



SCHOOL BUS DRIVER'S HANDBOOK

Laws and Rules

Care and Inspection

Driving Strategies

Student Management

Emergency Procedures

Emergency First Aid

Transporting Students with Special Needs

D.O.T. Drug & Alcohol Testing

Head Start Students

School Bus Safety

Frequently Asked Questions



Offices in Cedar Falls, Clear Lake and Marshalltown

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LAWS & RULES

The following laws and rules have been selected from the Code of Iowa and the Iowa Administrative Code (IAC). We have selected sections relating to School Transportation and those most frequently referenced have been reproduced. These should not be considered all inclusive.

Definitions:

- *Iowa Code*. Contains statutes which have been passed by the General Assembly and signed into by the Governor.
- *Iowa Administrative Code (IAC)* contains rules promulgated by state agencies to implement, interpret or prescribe a law or policy or to describe a procedure or practice requirement of any agency.

Procedures:

- IAC supercedes local school board policy matters.
- The local board shall make rules for its own government and shall include in its rules provisions regulating the loading and unloading of pupils from a school bus stopped on the highway during a period of reduced highway visibility caused by fog, snow, or other weather conditions.

The School Bus Driver

School Bus Driver Iowa Code 321.375

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Be physically and mentally competent.
- Not possess personal or moral habits, which would be detrimental to the best interests of the safety and welfare of the children transported.
- Have a DOT physical examination and meet all established requirements for the physical fitness.
- Must submit to a pre-employment drug test and be included in a mandatory Drug and Alcohol testing program.
- Must submit to all background checks as required by local, state & federal guidelines. (This may include but not be limited to, checks of criminal background, child abuse registry and DOT check).

Driver Qualifications 281 - IAC 43.12(285)

General character and emotional stability are qualities, which must be given careful consideration by boards of education in the selection of school bus drivers. Elements that should be considered in setting a character standard are:

- Reliability or dependability
- Initiative, self-reliance, and leadership
- Ability to get along with others.
- Freedom from use of undesirable language
- Personal habits of cleanliness
- Moral conduct above reproach
- Honesty
- Freedom from addiction to narcotics or habit-forming drugs
- Freedom from addiction to alcoholic beverages or liquors

Stability Factors 281—IAC 43.13(285)

Factors to be considered in determining emotional stability are:

- 43.13(1) Patience
- 43.13(2) Considerateness
- 43.13(3) Even temperament
- 43.14(4) Calmness under stress

Physical Fitness 281—IAC 43.15(285)

Except for insulin-dependent diabetics, an applicant for a school bus driver's authorization must undergo a biennial physical examination by a licensed physician or surgeon, osteopathic physician or surgeon, osteopath, qualified doctor of chiropractic, licensed physician assistant, or advanced registered nurse practitioner. The applicant must submit to the applicant's employer the signed medical examiner's certificate (pursuant to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations 49 CFR Sections 391.41 to 391.49) indicating among other requirements sufficient physical capacity to operate the bus effectively and to render assistance to the passengers in case of illness or injury, and freedom from any communicable disease, such as tuberculosis. At the discretion of the chief administrator or designee of the employer or prospective employer, the chief administrator or designee shall evaluate the applicant's ability in operating a school bus, including all safety equipment, in providing assistance to passengers in evacuation of the school bus, and in performing other duties required of a school bus driver.

- Insulin-dependent diabetics may qualify to be a school bus driver if the person meets all qualifications of Iowa Code subsection 321.375(3). Such driver is subject to an annual physical examination by a qualified medical examiner as listed above.
- Drivers must carry a current Medical Examiner's Certificate and a valid Department of Education Driver Authorization Card.

Contracts For Transportation Iowa Code 285.5(9)

All bus drivers for school-owned equipment shall be under contract with the board. The Director of the Department of Education shall prepare a uniform contract with this chapter, which shall be used by all school boards in contracting with drivers of school owned vehicles.

License—Endorsements—Autorizations Iowa Code 321.376

Obtain proper license for the vehicle you will be driving:

- general knowledge
- passenger endorsement
- "S" endorsement
- air brake endorsement if required

The driver of a school bus must possess a School Bus Driver's Authorization obtained from the Department of Education and issued by the local school district. This authorization is to be carried by the school bus driver at all times. Drivers must attend State mandated annual school bus driver training and any district required training.

New drivers will be required to complete both the 12-hour STOP class and the current 3-hour training class for the year in which they are hired. The 12-hour STOP class carries with it a 6 month grace period during which a new driver may obtain a probationary authorization and may drive a bus. Current drivers who miss a year of instruction will then have to complete the 12-hour STOP class **before** again being issued an authorization. They will also have to complete the current 3-hour class.

Driver Restrictions 281—IAC 43.38(285)

- The driver of a school bus shall not smoke on any District owned vehicles
- The driver shall not permit firearms to be carried in the bus
- The driver shall not fuel the vehicle while the motor is running OR when there are passengers on board



The Vehicle

The Vehicle - Definition - Requirements - Operating Definition Iowa Code 321.1(69)

"School Bus" means every vehicle operated for the transportation of children to and from school, except vehicles, which are:

- privately owned and not operated for compensation.
- used exclusively in the transportation of children in the immediate family of the driver
- operated by a municipally or private owned urban transit company for the transportation of children as part of or in addition to their regularly scheduled service.
- designed to carry not more than nine passengers, either school owned or privately owned, which are used to transport pupils to activity events in which the pupils are participants or used to transport pupils to their home in case of illness or other emergency situations. These vehicles shall be operated by employees of the school district who are specifically approved by the local superintendent of schools.

Vehicle Requirements 281—IAC 43.7(285)

Any vehicle used, other than that used by individuals to transport their own children or other children on a not-for-hire basis, is considered to be a school bus and must meet all requirements for the type of vehicle used. (This requirement is not intended to restrict the use of passenger cars during the time the vehicles are not actually engaged in transporting school pupils.)

Required Construction: Every vehicle used as a school bus shall be constructed and or equipped to meet safety standards as adopted by the state board of education in chapter 281—IAC 44(285).

Seating Requirements: 281—IAC 43.10(6)

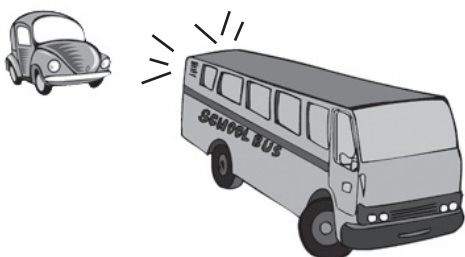
Student passengers shall have a minimum of 13 inches of allowable seating per person. Standees are prohibited in all situations and the maximum number of passengers shall never exceed the rated capacity of the vehicle.

Vehicle Operations Iowa Code 321.372

- The driver of a school bus used to transport children to and from a public or private school shall, when stopping to receive or discharge pupils, turn on flashing warning lamps at a distance of not less than 300 feet nor more than 500 feet from the point where the pupils are to be received or discharged from the bus if the speed limit at that point is 45 mph or greater and shall turn on flashing warning lamps at a distance of not less than 150 feet from the point where the pupils are to be received or discharged

from the bus if the speed limit is at that point less than 45 mph. Exception is when reduced visibility is caused by fog, snow, or other weather conditions.

- The driver of a school bus is not required to use flashing warning lamps and the stop arm when receiving or discharging pupils at a school attendance center or at extra-curricular or educational activity locations where students exiting the bus do not have to cross the street or highway.
- A school bus, when operating on a highway with four or more lanes shall not stop to load or unload pupils who must cross the highway, except at designated stops where pupils who must cross the highway may do so at points where there are official traffic control devices or police officers.
- All pupils shall be received or discharged from the right front entrance of every bus and if said pupils must cross the highway, they shall be required to pass in front of the bus, look in both directions, and proceed to cross the highway only on the signal from the bus driver.
- The driver of a vehicle, including the driver of a vehicle operating on a private road or driveway, when meeting a school bus with flashing amber warning lamps activated shall reduce the vehicle's speed to not more than 20 MPH, and shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop when the school bus stops and the stop arm is extended. The vehicle shall remain stopped until the stop arm is retracted, after which time the driver may proceed with due caution.
- The driver of a vehicle, including the driver of a vehicle operating on a private road or driveway, overtaking a school bus shall not pass a school bus when the red or amber warning lamps are flashing. The driver shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop no closer than 15 feet from the school bus when it is stopped and the stop arm is extended, and the vehicle shall remain stopped until the stop arm is retracted and the school bus resumes motion.
- The driver of a vehicle upon a highway providing two or more lanes in each direction need not stop upon meeting a school bus which is traveling in the opposite direction even though said bus is being stopped.
- A school bus shall, while carrying passengers, have its headlights turned on.



Prompt Investigation of Reported Violation of Failing to Obey School Bus Warning Devices — Iowa Code 321.372A

- The driver of a school bus who observes a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, may prepare a written report on a form provided by the department of public safety indicating that a violation has occurred. The school bus driver or a school official may deliver the report not more than seventy-two hours after the violation occurred to a peace officer of the county or municipality in which the violation occurred. The report shall state the time and the location at which the violation occurred and shall include the registration, plate number and a description of the vehicle involved in the violation.
- Not more than seven calendar days after receiving the report of a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, from a school bus driver or school official, the peace officer shall initiate an investigation of the reported violation and contact the owner of the motor vehicle involved in the reported violation and request that the owner supply information identifying the driver in accordance with section 321.484.
- If, from the investigation, the peace officer is able to identify the driver and has reasonable cause to believe a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, has occurred, the peace officer shall prepare a uniform traffic citation for the violation and shall serve it personally or by certified mail to the driver of the vehicle.
- If, from the investigation, the peace officer had reasonable cause to believe that a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, occurred but is unable to identify the driver, the peace officer shall serve a uniform traffic citation for the violation to the owner of the motor vehicle. Notwithstanding section 321.484, in a proceeding where the peace officer who conducted the investigation was not able to identify the driver of the motor vehicle, proof that the motor vehicle described in the uniform traffic citation was used to commit the violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, together with proof that the defendant named in the citation was the registered owner of the motor vehicle at the time the violation occurred, constitutes a permissible inference that the registered owner was the driver who committed the violation.

Discharging Pupils off Public Highway Iowa Code 285.11(7)

No bus shall leave the public highway to receive or discharge pupils unless their safety is enhanced thereby, or the private road is maintained in the same manner as a public roadway

Loading and Unloading Areas

281—IAC 43.42(285)

Restricted loading and unloading areas shall be established for school buses at or near schools

Speed Restrictions Iowa Code 321.285

A motor vehicle in use as a school bus shall not be operated at a speed in excess of the posted maximum speed limit.

Railroad Crossing Iowa Code 321.341 & 321.343

- **Operation at Railroad Crossing Iowa Code (321.341)** Obedience to signal train. When a person driving a vehicle approaches a railroad grade crossing and warning is given by automatic signal, crossing gates, a flag person, or otherwise of the immediate approach of the train, the driver of the vehicle shall stop within fifty (50) feet but no less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail and shall not proceed until the driver can do so safely. The driver of a vehicle shall stop and remain standing and not traverse such a grade crossing when a crossing gate is lowered or when a human flagman gives or continues to give signal of the approach of passage of train.



- **Certain Vehicles Must Stop Iowa Code (321.343)** The driver of a motor vehicle carrying passengers for hire, a school bus, or a vehicle carrying hazardous material are required to stop before crossing a railroad track by motor carrier safety rules adopted under Section 321.449, before crossing at grade any track of a railroad, shall stop the vehicle within fifty (50) feet but not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail. While stopped, the driver shall listen and look in both directions for an approaching train, and for signals indicating the approach of a train, and shall not proceed until the driver can do so safely.

NO stop need to be made at a crossing where a police officer or a traffic control device directs traffic to proceed. No stop need be made at a crossing designated be an "exempt" sign. An "exempt" sign shall be posted only where the tracks have been partially removed on either side of the roadway.

- **Railroad Crossing 281—IAC 43.37(285)**

The driver of any school bus shall bring the bus to a complete stop at all railroad crossings, as required in section 321.343, regardless of whether or not there are any pupils in the bus, and regardless of whether or not there is an automatic signal at the crossing. After stopping, the driver shall open the entrance door, look and listen for approaching trains and shall not proceed to cross the track until it is safe to do so.

