicles. The vehicle must have a gross vehicle weight rating of 3,800 pounds or more in order to qualify to be a pupil transportation vehicle. [The Statewide Program uses Dodge Caravans]

Unless otherwise specifically provided for herein, the provisions of section 31-20-4, et seq. (Special Stops Required) shall be applicable to pupil transportation vehicles. The provisions of section 31-23-42 (An approved American Red Cross First Aid Kit sufficiently stocked for expected vehicle occupancy and equipped with an operable system for completely and adequately heating the bus while transporting children), a Body Fluid Kit and Emergency CPR Mask are also required; section 31-23-42.2 (Power equipment on school buses), section 31-23-54 (Fire extinguishers – charged and mounted in the manufacturer’s extinguisher bracket and located in the driver’s compartment in full view of and readily accessible to the driver. The fire extinguisher shall have a minimum capacity of two and one-half pounds and be of a type approved by the Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., with a rating of not less than ten (10) B.C.), and section 31-23-55 (speedometer and odometer) shall be applicable to pupil transportation vehicles.

A pupil transportation vehicle shall not be required to be painted school bus yellow provided it carries a sign in school bus yellow visible from forward and from in back of the vehicle containing the lettering required by section 31-20-4.11. The lettering on the sign must be black and not less than 8” in height. [The Statewide Program also requires lettering on the side of vehicle as follows: Statewide Transportation Program.]

Each pupil transportation vehicle shall be equipped with Type I Class A turn signal lamps, which shall have four-way hazard warning signal switch to cause simultaneous flashing of the turn signal lamps; Each pupil transportation vehicle shall also be equipped with front and rear alternating flashing school bus red signal lamps. All lamps shall comply with applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and any applicable rules and regulations promulgated by the Dept of Motor Vehicles. Each vehicle shall also be equipped with an emergency buzzer or warning light to alert the driver of any open door.

Each pupil transportation vehicle shall be required to be equipped with one pair of adequate chock blocks and three (3) flares in compliance with US Federal Motor Vehicle D.O.T. Safety Standard No. 125 or 4 Triangles.

Each vehicle shall also have seat belts for each permanent seating accommodation, including the operator's seat, designed and installed in compliance with applicable U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. The seat belt and child restraint state law is effective for pupil transportation vehicles. RIGL 31-22-22 Safety belt use – Child Restraint.

All owners of pupil transportation vehicles must file a GU1338 insurance document with the Financial Responsibility Office of the Division of Motor Vehicles prior to having a Special Equipment and Safety inspection.

All owners of pupil transportation vehicles must obtain a letter from the school department stating that the vehicle will be used as a pupil transportation vehicle. The letter should have the license plate number and VIN number of each vehicle.

All pupil transportation vehicles will be required to have a combined special equipment and safety inspection annually. On the year that an emissions inspection is required, the emissions inspection will be included with the safety special equipment and safety inspection. Contact the Safety and Emission Control Section at 222-3884 to schedule an appointment for an inspection. They are located at 325 Melrose Street, Providence, RI.

All pupil transportation vehicles used to transport school students under the provisions of this section shall display a sticker as authorized by the DMV.

[Note: The monitor requirement of section 16-21-1 shall not apply to pupil transportation vehicles.]

Driver Licensing Requirements Summarized:

A chauffeur license and a pupil transportation certificate as required to operate a pupil transportation vehicle.

To obtain a Chauffeur's License, applicants must complete an application entitled Pupil Transportation Chauffeur License. Call 401-462-5771 to obtain an application or download the form from the RI DMV website at www.dmv.ri.gov The fee is \$26.50 to add the endorsement to your license. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age and have had a driver's license for three (3) continuous years. Applicants must also obtain a BCI check from the RI Attorney General's Office located at 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI.

Applicants who hold an active CDL license with a passenger endorsement issued by the RI DMV may operate a pupil transportation vehicle without a Chauffeur's license but must have an active Pupil Transportation Certificate.

To obtain a Pupil Transportation Certificate, obtain and complete an application for a Chauffeur's License and a Pupil Transportation Certificate along with the Pupil Transportation Guide. Applicants must successfully pass a written test. Both documents can be downloaded from the RI DMV website as shown above or by calling 401-462-5772.

Obtain required references. Obtain criminal background check from Bureau of Criminal Identification (BCI) unit at the RI Attorney General's Office, 150 South Main Street, Providence. Applicants who are non-RI residents or those who have moved into the state within the past five (5) years, must obtain a certified criminal record check as well as a certified driving record from your current or former home state(s). These documents must be no more than 30 days old and must be submitted with the original application. Only original documents are accepted.

Bring the application and letter of sponsorship to the Division of Motor Vehicles Motor Carrier and School Bus Safety Office located at 600 New London Avenue, Cranston, RI. A letter of sponsorship verifying that the applicant will be employed, must accompany the application (from a school department, school bus company, etc.) All applicants are subject to a criminal record check and a driving record check. The materials will be reviewed by this office. DMV personnel will make determinations as to the issuance of Pupil Transportation Certificates. Disqualification Criteria can be found in the guide. If approved, applicants will take the Pupil Transportation written test. There is a \$16.50 fee to take the test. Applicants who pass the test then go the license clerk and pay an additional \$26.50 processing fee, be photographed and receive their Chauffeur's License. This License is then taken to the Motor Carrier and School Bus Safety Office at which time the applicant receives the Pupil Transportation Certificate.

A medical certification on the pupil transportation application must be completed and certified by a licensed physician. This evaluation is valid for 90 days only. The certification must include the doctor's signature and registration number. *[The Statewide Program requires full DOT physicals before sending applicants for licensing.]*

Applicants who have passed their 65th birthday and are mentally and physically capable of operating a motor vehicle transporting school pupils shall twice annually be examined by a physician to determine such capability.

[Under the Statewide Program, all training required of for CDL licensed drivers, as well as aides and monitors, under the statewide contract also apply to the drivers and aides on pupil transportation vehicles.]

RI Department of Motor Vehicles

401-462-5771

www.dmv.ri.gov

Vehicle Inspection:

401-462-5892

www.dmv.ri.gov