Use of Strobe Light Iowa Code 321.373(7)

A school bus shall be equipped with a white flashing strobe light mounted on the roof of the bus to afford optimum visibility during periods of inclement weather. The light shall be of a type approved by the department of transportation and shall be installed and operated in accordance with rules promulgated be the Department of Education. The white flashing strobe light rated for outdoor use and weather sealed shall be installed on the roof of the bus at a point 1 to 10 feet from the rear center of the bus. The lighting system must be controlled by a separate switch with indicator light which when lit will indicate that the strobe light is turned on. The light shall be used in fog, rain, snow, or at times when visibility is restricted.

Moving Vehicle Backward on Highway

Iowa Code 321.323 A person shall not cause a vehicle to be moved in a backward direction on a highway unless and until the vehicle can be backed with reasonable safety and shall yield the right of way to any approaching vehicle on the highway or an intersecting highway which is so close as to constitute an immediate hazard.

Reporting Accidents Iowa Code 321.266

- The driver of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury to or death of any person shall immediately, by the quickest means of communication, give notice of such accident to area law enforcement as near to the place where the accident occurred.
- The driver of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury to or death of any person or total property damage to an apparent extent of five hundred dollars or more shall also, within seventy-two (72) hours after such accident, forward a written report of such accident to the Department of Education.

Pupil Instruction 281—IAC 43.40(285)

At least twice during each school year, each pupil who is transported in a school vehicle shall be instructed in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drills.

Family Type or Multipurpose Vehicles 281—IAC 44.6(285)

These vehicles may be used as a school bus in accordance with the following general requirements:

- When used as a “school bus”, the vehicle must be driven by an approved school bus driver possessing a school bus driver’s authorization.
- The vehicle shall be an original equipment manufacturer’s (OEM) product and manufactured as a family type or multipurpose passenger vehicle.
- The manufacturer’s rated capacity of this vehicle shall not exceed nine (9) persons including the driver and shall be determined only by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) on the date of manufacture. The capacity rating may not be changed or modified except by the original equipment manufacturer. Secondary stage or vehicle conversion manufacturers shall not establish vehicle capacity.
- Alteration of this vehicle, following manufacturing by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to the addition or deletion of seats, ramps, wheelchair securement devices and power lifts. **See 281—44.4(285)**

Exceptions: The addition or installation of original equipment manufacturer (OEM) options or other manufacturer’s accessories not in violation of these standards may be installed.

- When used as a “school bus”, this type of vehicle must be equipped with:
 - A “school bus” sign visible from the rear.
 - A ten-unit first aid kit.
 - A 2 1/2 pound, 2A-10BC fire extinguisher.
 - A webbing cutter.
 - A body fluid cleanup kit.
 - A 112db backup alarm on model year 2007 and newer vehicles.

Unattended Motor Vehicle Iowa Code 321.362

No person driving or in charge of a motor vehicle shall permit it to stand unattended without first stopping the engine, or when standing upon any perceptible grade without effectively setting the brake thereon and turning the front wheels to the curb or side of the highway.

Unsafe Vehicles Iowa Code 321.381

It is a misdemeanor, punishable as provided in section 321.482, for any person to drive or move or for the owner to cause or knowingly permit to be driven or moved on any highway any vehicle or combination of vehicles which is in such unsafe conditions as to endanger any person, or which does not contain those parts or is not at all times equipped with such lamps and other equipment in proper condition and adjustment as required or which is equipped with one or more unsafe tires or which is equipped in any manner in violation of this chapter.

Daily Pre/Post Trip Inspection

281—IAC 43.41(285)

A Pre-trip inspection shall be performed and recorded each time the bus goes out. “A written report shall be submitted promptly to the superintendent of schools, transportation



supervisor, school bus mechanic, or other person(s) charged with the responsibility for the school transportation program, if any defects or deficiencies are discovered that may affect the safety of the vehicle’s operation or its mechanical breakdown.”

A Post-trip inspection of the interior of the school bus shall be performed after each trip.

Daily Pre/Post Trip Vehicle Inspection

According to rule 281—IAC 43.41(285)

“A daily pre & post trip inspection of each school bus shall be performed and recorded. A written report shall be submitted promptly to the superintendent of schools, transportation supervisor, school bus mechanic or other person charged with the responsibility for the school transportation program, if any defects or deficiencies are discovered that may affect the safety of the vehicle’s operation or its mechanical breakdown.”

The daily pre-trip inspection is one of the most important responsibilities of the transportation program. The identification, reporting and repair of vehicle defects, before they can develop into costly repairs, breakdowns, or accidents, is vital to the success and safety of any school transportation program.

The pre-trip vehicle inspection need not be overly time consuming, but must be thorough. Therefore, a systematic approach to the inspection must be taken to assure that the inspection includes all components that may affect the safe operation and handling of the vehicle.

Pre-trip Check List

An example of a pre-trip vehicle inspection check list can be obtained from the Iowa Department of Education’s web site, www.iowagov/educate. The systems and components to be inspected are considered by the Iowa Department of Education’s certified school bus inspectors as the minimum requirements for a pre-trip inspection.

What to look for

1. Exterior Inspection or the “Daily Walk Around”

- **Fluid Leaks** – Examine inner wheels and tires and the area under the bus for leaking fluid. Leaks can be engine oil, coolant, fuel, grease, rear axle, brake, or transmission fluid. Leaks should be immediately reported and repaired.



- **Under the Hood** – Before starting the engine for the walk-around inspection, you should check the coolant and oil to be sure they are at the proper levels. Also, look for cracked or loose drive belts, hoses and hose clamps.
- **Emergency Door** – It should open easily and the warning buzzer should sound when the ignition key is on. This door must always be ready for emergencies, yet tightly sealed when closed to prevent possible entrance of dangerous carbon monoxide fumes. If equipped with a vandal lock, check during your pre-trip inspection to be sure that the engine will not start when the vandal lock is engaged.
- **Lights** – See that all lights are clean and functioning properly. Any lights or reflectors that are not working properly, such as flashing inconsistently, or cracked or otherwise damaged should be reported in writing and repaired.
- **Windows** – All windows should be cleaned to provide clear vision for the driver. Do not clear just a “peephole”.
- **Exhaust System** – Carbon Monoxide gas cannot be detected by sight or smell. Poisoning occurs the most frequently when a vehicle is standing still or is in an enclosed space with the engine running. Listen for excessive noise and vibration. Check for leaks and sagging in the exhaust system and holes in the bus body. Any problem should be reported immediately and repaired.
- **Mirrors** – Mirrors should be properly positioned, aimed and adjusted in accordance with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 111 which can be found at the end of this section.
- **Tires** – Check tires for proper inflation and unusual wear or damage. A flat rear tire can place dangerous weight on the companion tire or dual set. Studies show that fuel consumption increases by .4 percent for every pound a tire is under-inflated.
- **Wheels** – Look for loose or missing lug-nuts, excessive corrosion, cracks or other damage.
- **Crossing Gates** – If equipped, they must be working.
- **Backup Alarms** – Check to make sure they are working.

2. Interior Inspection – Driver’s Compartment

- **Emergency Equipment** – All emergency equipment should be easily accessible to the driver. It consists of the first aid kit, body fluid cleanup kit, fire extinguisher and reflectors or triangular warning devices. The fire extinguisher should be undamaged, properly stored and fully charged. Replace cracked or broken hoses, keep nozzle unobstructed and make sure the locking pin and sealing wire are in place. Once a month, the fire extinguisher should be taken from its bracket and shaken or turned up-side down and tapped on the bottom to loosen the dry powder chemical inside.
- **Operational Lights and Indicators** – Check all dash, accessory panel and other interior lights to see that they are clean and operational.
- **Air Pressure or Vacuum Gauge** – This gauge indicates the proper capacity of pressure to operate the brakes. Do not operate the bus until the pressure reaches the proper capacity. Loss of pressure may indicate a leak in the system.
- **Ampmeter Gauge** – This gauge should not show a discharge after the engine is running. If it does, it indicates a malfunction in the charging system.
- **Voltmeter Gauge** – This gauge shows the actual output of the charging system in volts. Normal voltage output of the charging system will be somewhere in the range of 131/2 to 141/2 volts. This will vary from vehicle to vehicle and a mechanic or the vehicles operating manual should be consulted to find out the proper operating ranges for your vehicle.
- **Oil Pressure Gauge** – The oil pressure gauge indicates engine oil pressure but not the quantity of oil contained in the engine. Learn what the proper oil pressure is for your vehicle. If the gauge indicates in-adequate oil pressure, turn off the engine.
- **Water Temperature Gauge** – The water temperature gauge indicates the temperature of the coolant in the engine. It should read in the COOL to WARM range on the gauge; however, if it reads in the HOT range, the engine should immediately be turned off and the problem reported.
- **Brake Warning Light** – If lit, indicates a malfunction in the brake system.
- **Horn** – It should sound clearly without the horn or horn button sticking.
- **Stop Arm and Service Door Controls** – Check to see that the controls coordinate with the actions of the stop arm and door. If they delay, are sporadic or stick, they should be reported and repaired.



- **Windshield Wipers and Washers** – Check to see that both the wipers and washers are functioning properly and that the washer fluid reserve tank is filled. Wiper blades should be flexible and not stiff or hard. The wiper blades should fully retract from the driver’s direct view after shutting off.
- **Defroster Fans and Heaters** – All defroster fans and heaters should be inspected for obstructions such as paper and other debris which can obstruct air flow and cause premature failure. Do not allow students to cover them with coats, books, paper, etc.
- **Driver’s Seat and Seat Belt** – These should be adjusted so that the driver’s feet reach the pedals and so that the steering wheel is easily grasped without stretching or excessive reaching.
- **Service Brakes** – Start the engine and pull the bus forward a few feet and apply the service brakes. Do not wait until the bus is on the road to conduct this test. The bus should stop in a straight line without pulling to either side, skidding or swerving. The brakes should not grab, lock or make excessive noise such as squeaking or squealing. The brake pedal should not feel grabby, over sensitive or spongy. When the brakes are not in use, be alert for dragging which may cause the bus to pull to the side.
- **Clutch** – For information regarding manual transmissions and clutch’s refer to owners’ manual for more information.
- **Emergency Parking Brake** – To test both air and mechanical parking brakes, slowly engage the clutch while the parking brake is on. If the bus moves easily, the parking brake is not holding and should be reported. With air brake systems, the parking brake will remain applied, if there is partial or complete air loss in the service brakes. Release the parking brake when the bus is in motion. Driving with the parking brake on is a frequent cause of failure of the emergency brake and can even cause damage to the transmission case.
- **Engine** – Do not race the engine when it is cold. Increase the engine speed slowly so that all the parts can be lubricated. Do not exceed the maximum rpm. Listen for unusual sounds such as backfire, light tapping, occasional misfire, piston slap, rapid hammering or whistling. Be alert to unusually slow engine warm-up, lack of normal response, vibrations of the chassis or failure of warm engine to start.
- **Steering** – The steering should be easy to handle, precise, responsive and steady in turns and over rough roads. Power steering should be exceptionally quiet. The steering should not have excessive “play”, jerking, “kickback” or rattles.



- **Transmission** – With the transmission in a moving gear, the bus should move smoothly in response to depressing the accelerator. An automatic or manual transmission should slip into gear and have easy and smooth gear changes throughout the shifting range. Do not exceed the manufacturer’s recommended speed for each specific gear (rpm). Exceeding speed recommendations could damage the transmission or reduce its service life. Any metallic or unusual sounds or shifting difficulty should be reported.

3. Interior Inspection – Passenger Compartment

- **Seats** – Walk down the aisle of your bus and using the palm of your hand strike the back of each seat to test for loose or broken seat frames. Check for loose seat bottoms by attempting to lift each seat cushion. Inspect for loose or missing seat mounting bolts at the floor level and at the point of attachment to bus side walls. Inspect each seat on a regular basis for cuts or tears in seat upholstery. Small cuts or tears noticed and repaired early can help to avoid costly seat replacement. Be ever aware of potential vandalism by students on your bus to seats and interior walls. Regular inspection can help to identify those students responsible for such vandalism; especially where seats have been assigned to passengers.
- **Floor Covering** – Floors and the interior of the bus should be kept as clean as possible. Daily sweeping of the bus is an indicator of a driver’s attitude toward his or her job. Students tend to help a driver keep the bus clean and free from debris if the driver, too, is a neat housekeeper. Damaged or loose flooring material should be reported and repaired before dirt or water can get between it and the under-flooring. During cold weather, water should be mopped up after each route so as to prevent it from freezing and creating a slippery hazard for students.
- **Windows** – These should be cleaned from the inside as well as the outside, for total visibility, especially the windshield and rear window.



Post Trip Vehicle Inspection 281—IAC 43.41(285)

- Secure the vehicle by placing the transmission to the Neutral position with the brakes set.
- All lights and switches should be checked to ensure they are in the off position.
- Walk to the rear service door to ensure that there are no children left on the bus.
- Check the interior for seat cuts, tears, graffiti, lost articles, or other debris.

Automatic Transmission Tips

Below is shown a typical automatic transmission range (gear) selector. The school bus driver should pay particular attention to the proper use and operation of each of the selector ranges. Improper use of this piece of equipment can result in hundreds of dollars in repair costs.

- **R (Reverse)** – Completely stop the vehicle before shifting from a forward gear to reverse or from reverse to forward.
- **N (Neutral)** – Use this position when you start your engine. If the engine starts in any other position, the neutral start switch is malfunctioning. Use neutral when the vehicle will be left unattended while the engine is running. (Always apply the parking brake in this situation as the school bus automatic transmission is not equipped with a “Park” position).
- **D (Drive)** – Use this for all normal driving conditions.
- **3 & 2** – Occasionally, the road, load, or traffic conditions will make it desirable to restrict the automatic shifting to a lower range. These positions also provide progressively greater engine braking power (the lower the gear range the greater the braking effect).
- **1** – This is the low gear; use this when pulling through mud and snow or driving up steep grades. This position also provides maximum engine braking power.
In the lower ranges (1,2, and 3), the transmission will not up-shift above the highest gear selected unless the engine governed speed is exceeded.
- **Downshift or Reverse Inhibitor Feature** – The transmission can be downshifted or up-shifted, even at full throttle, and although there is no speed limitation on up-shifting, there is on downshifting and reverse. Downshifting should be avoided when the vehicle is above the maximum speed attainable in the next lower gear.
- **Using The Engine To Slow The Vehicle** – To use the engine as a braking force, shift the range selector to the next lower range. If the vehicle is exceeding the maximum speed for a lower gear, use the service brakes to slow the vehicle to an acceptable speed where the transmission may be downshifted safely.
- **Towing or Pushing** – Before towing or pushing a disabled vehicle equipped with an automatic transmission, the driveline should be disconnected or the driving wheels lifted off the road to prevent serious transmission damage. The engine cannot be started by pushing or towing.
- **Engine** – The useful service life of a school bus engine is directly related to the care and use it receives. The school bus driver and mechanical repair persons should work as a team to assure that the engine will deliver maximum safety and efficiency.

The bus driver should report any mechanical deficiency to the school bus mechanic so that repair or adjustment can be made before major repairs are necessary. A new vibration, noise, different feel of the wheel or sound of the engine must be considered cause enough for a request for maintenance assistance.



- **Starting and Warm-up Procedures** – Starting and warming up an engine has a direct relationship on the life expectancy of the engine. Because of the need to conserve fuel, a warm-up time of 5-7 minutes is sufficient. The procedures outlined below are those generally recommended by engine manufacturers to extend efficient engine life and reduce wear in other affected systems.

1. Place the transmission in neutral.
2. Insure that all electrical circuits are off except the ignition.
3. Depress the clutch (always depress the clutch when cranking engine).
4. Turn the key to start engine. Do not crank the engine for more 10 seconds at a time. If after three or four tries the engine will not start, notify the mechanic of the problem. Do not crank the engine until the battery is dead.

5. When the engine starts, check the oil pressure gauge. If the gauge does not register within a few moments, turn the engine off. Never race or “gun” the engine during this period. After oil pressure is up, the engine should be run at about 900-1200 rpm. For buses that do not have tachometers, this would be a speed that is about twice the normal idle speed of the engine.
6. Drivers should be with their buses during the warm-up period, or whenever the engine is running.
7. Caution: Do not let the engine idle at low (under 700 rpm) for any extended period. Engine warm-up at low rpm’s will not allow for proper oil circulation.
8. Never operate the engine at full throttle or at maximum rpm’s until the engine has reached normal operating temperature as shown by the water temperature gauge.
9. Check the owner’s manual for proper rpm for normal start up.
10. Avoid excessive idling at all times. Excessive idling consumes more fuel, causes the engine to wear prematurely, and adds additional pollution to the air that we breathe.

CHAPTER 3

DRIVING STRATEGIES

Understanding the law and knowing the correct driving procedures will help you become a safe driver. When you begin to identify the mistakes of others and adjust your driving to compensate, you have mastered the basic driving fundamentals for “defensive driving.”

The I.P.D.E. Formula to Safe Driving:

Traffic safety experts have determined how we can avoid traffic accidents. There are four steps involved in the process:

- **IDENTIFY:** Identify that a potential hazard(s) exists.
- **PREDICT:** Predict which of the hazard(s) may endanger the safety of your vehicle and its occupants.
- **DECIDE:** Decide which action(s) to take if the potential hazard develops.
- **EXECUTE:** Execute the maneuver(s) to avoid the hazard.

Strategies for School Bus Drivers:

Situation:

Traffic becomes blocked when oncoming vehicles are required to stop for a school bus. (Stop arm out and RED flashing warning lights activated.)

Strategies:

- 1) Activate the AMBER warning lights the required distance (either 150-300 or 300-500 feet) in advance of the stop. **321.372 Code of Iowa.**
- 2) Give oncoming vehicles the opportunity to pass the bus before activating the RED flashing warning lights and stop arm.

Situation:

A long line of vehicles develops behind the school bus.

Strategies:

- 1) If possible, allow vehicles to pass the bus before activating the Amber warning lights.
- 2) Make smooth gradual stops to avoid rear-end collisions.

Situation:

Picking up and discharging students on the route.

Strategies:

- 1) Instruct students as to where they should be positioned as the bus approaches the stop.
Students should wait for the bus in an orderly single file, at least 10 steps from the roadway.
 - 2) Students crossing the roadway shall be instructed to cross “only on signal from the bus driver,” **321.372 Code of Iowa**
 - 3) Count all students leaving the bus and again when they reach a safe spot on the same side of the road as their home.
-

continued

Strategies for School Bus Drivers continued:

Situation:

Driver stress

Strategies:

- 1) Recognize that your emotions may interfere with your driving.
 - 2) Cope with problems by realizing they exist, facing them, dealing with them, and not allowing them to bother you further.
 - 3) Leave personal problems at home don't bring them aboard the bus. In the same way, leave your work problems behind when you go home.
-

Situation:

The additional size and weight of a school bus affects how it can be maneuvered.

Strategies:

- 1) A bus requires more time than other vehicles to cross an intersection or to make similar maneuvers.
 - 2) Increased use of mirrors is necessary to drive a large vehicle the size of a bus.
 - 3) A bus requires a larger space cushion of unoccupied space and time for maneuvers.
 - 4) Maintain a minimum of two seconds following distance when traveling behind other vehicles.
 - 5) A bus travels a greater distance before stopping as compared to other vehicles.
-

Situation:

Entering and leaving traffic.

Strategies:

- 1) Check for traffic to the front and rear.
 - 2) Give the proper signal.
 - 3) Check all mirrors for traffic.
 - 4) Check your blind spots.
 - 5) Pull into the nearest lane.
 - 6) When pulling off the roadway to the curb, check the mirrors and pull to the curb and cancel signal.
-

Situation:

Turning right.

Strategies:

- 1) Position the bus toward the right side of the street or road.
- 2) Check for any signs prohibiting right turns.
- 3) Signal; start the right turn signal at least 100 feet when speed limit is less than 45mph, and 300 feet when speed limit is 45mph or greater before the turn.
- 4) Check mirrors, especially the right side.
- 5) Yield the right of way to traffic and pedestrians.
- 6) Turn into the nearest lane, if possible. Allow extra space for the rear end swing and if you must cross into another lane of traffic, make the lane crossover in the road in which you are entering.

continued

Strategies for School Bus Drivers continued:

Situation:

Turning left.

Strategies:

- 1) Position the bus near the center line in two-way traffic, or near the left side of the street in a one-way situation.
- 2) Check for signs prohibiting left turns. You are allowed to make a left turn on a red traffic signal if the turn is made from a one-way street to a one-way street, unless specifically prohibited by signs.
- 3) Signal, start the left turn signal at least 100 feet when the speed limit is less than 45mph, and 300 feet when the speed limit is 45mph or greater ahead of the turn.
- 4) Check all mirrors especially the left side.
- 5) Wait for traffic to clear. If there is oncoming traffic, position the bus partway into the intersection, and wait until traffic clears before completing the turn. Keep the front wheels straight, to prevent being forced into oncoming traffic if the bus is struck in the rear. Wait for pedestrians to clear the sidewalk.
- 6) Make a left turn into the nearest lane heading in the proper direction. Although the traffic signal may have changed to red, you are allowed to complete the turn to clear the intersection. Use extreme care.

Situation:

Changing lanes.

Strategies:

- 1) Check traffic—front and back.
- 2) Give proper signal.
- 3) Check all mirrors.
- 4) Double check the “blind spots.”
- 5) When the lane is clear, move into it gradually, keeping pace with the traffic.
- 6) Cancel the turn signal.

Situation:

Passing.

Strategies:

Consider these factors:

- 1) Bus speed—cannot be increased quickly
- 2) Speed of vehicle ahead
- 3) Time and distance required to pass
- 4) Amount of clear distance available
- 5) Speed of oncoming vehicles
- 6) Distance between the vehicle you plan to pass and the vehicle ahead of it.

Passing procedures:

- 1) Check rearview mirror
- 2) Check all blind spots
- 3) Signal
- 4) Pull into passing lane
- 5) Sound horn
- 6) Pass quickly, but do not exceed posted speed
- 7) Signal to return to original lane
- 8) When the passed vehicle is a safe distance behind the bus, return to original lane

continued

Strategies for School Bus Drivers continued:

Situation:

Entering and leaving an interstate or freeway.

Strategies:

Entering:

- 1) Pull onto proper entrance ramp and be prepared to increase speed, as the ramp becomes the acceleration lane for entering the freeway.
- 2) Check traffic for available spots for entry.
- 3) Signal
- 4) Increase speed to that of freeway traffic
- 5) Yield if necessary
- 6) Merge smoothly with the traffic flow
- 7) Maintain at least a two- second following distance

Leaving:

- 1) Signal
 - 2) Pull into the deceleration lane
 - 3) Slow down to the posted or safe speed
-

Situation:

Adverse weather conditions.

Strategies:

- 1) Reduce speed as it takes a greater distance to stop a bus than a smaller vehicle especially with slippery road conditions.
 - 2) Check lights, wiper blades, defrosters, and other equipment.
 - 3) Don't over steer as a sudden turn of the steering wheel may lead to loss of control of the bus.
 - 4) Brake gradually using light pressure. If your vehicle is equipped with Anti-Lock brakes know how to use them.
 - 5) Begin to brake sooner than usual in bad weather.
 - 6) Give other drivers adequate warning of the stop so they can begin to slow down too.
 - 7) Don't overpower as sudden acceleration may cause skidding.
 - 8) Be certain all lights are operational and clean.
 - 9) Use your strobe light when adverse weather reduces visibility. During adverse weather the strobe light shall be in continuous operation. (Rule 44.3(20) of IAC.
 - 10) Signal your intentions to slow down by touching the brake pedal lightly, well in advance of stop.
-

Situation:

Skid control

Strategies:

- 1) Remove foot from the accelerator.
- 2) Steer in the direction of the skid.
- 3) When the bus begins to straighten out, steer in the opposite direction (away from the skid)
- 4) **Do not apply brake while skidding. Applying brakes will make it harder to control the bus.**

CHAPTER 4

TRANSPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Federal and State laws provide for programs and services to students with special needs. One of those services that are made available to these students is transportation whenever it is deemed necessary.

Federal Laws

Three of the most common Federal laws that will apply to transporting students with special needs are:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, commonly referred to as (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

These Federal laws provide a framework of rules, regulations and guidelines necessary to ensure that a student with disabilities, regardless of how severe, receives a *Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)* at public expense. Transportation is considered a “Related Service” under the FAPE law (Public Law 94-142). These transportation services apply to:

1. Travel to and from school and between schools.
2. Travel in and around school buildings.
3. Specialized equipment (such as special or adaptive buses, lifts, and ramps) if required to provide special education for a handicapped child.

Iowa Laws

The Iowa Code includes Chapter 285, which



describes general transportation laws. The Department of Education’s relevant agency rules in 281—IAC chapters 41, 43, and 44 also address student transportation. Chapter 41 describes special education transportation requirements. Chapter 43 is where you will

find the “general education” requirements for student transportation. Chapter 44 outlines the minimum standards for construction of school transporta-

tion equipment. Chapter 44.5 presents the standards for construction of vehicles for children with mobility impairments of such severity that they cannot use regular service door entrances on vehicles.

In addition to Federal and State laws, your school district may have additional policies and procedures regarding students in special needs programs.

Another requirement stated in the law is a provision for “specialized transportation” of a pupil to and from a special education instructional program. These services can include transportation from the pupil’s residence to the location of the special education services and back to the pupil’s residence.

Students who are eligible for special education services are placed on an *Individualized Education Programs (IEP)* by a specialized team consisting of teachers, administrators, the student’s parents, and experts who are knowledgeable about the student’s disability. This team follows the student throughout his/her educational experience and is ultimately responsible for seeing that the student receives the programs and services necessary for the student to be successful.

The significance of all the information presented above to a school bus driver is that these students are afforded an extra layer of protection when it comes to acts or actions that are directly related to their disabilities. For example, students with identified behavior disorders will, in all probability, exhibit those behaviors while riding on the bus. The frequency of this misbehavior can cause a great deal of frustration in a bus driver. A normal response on the part of the driver would be to write the student up, ask that disciplinary measures be taken against the student, and in some cases, ask that the student lose their bus riding privileges. Safety to other students and to the bus driver is always a primary consideration when a student riding on the bus behaves in an inappropriate way. However, due to the nature of the student’s disability, which in this case is the student’s behavior, it is important that the bus driver document the inap-

appropriate behavior and discuss it with appropriate school personnel. The information that the driver provides to the transportation director, an administrator, or teacher will need to go to the students IEP team for consideration and a plan for resolving the behavior.

Often times, special needs students will require special equipment. If you are not familiar with the equipment used by a student(s) on your bus, you should ask your supervisor for training on this equipment. This type of equipment would include devices such as harnesses, vests, belts, belt cutters, child safety restraint seats, wheelchairs, medical equipment and life saving devices such as EpiPens used for allergic reactions.

Student Confidentiality

The confidentiality of children's educational records is guaranteed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The heart of this law is that information about children and their families cannot be shared with anyone else unless there is a genuine need for the information to protect the child. Schools may not permit "the release of educational records...without the written consent of the parents to any individual, agency, or organization, other than...in connection with an emergency, and appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons."

It is just as important to know that all pertinent information about a student with a disability must be shared with the student's primary bus driver and any substitute drivers. The school's transportation director must also have sufficient information about all students who receive school transportation.

CHAPTER 5

STUDENT MANAGEMENT



... every student who rides a school bus for any reason needs to be informed of safe riding practices and procedures at least twice each school year.

As a school bus driver, you are responsible for the safe transportation of students every day. Safe transportation means not only driving the bus, but also managing the students behavior while they're aboard the bus. A task that can at times be more difficult than driving the bus.

Positive student behavior on the school bus is dependent on the cooperation of everyone involved. Administrators, teachers, parents, students and drivers must know, understand, and support school bus rules, school policies, and applicable State/Federal laws. In addition, each of these groups should know and support the consequences for poor student behavior.

To reinforce positive student behavior, every student who rides a school bus for any reason needs to be informed of safe riding practices and procedures at least twice each school year. 281—IAC 43.40(285)

Reasons for Misbehavior

Misbehavior generally results from one or more of the following four reasons;

- 1) a need for attention;
- 2) a sense of boredom;
- 3) a sense of power or control; or,
- 4) for revenge.

All children seek recognition. So, it's important that as a driver you recognize each student as an individual. You should also recognize that each of these individuals will exhibit different maturity levels regardless of their age. It's also important to remember that the students that you are transporting can be faced with physical, social and/or mental challenges that are affecting their lives every day.

Behavior management includes any interaction designed to bring about or promote a positive behavior. To begin with, it's important that students know the rules for riding the bus and they should clearly understand the consequences for breaking the rules. Students need to see that you are consistent, fair, and professional in your management of the bus. Good student management means to compliment students often for good behavior as well as to discipline students for inappropriate behavior.

School bus drivers cannot afford to become distracted from their driving by student behavior. This can become a difficult challenge at times. If the situation on the bus gets to a point where it is unsafe for other students on the bus or you are unable to concentrate on driving the bus, you should:

1. Safely pull the bus off the road and park it.
2. Turn off the engine
3. Take the keys out of the ignition
4. Stand and speak to the student or students involved, but do not allow yourself to get into a verbal confrontation with a student
5. Remind the students of the bus rules and the consequences for breaking them
6. Take whatever appropriate action might be necessary to resolve the issue
 - Place students in assigned seats
 - Move student to front seat next to driver, but never directly behind you
 - If necessary, call administrator or police for assistance
 - It is not appropriate for a bus driver to remove a student from the bus unless it is at their regularly assigned bus stop or school site

No matter what the necessary action taken, always remain professional and keep your emotions under control. Never hit or touch a student unless it is absolutely necessary to protect the safety of yourself or students on the bus.

Another aspect of being a professional school bus driver has to do with the confidentiality of children's educational records. This confidentiality is guaranteed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The heart of this law is that information about children and their families cannot be shared with anyone else unless there is a genuine need for

the information to protect the child. Schools may not permit "the release of educational records...without the written consent of the parents to any individual, agency, or organization, other than...in connection with an emergency, and appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons."

The driver who understands the needs of children, and who recognizes certain behavior characteristics as attempts by children to develop as mature individuals, can work effectively with the passengers. Good attitudes and behavior can be nurtured by the driver who develops methods of supervision and instruction based on a concern for each individual who rides the bus.

Dealing with groups of students

When confronting inappropriate group behavior, look for an opportunity to focus your interaction on one student. Whenever possible isolate the problem student from the rest of the group before confronting the behavior. Your success in dealing with the behavior will increase if you can break down the "collective personality" that develops when students join forces. By dealing with the most resistant student you can reduce the influence of peer pressure and enable the student to act appropriately as an individual.

Dealing With Young Riders

There are several models or strategies offered to school bus drivers for dealing with inappropriate behavior on the bus. One of those models involves a four step process which encourages students to identify their behavior and determine appropriate outcomes themselves. The four steps are:

1. Encourage the student to identify the problem behavior by asking the question, "What are you doing"?
2. Encourage the student to make a value judgment about the identified behavior by asking the question, "Is that something that you are supposed to be doing on this bus"?
3. Give the student the opportunity to identify the known consequences for his/her actions by asking, "What happens when you (do that thing) on this bus"?
4. You present the student with the choices available for the identified behavior or you can follow through with the known consequences. "It looks like you have a decision to make". "You can either stop what you're doing or you can keep doing it and the consequence is going to be applied".

CHAPTER 6

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency Evacuations

In an emergency it may be necessary that the bus be evacuated. This procedure is not difficult but does require a definite plan followed by periodic practice in emergency evacuation drills.

Reasons for Emergency Evacuation of a School Bus

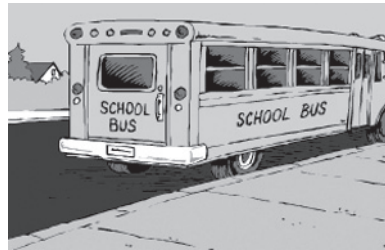
- **Fire or danger of a fire** — If any portion of a school bus is on fire, it should be stopped and evacuated immediately. Passengers should move to a point 100 feet or more from the bus and remain there until the bus driver has determined that no danger remains. If a school bus is unable to move and is close to an existing fire or highly combustible materials, the “danger of fire” should be assumed and all passengers evacuated.
- **Unsafe Location** — In the event that a school bus is stopped in an unsafe location and is unable to proceed, the driver must determine immediately whether it is safer for passengers to remain on the bus or to evacuate.
- **Driver must evacuate a disabled bus** — If the bus is in the path of any train, or on, or closely adjacent to any railroad tracks, evacuate the bus. Also, a bus must be evacuated if final resting place is near a body of water or precipice where it could slide into the water or over a cliff. Danger of collision or reduced visibility is reason enough to consider evacuation.

Important Factors in School Bus Evacuation

- Safety of children is the utmost important reason and first consideration.
- Before evacuation, be sure the bus’s emergency brake is set, ignition is off, the transmission in park/neutral and hang the 2-way radio mic out the window.
- The driver should stay in the bus during evacuation to guarantee smoothness of the evacuation procedures.
- Evacuations should be conducted with “deliberate speed”. A time interval of 1 1/2 to 2 seconds per passenger has proven to be safest and most efficient.
- To insure a safe exit, passengers must have their hands free. They should leave all belongings on the bus.



- Passengers selected and trained in advance should be assigned to serve as leaders and helpers. Leaders will lead passengers to safety. A safety point of at least 100 feet from the bus is recommended. Helpers are two students that are stationed to aid passengers as they leave the bus through the rear emergency exit.



Common Types of School Bus Emergency Evacuation.

- Evacuations utilizing the front or service door should be conducted using the same techniques as a routine unloading. The driver will choose whether to evacuate the bus one side at a time or on a staggered seat basis.
- Evacuations utilizing only the rear exit doors have some distinctive features:
 - 1) The bus driver should walk back through the bus to the rear exit and direct the pre-assigned leader and helpers to take their position.
 - 2) The leader will open the rear emergency door, exit and stand clear, ready to lead exiting passengers to a safe location set by the driver.
 - 3) The helpers will exit and take their position, one on each side of the rear emergency exit to assist passengers in exiting the bus in a safe and orderly manner.
 - 4) Passengers should remain in their seats until directed by the driver to leave the bus. The driver may choose whether to evacuate the bus one side then the other or on a staggered seat basis.
 - 5) The driver should advise all passengers to have their hands free and coats on. Each passenger should be two steps away from the bus before the next person exits. Taller passengers should be reminded to duck their heads in order to exit safely. Younger students should be told to sit at the entrance and “scoot” out the door to lessen the fall distance.

Student School Bus Representatives

- The school bus driver is responsible for the safety of pupils! However, in emergencies, a driver might be incapacitated and unable to direct evacuations. Therefore, school bus representatives (appointed pupils) should be selected, trained, and prepared to direct the evacuation.



The appointed student representatives should be students who are mature and regular riders. It is recommended that written parental permission be on file for these student helpers.

- Training programs should prepare student school bus representatives to be able to:
 - a) set emergency brake
 - b) turn off ignition switch
 - c) summon help when and where needed
 - d) use windows for evacuation in emergencies
 - e) set triangles/reflectors out
 - f) open and close service and emergency exit doors
 - g) direct school bus evacuations
 - h) account for all passengers
 - i) perform other duties as directed by the driver

School Bus Evacuation Drills

- All children shall be given an opportunity to participate in evacuation drills including those children who ride buses only on special trips.
- All children should be instructed in school bus passenger safety and procedures for emergency evacuation prior to participation in evacuation drills.
- School bus evacuation drills should be held more often during fall and spring months.
- Drills should be held in restricted off-street areas and not on a bus route.
- All types of emergency evacuations should be practiced with emphasis on those utilizing the rear emergency exit.
- Rule 43.40 of the IAC states "At least twice during each year, each student who is transported in a school vehicle shall be instructed in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drills."

Emergency Equipment

Drivers should become knowledgeable about the use and location of all emergency equipment. These are hazard flashing lights, reflectors, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and spare fuses.

- **Hazard lights**—flashing hazard lights are part of the lighting system of the school bus. These are used to warn traffic when the bus is disabled, abandoned, or while stopped at railroad crossings.
- **Reflectors**—Each bus is equipped with a container of three reflectors to be used day or night to warn

others that a bus is disabled or abandoned. One is to be placed 10 feet at the front or rear of the stopped vehicle. One at a distance of 100 feet to the front in the center of the traffic lane or shoulder occupied by the vehicle, and the third placed in a similar position 100 feet to the rear.

- **First Aid Kit**—the first aid kit should be stored in the driver's compartment area of the bus. Items used from the kit should be replaced as soon as possible.

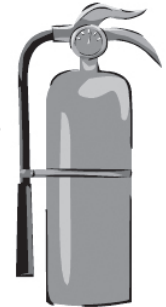
- **Fire Extinguisher**—Every Iowa school bus is equipped with a fire extinguisher with a 2A-10BC rating. This type can be used on combustible liquids (fuel), and electrical wiring.

To operate

- 1) remove from the bracket and hold in an upright position.
- 2) pull the safety pin out.
- 3) Stand up wind of the fire when possible.
- 4) point the discharge tube at the base of the fire.
- 5) squeeze the handle.

Once an extinguisher has been used it must be replaced.

- In the event of an electrical fire, disconnect the battery cables.
- Too much pressure released from the extinguisher while putting out a fuel fire may spatter or spread the fire.
- Use a sweeping motion with the extinguisher aiming at the base of the fire to spread the chemical evenly over the fire.
- If a driver suspects a fire under the hood, first feel the hood's surface before opening. If the hood is hot, open the hood very carefully watching for sudden flare-ups.



Emergencies and Accidents:

- Stop and secure the bus in a safe position
- Remain calm and account for all students
- If necessary, evacuate the bus
- Administer first aid.
- Extinguish any fire.
- Place reflectors according to **321.448 Code of Iowa**.
- Send for help. If other motorists are available have them call for assistance. Every bus should carry emergency names and numbers.
- During inclement weather it is better to remain inside the bus if possible. If the engine remains to run, check passengers frequently for drowsiness, or other symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. If necessary, open windows to ventilate the bus.
- After an accident, follow accident reporting procedures, reporting very clear and concise details. When authorized, continue transporting. A substitute bus may be necessary.



Weather Related Issues

Every driver of a school bus should have some basic knowledge of precautionary measures and information to use when dangerous weather approaches. Here are a few tips:

TORNADOS

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air descending from a thunderstorm cloud and touching the ground. It nearly always starts as a funnel-shaped rotating extension from a thunderstorm cloud, builds downward to the ground and grows dark as it picks up debris. Tornadoes form several thousand feet above the earth's surface, usually during warm, humid, unsettled weather, and usually in conjunction with a severe thunderstorm.



- Most likely to occur at mid afternoon, but they have occurred at all times
- Usually comes from the southwest to northeast
- Average speed is generally from 25 to 40 MPH

Sighting of a tornado while on a route:

- Driver awareness of any and all areas along the routes, such as caves, basements, concrete bridges, and other substantial structures that could be used as a shelter.
- If no shelter, a ditch or depression in the immediate area will have to be used. Evacuate the students into the shelter area, being sure that the bus has been positioned far enough, and in a direction, away from the students so that the wind will not overturn the bus onto them.
- If a funnel is sighted, it is best to evacuate the students from the bus immediately into an appropriate shelter. *Trying to out run a tornado is not a wise decision!*
- Maintain radio communication if possible. Carry a portable radio during threatening periods.

BLIZZARDS

Winter months pose the most concern. Some precautionary measures to consider are:

- Have knowledge of existing and possible weather conditions
- Monitor fuel tank and start with a full tank
- Check exhaust system for leaks
- Set up a calling tree to notify parents of delays or problems
- Do not allow anyone to leave the bus, except at regular stops
- Carry emergency items such as sand
- If stuck and the engine is running, check for exhaust fumes. Exhaust pipes may become plugged with snow. Open windows as necessary. Remain calm and give very clear details of problem and location over the radio. Stay in the bus. If the bus is stalled on the roadway, keep flashing lights going as long as possible.

FLOODS

- Never drive through water when unsure of the roadbed or hidden depressions or objects
- Check all bridges and bridge approaches before crossing if they have not been traveled
- Do not allow students in the water if the depth is unknown
- Check brakes periodically after driving in water

AGRI-CHEMICAL

Be alert to locations where agri-chemicals are being used along the route and watch for potential hazards such as:

- Portable tanks being towed or carried on other vehicles may release fumes that are not visible
- Bulk stations may also release deadly fumes
- Be aware of aerial spraying. Insecticides can be harmful
- All windows and vents should be closed if chemical conditions are encountered

School bus drivers are often faced with:

- **BLEEDING:** Use a clean cloth or sterile dressing, apply and maintain direct pressure over the wound. Lie the person down if possible and raise the feet higher than the head.
- **BURNS:** Raise burned arm or legs higher than the person's heart. Keep the person lying down. Do not break blisters or remove burned skin and do not apply butter, ointments or other home remedies.
- **BROKEN BONES & SPRAINS:** Immobilize the affected extremity in the position found. Apply ice packs to minimize swelling. Never try to push a protruding bone back into the skin.
- **CHOKING:** If a person can speak or cough, then they are able to breathe and the airway is not totally blocked. Encourage the person to cough out the object, so do not interfere with efforts to do so.

If the person can not speak or breathe but is still conscious, you must quickly dislodge the object that is blocking the airway by using the heel of your hand and giving four, quick, very hard blows on the person's back between the shoulder blades.

If the object does not dislodge with blows, then use the Heimlich Maneuver;

1. Stand behind the person and place one clenched fist just below the ribs in the middle, upper abdomen. Place your other hand on top of the first hand
2. Very forcefully pull the clenched fist directly backward and upward under the rib cage (as in a bear hug from behind). This should loosen the object.
3. Repeat procedure until the object does dislodge.

If the person has collapsed;

1. Call for help immediately
 2. Place the person on his back, turn the head to one side, open mouth and look for and remove any visible foreign material
 3. If no visible foreign material is seen, place the heel of your hand on the person's middle upper abdomen and give a forceful push. This should dislodge the foreign material into the mouth, from which it can be removed.
 4. Repeat procedure as often as necessary.
- **HEAD INJURIES:** Do not move the person if a broken neck is suspected. Apply a sterile dressing over the wound. It should be secure and snug and a roller bandage should be used. Severe, deep lacerations

should not be cleaned or irrigated. Heavy pressure should not be applied to severe lacerations. Check for a normal pulse and respiration.

- **UNCONSCIOUSNESS:** Check for an open airway and for a pulse. If the person cannot be roused but is breathing well and has a good pulse, they should be placed on one side so that any stomach contents will not be inhaled if vomiting occurs. If drug ingestion or poison is suspected, the container of the suspected toxin should be taken to the emergency room. Never administer fluids and never induce vomiting.
- **FAINING/DIZZINESS:** If a person reports feeling faint, have them lie down on their back until they feel better. Raise their feet higher than the head. Check their airway for breathing and their pulse. Apply cold compresses to their forehead. If chest pains, convulsion, or severe headache, or if any symptoms associated with fainting last for more than one or two minutes, call for an ambulance.

Fainting is a relatively common problem but always should be considered serious.

- **CONVULSIONS/SEIZURES:** Protect the person from injury and turn the person on one side so that saliva is able to drain out without being inhaled into the lungs. If there is evidence of a head trauma, then it should be assumed there could be a broken neck, and the person should not be moved. Do not force anything into their mouth and do not try to restrain.
- **EPIPEN:** An EpiPen is prescribed for individuals who have had a life threatening reaction secondary to allergies from foods, bee stings, or severe asthmatic reactions. The EpiPen contains Epinephrine, which is the treatment of choice for anaphylactic or severe allergic emergencies. Students with these conditions will usually carry their own EpiPen. Symptoms may include flushing, anxiety, rapid heart rate, tightness in the throat, cough, difficulty swallowing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, itchy skin, rash, hives, and/or vomiting.

How to Use:

1. Remove gray safety cap
2. Place the black tip on the outer thigh. *Do not attempt to inject in a vein or buttocks.*
3. Push EpiPen against the thigh until it activates and injects the medication.
4. Hold in place for several seconds
5. Remove and discard the unit.
6. Seek medical evaluation as soon as possible after use as symptoms may return

CHAPTER 8

D.O.T. DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING: WHAT SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS NEED TO KNOW

Why are safety-sensitive employees tested (School Bus Drivers)?

The short answer is for the safety of the traveling public, co-workers and yourself. The longer answer is that the United States Congress recognized the need for a drug and alcohol free transportation industry, and in 1991 passed the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act, requiring DOT Agencies to implement drug & alcohol testing of safety-sensitive transportation employees.

Within DOT, the Office of the Secretary's Office of Drug & Alcohol Policy & Compliance (ODAPC) publishes rules on how to conduct those tests, what procedures to use when testing and how to return an employee to safety-sensitive duties. Encompassed in 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 40, ODAPC publishes and provides authoritative interpretations of these rules.

DOT agencies and the U.S. Coast Guard write industry specific regulations, spelling out who is subject to testing, when and in what situations. Industry employers implement the regulations that apply to them.

The benefit to all employees affected by DOT regulations is that each agency's regulations must adhere to DOT's testing procedures found at 49 CFR Part 40, commonly know as "Part 40." For example, you may work in the rail industry and later work in the motor carrier industry, but the procedures for collecting, testing and reporting of your tests will be the same under Part 40.

What information must employers provide when I first begin performing DOT safety-sensitive functions?

Depending on the DOT agency over-seeing your industry, your employer may be required to provide you with educational materials and a company policy that explain the requirements of DOT's drug & alcohol testing regulations and the procedures to help you comply. If you have not received this information, be sure to ask your employer about it.

What conduct is prohibited by the regulations?

As a safety-sensitive employee:

- You must not use or possess alcohol or any illicit drug while assigned to perform a safety-sensitive function or actually performing safety-sensitive functions.
- You must not report for service, or remain on duty if you...
 1. Are under the influence or impaired by alcohol;
 2. Have a blood alcohol concentration .04 or greater; (with a blood alcohol concentration of .02 to .039, some regulations do not permit you to continue working until your next regularly scheduled duty period);
 3. Have used any illicit drug.
- You must not use alcohol within four hours (8 hours for flight crew members and flight attendants) of reporting for service or after receiving notice to report.
- You must not report for duty or remain on duty when using any controlled substance unless used pursuant to the instructions of an authorized medical practitioner.
- You must not refuse to submit to any test for alcohol or controlled substances.
- You must not refuse to submit to any test by adulterating or substituting your specimen.



What drugs does DOT test for?

DOT drug tests are conducted only using urine specimens. The urine specimens are analyzed for the following drugs/metabolites:

- Marijuana metabolites /THC
- Cocaine metabolites
- Amphetamines (including methamphetamine)
- Opiates (including codeine, heroin, morphine)
- Phencyclidine (PCP)

Can I use prescribed medications & over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and perform safety-sensitive functions?

Prescription medicine and OTC drugs may be allowed. However, you must meet the following minimum standards:

- The medicine is prescribed to you by a licensed physician, such as your personal doctor.
- If you are being treated by more than one medical practitioner, you must show that at least one of the treating medical practitioners has been informed of all prescribed and authorized medications and has determined that the use of the medications is consistent with the safe performance of your duties.
- The treating/prescribing physician has made a good faith judgment that the use of the substance at the prescribed or authorized dosage level is consistent with the safe performance of your duties.



Best Practice: To assist your doctor in prescribing the best possible treatment, consider providing your physician with a detailed description of your job. A title alone may not be sufficient. Many employers give employees a written, detailed description of their job functions to provide their doctors at the time of the exam.

- The substance is used at the dosage prescribed or authorized.
- If you are being treated by more than one physician, you must show that at least one of the treating doctors has been informed of all prescribed and authorized medications and has determined that the use of the medications is consistent with the safe performance of your duties.
- Taking the prescription medication and performing your DOT safety-sensitive functions is not prohibited by agency drug and alcohol regulations. However, other DOT agency regulations may have prohibitive provisions, such as medical certifications.

When will I be tested?

Safety-sensitive employees are subject to drug or alcohol testing in the following situations:

- Pre-employment.
- Reasonable Suspicion/Cause.
- Random.
- Return-to-duty.
- Follow-up.
- Post-Accident.

Pre-Employment

As a new hire, you are required to submit to a drug test. Employers may, but are not required to, conduct alcohol testing. Only after your employer receives a negative drug test result (and negative alcohol test result - if administered) may you begin performing safety-sensitive functions. This also applies if you are a current employee transferring from a non-safety-sensitive function into a safety-sensitive position (even if it is the same employer).

Reasonable Suspicion/Cause

You are required to submit to any test (whether drug, alcohol or both) that a supervisor requests based on reasonable suspicion. Reasonable suspicion means that one or more trained supervisors reasonably believes or suspects that you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. They cannot require testing based on a hunch or guess alone; their suspicion must be based on observations concerning your appearance, behavior, speech and smell that are usually associated with drug or alcohol use.

Random

You are subject to unannounced random drug & alcohol testing. Alcohol testing is administered just prior to, during or just after performing safety-sensitive functions. Depending on the industry specific regulations, you may only be subject to random drug testing. No manager, supervisor, official or agent may select you for testing just because they want to. Under DOT regulations, employers must use a truly random selection process. Each employee must have an equal chance to be selected and tested.

Just prior to the testing event, you will be notified of your selection and provided enough time to stop performing your safety sensitive function and report to the testing location. Failure to show for a test or interfering with the testing process can be considered a refusal.

Post-Accident

If you are involved in an event (accident, crash, etc.) meeting certain criteria of the DOT agency, a post-accident test will be required. You will then have to take a drug test and an alcohol test. You are required to remain available for this testing and are not permitted to refuse testing. Remember: Safety-sensitive employees are obligated by law to submit to and cooperate in drug & alcohol testing mandated by DOT regulations.

Return to Duty

If you have violated the prohibited drug & alcohol rules, you are required to take a drug and/or alcohol test before returning to safety-sensitive functions for any DOT regulated employer. You are subject to unan-

nounced follow-up testing at least 6 times in the first 12 months following your return to active safety-sensitive service.

Follow-up

The amount of follow-up testing you receive is determined by a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) and may continue for up to 5 years. This means the SAP will determine how many times you will be tested (at least 6 times in the first year), for how long, and for what substance (i.e. drugs, alcohol, or both). Your employer is responsible for ensuring that follow-up testing is conducted and completed, and your employer may have a policy that all follow-up tests are collected under direct observation. Follow-up testing is in addition to all other DOT required testing. USCG & PHMSA do not perform random alcohol tests. In post-accident testing, the FRA requires a blood specimen for drug testing.

Overview of DOT Drug Testing

1. You are notified to submit for a drug test.
2. Why
 - Pre-employment
 - Reasonable Suspicion
 - Random
 - Post-Accident
 - Medical Review
 - Return-to-duty
 - Follow-up
3. You report immediately to the collection site.
4. Urine Collection
 - Verify ID
 - Empty Pockets
 - Select Sealed Kit
 - Provide 45 ml + of urine
 - Watch collector check temp and pour into two bottles
 - Watch collector seal bottles A & B
 - Sign paperwork
5. Lab Testing
 - Analyzes bottle A
 - Results sent to Medical Review Officer (MRO)
6. Medical Review

As gate-keeper to the integrity of the drug testing process, the MRO reviews lab results and determines if there are any legitimate medical reasons for a positive, adulterated or substituted result. This includes an interview with you, review of your medical records or a request that you be examined by an MRO approved physician.
7. Employees' Rights

Upon notice by the MRO, you have 72 hours from the MRO interview to request the B bottle be tested by another certified lab.
8. Verified Results

MRO verifies results to employer as either:

- Negative
- Positive
- Refusal
- Cancelled

How is a urine drug test administered?

Regardless of the DOT agency requiring the drug test, the drug testing process always consists of three components:

- The Collection. (49 CFR Part 40, Subparts C, D, E)
- Testing at the Laboratory. (49 CFR Part 40, Subpart F)
- Review by the Medical Review Officer. (49 CFR Part 40, Subpart G)

The Collection

During the collection process, a urine specimen collector will:

- Verify your identity using a current valid photo ID, such as driver's license, passport, employer issued picture ID, etc.
- Create a secure collection site by:
 1. Restricting access to the site to only those being tested.
 2. Securing all water sources and placing blue dye in any standing water.
 3. Removing or securing all cleaning products/fluids at the collection site.
- Afford you privacy to provide a urine specimen. Exceptions to the rule generally surround issues of attempted adulteration or substitution of a specimen or any situation where general questions of validity arise, like an unusual temperature.
- Ask you to remove any unnecessary garments and empty your pockets (you may retain your wallet).
- Instruct you to wash and dry your hands.
- Select or have you select a sealed collection kit and open it in your presence.
- Request you to provide a specimen (a minimum of 45 mL) of your urine into a collection container.
- Check the temperature and color of the urine.
- In your presence, pour the urine into two separate bottles (A or primary and B or split), seal them with tamper-evident tape, and then ask you to sign the seals after they have been placed on the bottles. Remember: Neither you nor the collector should let the specimen out of your sight until it has been poured into two separate bottles and sealed.
- Ask you to provide your name, date of birth, and daytime and evening phone numbers on the Medical Review Officer Copy (Copy #2) of the Federal Drug Testing Custody and Control Form (CCF). This is so the Medical Review Officer (MRO) can

contact you directly if there are any questions about your test.

- Complete necessary documentation on the Laboratory Copy (Copy #1) of the CCF to demonstrate the chain of custody (i.e. handling) of the specimen.
- Give you the Employee Copy (Copy # 5) of the CCF and may suggest you list any prescription and over-the-counter medications you may be taking on the back of your copy of the CCF (this may serve as a reminder for you in the event the MRO calls you to discuss your test results). Package and ship both sealed bottles and completed CCF to a U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) certified testing laboratory as quickly as possible. If you are unable to provide 45 mL of urine on the first attempt, the time will be noted, and you will be:
- Required to remain in the testing area under the supervision of the collection site personnel, their supervisor, or a representative from your company,

Leaving the testing area without authorization may be considered a refusal to test.

- Urged to drink up to 40 oz. of fluid, distributed reasonably over a period of up to three hours,
- Asked to provide a new specimen (into a new collection container).
- If you do not provide a sufficient specimen within three hours, you must obtain a medical evaluation within five days to determine if there is an acceptable medical reason for not being able to provide a specimen. If it is determined that there is no legitimate physiological or pre-existing psychological reason for not providing a urine specimen, it will be considered a refusal to test.

Testing at the Laboratory

At the laboratory, the staff will:

- Determine if flaws exist. If it does, the specimen is rejected for testing.
- Open only the A bottle and conduct a screening test. Specimens that screen positive will be analyzed again using a completely different testing methodology to confirm the initial result.
 1. If the specimen tests negative in either test, the result will be reported as a negative.
 2. Only if the specimen tests positive under both methods will the specimen be reported to the medical review officer as a positive test.
- Report the findings of the analysis of the A bottle to the Medical Review Officer (MRO),
- Store the A and B bottles for any reported positive, adulterated, or substituted result for at least 12 months.

Remember: The Lab may conduct specimen validity tests (SVTs) to determine if the specimen was adulterated or substituted. Tests found to be adulterated or substituted are also reported to the MRO and may be considered a refusal to test.

Review by the Medical Review Officer (MRO)

Upon receipt of the test result from the laboratory, the MRO will:

- Review paperwork for accuracy.
- Report a negative result to the Designated Employer Representative (DER);
- If the result is positive, conduct an interview with you to determine if there is a legitimate medical reason for the result. If a legitimate medical reason is established, the MRO will report the result to the DER as negative. If not, the MRO will report the result to the DER as positive.
- If the result is an adulterated or substituted test, conduct an interview with you to determine if there is a legitimate medical reason for the result. If a legitimate medical reason is established, the MRO will report the result to the DER as cancelled. If not, the MRO will report the result to the DER as a refusal.
- Report a non-negative test result to the DER if:
 1. You refused to discuss the results with the MRO;
 2. You did not provide the MRO with acceptable medical documentation to explain the non-negative test result.
- Inform you that you have 72 hours from the time of the verified result to request to have your B “split” bottle sent to another certified lab for analysis for the same substance or condition that was found in the A “primary” bottle

What are Medical Review Officers (MRO)?

Under DOT regulations, MROs are licensed physicians with knowledge and clinical experience in substance abuse disorders. They must also complete qualification training courses and fulfill obligations for continuing education courses. They serve as independent, impartial gatekeepers to the accuracy and integrity of the DOT drug testing program. All laboratory results are sent to an MRO for verification before a company is informed of the result. As a safeguard to quality and accuracy, the MRO reviews each test and rules out any other legitimate medical explanation before verifying the results as positive, adulterated or substituted.

How is an alcohol test administered?

The DOT performs alcohol testing in a manner to ensure the validity of the testing as well as provide confidentiality of the employee's testing information. At the start of the test, a Screening Test Technician (STT) or a Breath Alcohol Technician (BAT), using only a DOT approved device, will:

- Establish a private testing area to prevent unauthorized people from hearing or seeing your test result.
- Require you to sign Step #2 of the Alcohol Testing Form (ATF).
- Perform a screening test and show you the test result. If the screening test result is an alcohol concentration of less than 0.02, no further testing is authorized, and there is no DOT action to be taken. The technician will document the result on the ATF, provide you a copy and provide your employer a copy.

If the screening test result is 0.02 or greater, you will be required to take a confirmation test, which can only be administered by a BAT using an Evidential Breath Testing (EBT) device. The BAT will:

- Wait at least 15-minutes, but not more than 30 minutes, before conducting the confirmation test. During that time, you are not allowed to eat, drink, smoke, belch, put anything in your mouth or leave the testing area.

Remember: Leaving the testing area without authorization may be considered a refusal to test.

- Perform an "air blank" (which must read 0.00) on the EBT device to ensure that there is no residual alcohol in the EBT or in the air around it.
- Perform a confirmation test using a new mouth-piece.
- Display the test result to you on the EBT and on the printout from the EBT.
- Document the confirmation test result on the ATF, provide you a copy and provide your employer a copy.
- Report any result of 0.02 or greater immediately to the employer.

If after several attempts you are unable to provide an adequate amount of breath, the testing will be stopped. You will be instructed to take a medical evaluation to determine if there is an acceptable medical reason for not providing a sample. If it is determined that there is no legitimate physiological or psychological reason, the test will be treated as a refusal to test.

Confirmation test results are the final outcome of the test.

Should I refuse a test if I believe I was unfairly selected for testing?

Rule of Thumb: Comply then make a timely complaint.

If you are instructed to submit to a DOT drug or alcohol test and you don't agree with the reason or rationale for the test, take the test anyway. Don't interfere with the testing process or refuse the test.

After the test, express your concerns to your employer through a letter to your company's dispute resolution office, by following an agreed upon labor grievance or other company procedures. You can also express your concerns to the appropriate DOT agency drug & alcohol program office.

What is considered a refusal to test?

DOT regulations prohibit you from refusing a test. The following are some examples of conduct that the regulations define as refusing a test (See 49 CFR Part 40 Subpart I & Subpart N):

- Failure to appear for any test after being directed to do so by your employer.
- Failure to remain at the testing site until the testing process is complete.
- Failure to provide a urine or breath samples for any test required by federal regulations.
- Failure to permit the observation or monitoring of you providing a urine sample (Please note tests conducted under direct observation or monitoring occur in limited situations. The majority of specimens are provided in private).
- Failure to provide a sufficient urine or breath sample when directed, and it has been determined, through a required medical evaluation, that there was not adequate medical explanation for the failure.
- Failure to take a second test when directed to do so.
- Failure to cooperate with any part of the testing process.
- Failure to undergo a medical evaluation as part of "shy bladder" or "shy lung" procedures.
- Failure to sign Step #2 of the ATF.
- Providing a specimen that is verified as adulterated or substituted.

What happens if I test positive, refuse a test, or violate an agency specific drug & alcohol rule?

If you test positive, refuse a test, or violate DOT drug & alcohol rules:

- A supervisor or company official will immediately remove you from DOT-regulated safety-sensitive functions.
- You will not be permitted to return to performing DOT regulated safety-sensitive duties until you have:
 1. Undergone an evaluation by a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP);
 2. Successfully completed any education, counseling or treatment prescribed by the SAP prior to returning to service;
- Provided a negative test result for drugs and a breath test less than 0.02 of alcohol. (Return to duty testing).
- Upon return to a safety-sensitive job, you will be subject to unannounced testing for drugs and/or alcohol no less than 6 times during the first 12 months of active service with the possibility of unannounced testing for up to 60 months (as prescribed by the SAP).

What are SAPs?

Under DOT regulations, SAPs are Substance Abuse Professionals. They play a critical role in the workplace testing program by professionally evaluating employees who have violated DOT drug & alcohol rules. SAPs recommend appropriate education, treatment, follow-up tests, and aftercare. They are the gatekeepers to the re-entry program by determining when a safety-sensitive employee can be returned to duty.

SAPs are required to have a certain background and credentials, which include clinical experience in diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse-related disorders. They must also complete qualification training and fulfill obligations for continuing education courses. While SAPs do make recommendations to the employer about an employee's readiness to perform safety-sensitive duties, SAPs are neither an advocate for the employee or the employer, and they make return-to-duty recommendations according to their professional and ethical standards as well as DOT's regulations.

Remember: Even if a SAP believes that you are ready to return to work, an employer is under no obligation to return you to work. Under the regulations, hiring and reinstatement decisions are left to the employer.

How do I find a SAP?

There are several resources to finding a SAP. If you violate a DOT drug or alcohol rule, your employer is required to provide you with a list of SAPs' names, addresses and phone numbers that are available to you and acceptable to them.

Will I lose my job if I violate drug & alcohol regulations?

DOT regulations do not address employment actions such as hiring, firing or granting leaves of absence. All employment decisions are the responsibility of the employers. Under Federal regulations, the main requirement for employers is to immediately remove employees from performing DOT safety-sensitive jobs. Be aware that a positive or refused DOT drug or alcohol test may trigger additional consequences based on company policy or employment agreement. While you may not lose your job, you may lose your certification or license to perform that job. Be sure to check industry specific regulations. For example, someone operating a commercial motor vehicle may not lose their state-issued CDL, but they will lose their ability to perform any DOT regulated safety-sensitive tasks.

Will my results be confidential?

Your test results are confidential. An employer or service agent (e.g. testing laboratory, MRO or SAP) are not permitted to disclose your test results to outside parties without your written consent. But, your test information may be released (without your consent) in certain situations, such as: legal proceedings, grievances, or administrative proceedings brought by you or on your behalf, which resulted from a positive or refusal. When the information is released, the employer must notify you in writing of any information they released.

Will the results follow me to different employers? Yes, your drug & alcohol testing history will follow you to your new employer, if that employer is regulated by a DOT agency. Employers are required by law to provide records of your drug & alcohol testing history to your new employer. This is to ensure that you have completed the return-to-duty process and are being tested according to your follow-up testing plan.

What should I do if I have a drug or alcohol abuse problem?

Seek help. Jobs performed by safety-sensitive transportation employees keep America's people and economy moving. Your work is a vital part of everyday life.

Employers cannot charge employees for the SAP list.

Most every community in the country has resources available to confidentially assist you through the evaluation and treatment of your problem. If you would like to find a treatment facility close to you, check with your local yellow pages, local health department or visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services treatment facility locator at <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>. This site provides contact information for substance abuse treatment programs by state, city and U.S. Territory.

Also, many work-place programs are in place to assist employees and family members with substance abuse, mental health and other problems that affect their job performance. While they may vary by industry, here is an overview of programs that may be available to you:

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

While not required by DOT agency regulations, EAPs may be available to employees as a matter of company policy. EAPs are generally provided by employers or unions. **Note:** Many employees believe they only need to contact an EAP counselor if they have a positive drug and/or alcohol test. Not true!

EAP programs vary considerably in design and scope. Some focus only on substance abuse problems; others undertake a broad brush approach to a range of employee and family problems. Some include prevention, health and wellness activities. Some are linked to the employee health benefit structures. These programs offer nearly full privacy and confidentiality, unless someone's life is in danger.

Voluntary Referral Programs

Often sponsored by employers or unions, referral programs provide an opportunity to self-report to your employer a substance abuse problem before you violate testing rules. This gives you an opportunity for evaluation and treatment, while at times guaranteeing your job. Be sure to check your company to see if there is a voluntary referral program.

Remember: Self-reporting just after being notified of a test does not release you from your responsibility of taking the test, and it also does not qualify as a voluntary referral.

Peer Reporting Programs

Generally sponsored by employers or unions, you are encouraged or required to identify co-workers with substance abuse problems. The safety of everyone depends on it. Using peers to convince troubled friends and co-workers with a problem is one of the strengths of the program, often guaranteeing the co-worker struggling with substance abuse issues the same benefits as if he had self-reported.

Education and Training Programs (required by all Agencies)

Topics may include the effects of drugs & alcohol use, company testing policies, DOT testing regulations and the consequences of a positive test. Materials may also contain information on how employees can get in touch with their Employee Assistance Programs and community service hot-lines.

In addition, supervisors sometimes receive additional training in the identification and documentation of signs and symptoms of employee's drug and/or alcohol use that trigger a reasonable suspicion drug or alcohol test.

CHAPTER 9

HEAD START STUDENTS

What is the Head Start Program?

Head Start began in 1965 as part of the War On Poverty Program created by President Lyndon Johnson. The aim of the program is to provide health, nutrition and educational services to disadvantaged children ages 5 and under.

Preschoolers have lots of energy and working with them on the bus can be a real challenge. They can be very frustrating do to there lack of understanding and attention. It's important for you as an adult and a bus driver to understand that they have just not developed mentally to comprehend adult reasoning. They are motivated by excitement and what's interesting, not what is logical. You will more successful if you use clear language and simple statements.

Getting preschoolers to learn can be accomplished through repetition and reinforcement. This is especially true for information you want the child to learn that relates to safety. The information should be repeated responsibly to the child every day. Having a short attention span is exhibited by children of all ages, but it is especially true of preschoolers.

Another consistency that must be maintained and controlled is the bus drivers emotional state. Even when you as a driver are having a bad day, you must remain positive. Uncontrolled language and angry gestures will not create the desired result. In fact, it will probably result in the preschoolers mimicking your behavior.

Head Start Transportation Rules

The rules for transporting children in a yellow school bus who are enrolled in a Federal Head Start program (45 CFR 1310.17) differ in several ways from State law that applies to children ages 0-4 and who are not in Head Start programs. Each vehicle that transports a Head Start student(s) must:

- Use child safety restrain systems
- Use seat belts.
- Have a seat belt cutter on board.
- Have a bus aide / monitor on board.
- Only release children to a parent or legal guardian.

- Have an up-to-date class roster on board.
- Have a back-up beeper installed and used.
- Train bus drivers within first 90 days of employment.
- Have a first aid kit required on board with a sign indicating it's location.
- Have a fire extinguisher on board, mounted by the drivers' seat, and, a sign indicating it's location.
- Have a communication system on board to call for assistance in an emergency.
- Conduct and document emergency evacuation drills at least 3 times each year.

Using Child Safety Restraint Systems

As stated above, the use of child safety restraint systems for Head Start children is mandated by Federal Law, even though, Iowa law currently exempts the use of child safety restraint systems on regular (16 passenger or more including the driver, or vehicles with a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more) school buses. Federal law takes precedence and Head Start children need to be placed in child safety restraints when being transported in any school vehicle.

Student Confidentiality

The same confidentiality of student records and information apply to Head Start students as they do with all students. Bus drivers have been sued by parents for revealing confidential information about their children and their families.

The confidentiality of children's educational records is guaranteed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The heart of this law is that information about children and their families cannot be shared with anyone else unless there is a genuine need for the information to protect the child. Schools may not permit "the release of educational records... without the written consent of the parents to any individual, agency, or organization, other than...in connection with an emergency, and appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons."

CHAPTER 10

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

One of the most powerful icons in America is the yellow school bus. Day in and day out, over 475,000 school buses travel more than 4 billion miles each year, safely carrying over 25 million children to and from school.

The fact is, the yellow school bus has been designed and redesigned so many times that it has become 46 times safer than the family car.

But the school buses design is not enough to keep kids completely safe. Most school bus accidents involving kids happen outside the bus.

School bus drivers, parents and students all play an important role in school bus safety.

The State of Iowa and your school district have very strict requirements for initial training and annual re-training of school bus drivers. Safety, both inside and outside the bus is the most important training issue.

School bus drivers are trained professionals, but they need the help of parents, students and motorists to ensure a safe and pleasant bus trip for everyone.

Iowa law requires that any student who rides in a school vehicle must be informed by the school bus driver of the safe riding practices, school bus rules and how to safely evacuate the school bus in an emergency. This information is required to be given to students twice each school year.

School Bus Rules

Some students will be required to cross the street to meet the bus. The law requires the school bus driver to use a specified district hand signal that is taught to students to safely cross them in front of the bus during loading and unloading procedures.

The following bus rules should be told to students often and even posted inside the bus as daily reminders.

Getting To the Bus

- Students should be at the bus stop on time
- They should give themselves plenty of time
- They should carry books and other objects in book bags

Getting On the Bus

- Students should stand back from the bus 10 feet (5 giant steps)

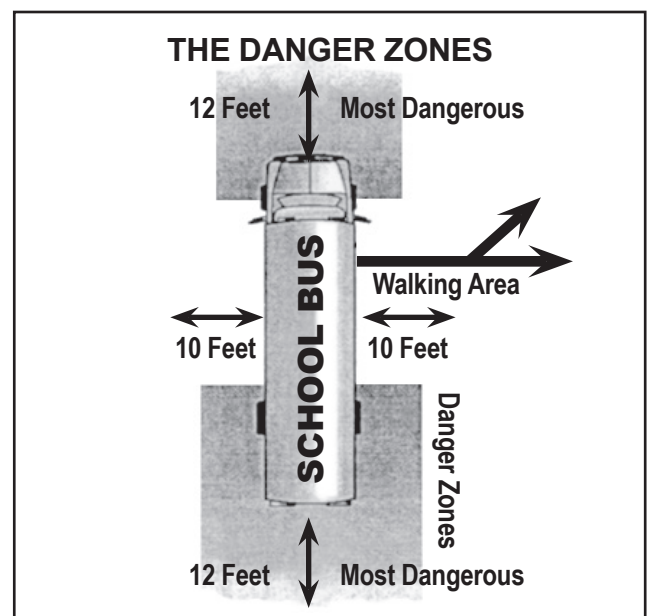
- They should not push, shove or run toward the bus
- They should enter the bus single file and use the hand rail
- They should go directly to their seat
- They should place bags or other objects under their seat

Riding On the Bus

- They should sit where they are suppose to
- They should sit quietly, facing forward with both feet on the floor
- They should keep hands, feet and inappropriate comments to themselves
- They should not throw or shine anything out of the windows
- They should not put their head, hands or arms out the window
- They should keep the bus aisle clear
- They should stop talking and sit quietly at the railroad crossings and other times when you the driver need quiet for safety reasons

Getting Off the Bus

Drivers and students must be aware of the “school bus danger zones”. School bus drivers should always count students as they leave the bus and account for all of them before leaving the stop. If a student is unaccounted for, the driver should not move the bus. The driver should place the transmission in neutral, set the emergency brake, turn off the ignition and take the key before exiting the bus to look to see that the student is not around or under the bus.



Again, school bus drivers are required by law to signal students when it is safe to cross in front of the bus and cross the street when unloading. Drivers should also place one hand over the horn during this procedure in the event that a motorist presents an immediate danger to the crossing student.

- Students should get off the bus single file and use the hand rail
- They should move 10 feet (5 giant steps) away from the bus
- They should never stop to pick up something that they dropped near the bus
- If they have to cross in front of the bus, they should make sure they can see you, the driver
- They should always make eye contact with the driver before crossing
- They should wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross
- They should go directly to where they are supposed to after leaving the bus
- Students should be told never to stop to talk to strangers and to never get into cars unless they are suppose to

Motorists are an important part of the school bus danger zone. More than one-third of all the children killed outside the school bus are run over by motorists who illegally pass a stopped school bus loading or unloading students.

As a school bus driver, you should know...

- It is illegal for a motorist to pass a school bus from the rear once you have turned on the amber warning lights prior to making your stop and putting your stop arm out. Iowa code 321.372.
- It is illegal for a motorist to pass a school bus from the front, from any direction, once the "stop arm" is extended.
- Motorist should stop no closer than 15 feet front or rear of your stopped school bus.
- If a school bus stops on a highway with three lanes or less, all traffic must stop for the bus, even if the motorists have two lanes going toward the bus.
- When there are four or more lanes, the motorists coming toward the bus do not have to stop. Motorists traveling in the lanes going in the same direction of the bus do have to stop.
- If another motorist passes your bus illegally while either loading or unloading students, it is your responsibility as a school bus driver to report the motorist to law enforcement authorities. Reporting forms are provided by the Iowa State Patrol and should be readily available from your school transportation director. Be sure to file your report immediately while all the details are still fresh in your mind.

Activity Trips

Iowa Administrative Code 281-IAC 43.10(4) requires that the bus be driven by a regularly approved driver holding an appropriate driver's license and a school bus driver's authorization. In addition, the bus must be accompanied by a member of the faculty or other employee of the school or a parent or other adult volunteer, acting as chaperone for the students both on and off the bus. If the faculty member is an approved bus driver, that person can act both as driver and chaperone.

The Exterior Strobe Light 281—IAC

44.4(24)"m" The Iowa Administrative Code requires that the strobe light be turned on by the driver when visibility is reduced by fog, rain, snow or at other times when visibility is restricted. This does not mean during night time hours just because it is dark.

Unattended Motor Vehicle Iowa Code 321.362

According to the Iowa Motor Vehicle Code, no person driving or in charge of a motor vehicle shall permit it to stand unattended without first stopping the engine.

If you as a school bus driver need to leave your vehicle for any reason, you must turn off your engine, set the brake, and take the keys with you. Even if you are driving a nine passenger or less vehicle, and even if you are transporting infants or pre-school children. If you leave your vehicle for any reason and for any amount of time, you must take the keys with you.

Head Lights Turned On Iowa Code 321.372

A school bus shall, while carrying passengers, have it's head lights turned on.

Head lights must be used on all school vehicles, regardless of size or number of passengers. This includes cars, vans, station wagons or SUV's.

This section of the Motor Vehicle Code also states that when a school bus is operating on a highway with four or more lanes, the bus shall not stop to load or unload pupils who must cross the highway, except at designated stops where pupils who must cross the highway may do so at points where there are official traffic control devices or police officers.

Mirrors (281—IAC 44.4(26) & Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 111

Proper adjustment and use of all mirrors is vital to the safe operation of the school bus in order to observe the danger zone around the bus and look for students, traffic, and other objects in this area.

You should always check each mirror before operating the school bus to obtain maximum viewing area consistent with the vision requirements of FMVSS 111. If you are unfamiliar with this standard you should ask your transportation supervisor for a copy.

Outside Left and Right Side Flat Mirrors

The Outside Left and Right Side Flat mirrors are mounted at the left and right front corners of the bus at the side or front of the windshield. They are used to monitor traffic, check clearances and students on the sides and to the rear of the bus. There is a blind spot immediately below and in front of each mirror and directly in back of the rear bumper. The blind spot behind the bus could extend up to 400 feet depending on the width of the bus.

Ensure that the mirrors are properly adjusted so you can see:

- 200 feet or 4 bus lengths behind the bus
- Along the sides of the bus
- The rear tires touching the ground

Convex Mirrors

The Convex mirrors are located below the outside flat mirrors. They are used to monitor the left and right sides at a wide angle. They provide a view of traffic, clearances, and students at the side of the bus. These mirrors present a view of people and objects that does not accurately reflect their size and distance from the bus.

If these mirrors are properly adjusted you should be able to see:

- The entire side of the bus up to the mirror mounts
- Front of the rear tires touching the ground
- At least one traffic lane on either side of the bus

Outside Left and Right Side Cross View Mirrors

The Outside Left and Right Side Cross View mirrors are mounted on both left and right front corners of the bus. They are used to see the “danger zone” area directly in front of the bus that is not visible by direct vision, and to view the “danger zone” areas to the left side and right side of the bus, including the service door and front wheel areas. The mirror presents a view of people and objects that does not accurately reflect their size and distance from the bus.

These mirrors are properly adjusted if you can see:

- The entire area in front of the bus from the front bumper at ground level to a point where direct vision is possible. Direct vision and mirror view vision should overlap.
- The right and left front tires touching the ground.
- The area from the front of the bus to the service door.
- These mirrors, along with the convex and flat mirrors, should be viewed in a logical sequence to ensure that a child or object is not in any of the danger zones.

Overhead Inside Rearview Mirror

The Overhead Inside Rearview mirror is mounted directly above the windshield on the driver’s side area of the bus. This mirror is used to monitor passenger activity inside the bus. It may provide limited visibility directly behind the bus if the bus is equipped with a glass-bottomed rear emergency door. There is a blind spot area directly behind the driver’s seat as well as a large blind spot area that begins at the rear bumper and could extend up to 400 feet or more behind the bus. You must use exterior mirrors to monitor traffic that approaches and enters this area.

These mirrors are properly adjusted if you can see:

- The top of the rear window in the top of the mirror.
- All of the students, including the heads of the students right behind you.

Anti-lock Braking Systems

The Department of Transportation requires that anti-lock braking systems be on:

- Air brakes vehicles, (trucks, buses, trailers and converter dollies) built on or after March 1, 1998.
- Hydraulically braked trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 lbs or more built on or after March 1, 1999.

Your school bus will have a yellow ABS malfunction lamp on the instrument panel if it is equipped with ABS.

When you brake hard on slippery surfaces in a vehicle without ABS, your wheels may lock up. When your steering wheels lock up, you lose steering control. When your other wheels lock up, you may skid or even spin the vehicle.

ABS helps you avoid wheel lock up and maintain control. You may or may not be able to stop faster with ABS, but you should be able to steer around an obstacle while braking, and avoid skids caused by over braking.

When you drive a vehicle with ABS, you should brake as you always do.

- Use only the braking force necessary to stop safely and stay in control.
- Brake the same way, regardless of whether you have ABS on the bus. However, in emergency braking, do not pump the brakes on a bus with ABS.
- As you slow down, monitor your bus and back off the brakes (if it is safe to do so) to stay in control.

When making a hard braking maneuver with an ABS-equipped vehicle, remember the three “S’s”:

- Stomp – hard on the brake pedal
- Stay – on the brake pedal
- Steer – the vehicle away from an accident

Without ABS, you still have normal brake functions. Drive and brake as you always have. If your ABS fails, you still have regular brakes.

As a system check on newer vehicles, the malfunction lamp comes on at start-up for a bulb check and then goes out quickly. On older systems, the lamp could stay on until you are driving over five miles per hour.

If the lamp stays on after the bulb check, or goes on once you are under way, you may have lost ABS control at one or more wheels.

ABS is an add-on to your brake system, not a replacement. It only comes into play when a wheel would normally have locked up due to over-braking.

Protecting Your Student Passengers

As a school bus driver your primary responsibility are the students on your bus.

You should never allow unauthorized persons to board your bus. This includes parents who may be waiting at bus stops or activity events. Persons who wish to talk to you should be asked to approach the bus at the driver's side window.

This rule also applies to unusual behavior along your bus route or at bus stops. Any individuals who approach the bus at a bus stop should be told or motioned to go to the driver's side window to talk to you. Never open the door for strangers or in situations that appear unusual or uncertain. Even if that individual is a parent who does not normally meet their child at the

bus stop. The parent should be encouraged to call the school. If a change is to occur in the manner in which the student will be picked up at the bus stop, that information should come from the school and not the parent. Notify the school by radio of the situation and wait to be advised of what to do.

The students who ride your bus can be the key to knowing whether there is something wrong at a bus stop. Pay attention to students who board the bus crying or upset. Encourage students to talk to you, a teacher or an administrator about what is wrong. Report any conversations you over hear among students about strange individuals or vehicles parked at or near the bus stop. Students should be assured that strangers who are bothering them or others, bullying, gang activity, and harassment will not be tolerated at the bus stop. You should also be aware of students who might be hiding something in clothing or bags.

If you are involved in an accident, the laws are quite specific as to what you the driver are required to do. In most cases you are required to stay at the scene of the accident. In these cases, you should notify the school or school personnel so that any students on board the bus can be removed by another school vehicle.

However, if you come upon an accident or distressed individuals while you have students on board the bus, the best course of action is to call the school or local authorities to inform them of the accident or situation. You should never leave students unattended on the bus or allow unauthorized individuals on the bus, even if they appear injured.

CHAPTER 11

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Is there a limit to the amount of time a student can ride on a school bus?

ANSWER: YES! "The riding time, under normal conditions, from the designated stop to the attendance center, or on the return trip, shall not exceed 75 minutes for high school pupils or 60 minutes for elementary pupils. (These limits may be waived upon request of the parents.)" 281-IAC 43.1(3)

QUESTION: Are all students entitled to transportation provided by the school?

ANSWER: NO!
"Elementary students shall be entitled to transportation only if they live more than two miles from the school designated for attendance." Iowa Code 285.1(1)"a"
"High school students shall be entitled to transportation only if they live more than three miles from the school designated for attendance." Iowa Code 285.1(1)"b"
However, these rules do not apply to students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that requires transportation.

QUESTION: At what grade level does high school begin?

ANSWER: "High school means a school which commences with either grade nine or grade ten, as determined by the board of directors of the school district or by the governing authority of the nonpublic school in the case of nonpublic schools." Iowa Code 285.1(1)"d"

QUESTION: Is it legal to travel up a driveway to use a farmyard as a pickup point?

ANSWER: If it enhances the safety of the pupils, YES!
"No bus shall leave the public highway to receive or discharge pupils unless their safety is enhanced thereby, or the private road is maintained in the same manner as a public roadway." Iowa Code 285.11(7)

QUESTION: Is it legal to put more students on the bus than the rated capacity?

ANSWER: NO! "The maximum number of passengers shall never exceed the rated capacity of the vehicle as it is equipped." 281-IAC 43.10(6)"e)

QUESTION: Is there a minimum or maximum age for school bus drivers?

ANSWER: YES & NO! School bus drivers must be at least 18 years old. However, there is no maximum age restriction because it's illegal to discriminate on the basis of age.

"School bus drivers must be at least 18 years of age on or before August 1 preceeding the opening of the school year for which a school bus driver's authorization is required." 281-IAC 43.14

QUESTION: Are school bus drivers required to have a TB test?

ANSWER: NO! As of 8/16/06, a TB test is no longer required. If a school suspects that a driver has TB or has been exposed to TB, the school may certainly require testing; this is true of any communicable disease. However, it is contrary to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to require testing with no reasonable cause.

QUESTION: Can a person who is an insulin-dependent diabetic become a school bus driver?

ANSWER: YES! "A person who is an insulin-dependent diabetic may qualify to be a school bus driver if the person meets all qualifications of Iowa Code subsection 321.375(3). Such a driver is subject to an annual physical examination by a qualified medical examiner as listed in rule 281-43.15(285)." 281-IAC 43.17(285)

QUESTION: Is it legal to have decorations, decals, designs, or other items on the windows of a school bus when on an activity trip, such as for a state competition?

ANSWER: YES & NO! The windshield, service door, first set of windows, and back windows should not be covered or decorated. These windows must remain clear for the driver's vision.
"A person shall not drive a motor vehicle equipped with a windshield, sidewings, or side or rear windows which do not permit clear vision." Iowa Code 321.438(1)

For purposes of a school bus, the first set of windows back from the driver are also considered to be "side windows" in addition to the driver's window and the service door.



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