

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EMS POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

SUBJECT: Emergency Vehicle Statutes

Reference #201E

Section 14-283 Rights of Emergency Vehicles. Obstruction of.

- (a) "**Emergency vehicle**", as used in this section, means any ambulance or emergency medical service organization vehicle responding to an emergency call, any vehicle used by a fire department or by any officer of a fire department while on the way to a fire or while responding to an emergency call but not while returning from a fire or emergency call, or any state or local police vehicle operated by a police officer or inspector of the Department of Motor Vehicles answering an emergency call or in the pursuit of fleeing law violators.
- (b) The operator of any emergency vehicle may
 - (1) park or stand such vehicle, irrespective of the provisions of this chapter,
 - (2) proceed past any red light or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down or stopping to the extent necessary for the safe operation of such vehicle,
 - (3) exceed the posted speed limits or other speed limits imposed by or pursuant to section 14-218a or 14-219 as long as such operator does not endanger life or property by so doing, and
 - (4) disregard statutes, ordinances or regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specific directions.
- (c) The exemptions herein granted shall apply only when an emergency vehicle is making use of an audible warning signal device, including but not limited to a siren, whistle or bell which meets the requirements of subsection (f) of section 14-80, and visible flashing or revolving lights which meet the requirements of sections 14-96p and 14-96q, and to any state or local police vehicle properly and lawfully making use of an audible warning signal device only.
- (d) The provisions of this section shall not relieve the operator of an emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property.
- (e) Upon the immediate approach of an emergency vehicle making use of such an audible warning signal device and such visible flashing or revolving lights or of any state or local police vehicle properly and lawfully making use of an audible warning signal device only, the operator of every other vehicle in the immediate vicinity shall immediately drive to a position parallel to, and as close as possible to, the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway clear of any intersection and shall stop and remain in such position until the emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a state or local police officer or a firefighter.
- (f) Any officer of a fire department may remove, or cause to be removed, any vehicle upon any public or private way which obstructs or retards any fire department, or any officer thereof, in controlling or extinguishing any fire.
- (g) Any person who wilfully or negligently obstructs or retards any ambulance or emergency medical service organization vehicle while answering any emergency call or taking a patient to a hospital, or any vehicle used by a fire department or any officer or member of a fire department while on the way to a fire, or while responding to an emergency call, or any vehicle used by the state police or any local police department, or any officer of the Division of State Police within the Department of Public Safety or any local police department while on the way to an emergency call or in the pursuit of fleeing law violators, shall be fined not more than two hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than seven days or both.
- (h) Nothing in this section shall be construed as permitting the use of a siren upon any motor vehicle other than an emergency vehicle, as defined in subsection (a) of this section, or a rescue service vehicle which is registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to section 19a-181.
- (i) A police officer may issue a written warning or a summons to the owner of a vehicle based upon an affidavit signed by the operator of an emergency vehicle specifying
 - (1) the license plate number, color and type of any vehicle observed violating any provision of subsection (e) or (g) of this section, and

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(2) the date, approximate time and location of such violation.

Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 14-279 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

- (a) The operator of any vehicle, motor vehicle, or authorized emergency vehicle, as defined in subdivision (4) of section 14-1, shall immediately bring such vehicle to a stop not less than ten feet from the front when approaching and not less than ten feet from the rear when overtaking or following any registered school bus on any highway or private road or in any parking area or on any school property when such bus is displaying flashing red signal lights, except at the specific direction of a traffic officer. Vehicles so stopped for a school bus shall not proceed until such bus no longer displays flashing red signal lights. At the intersection of two or more highways vehicular turns toward a school bus receiving or discharging passengers are prohibited. The operator of a vehicle upon a highway with separate roadways need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus which is on a different roadway.

Public Act No. 01-192

An Act Concerning The Use of Flashing White Head Lamps, Failure to Yield to Emergency Vehicles, and Duty to Stop For Stopped School Busses.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 14-96p of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

- (a) (1) No person shall display upon any motor vehicle any light visible from the front thereof other than white, yellow or amber, or any light other than red, yellow, amber or white visible from the rear thereof, except a light used with any school bus, without a written permit from the commissioner. If the Department of Transportation obtains from the commissioner such a permit covering more than one motor vehicle operated by the department, it may display the lights allowed under the permit on each such vehicle without placing a copy of the permit in each vehicle.
- (2) Any vehicle accommodating fifteen or fewer handicapped students may use a flashing red light or lights during the time such vehicle is stopped for the purpose of receiving or discharging such handicapped students, any motor bus may carry a purple light or lights, any interstate public service vehicle may carry a green light or lights, any taxicab may carry a lunar white light or lights, and any interstate commercial motor vehicle may display green identification lights, in front thereof, as the commissioner may permit.
- (3) A vehicle being operated by the chief executive officer of an emergency medical service organization, as defined in section 19a-175, an ambulance, as defined in section 19a-175, a vehicle being operated by a local fire marshal or a local director of emergency management may use a flashing red light or lights or flashing white head lamps and a flashing amber light while on the way to the scene of an emergency, except that an ambulance may use flashing lights of other colors specified by federal requirements for the manufacture of such vehicle. The chief executive officer of each such organization shall provide annually during the month of January, on forms provided by the commissioner, such officer's name and address and the registration number on the number plate or plates of the vehicle on which the authorized red light is or white head lamps and amber light are to be used. A vehicle being operated by a member of a volunteer fire department or company or a volunteer emergency medical technician may use flashing white head lamps, provided such member or emergency medical technician is on the way to the scene of a fire or medical emergency and has received written authorization from the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality to use such head lamps. Such head lamps shall only be used within the municipality granting such authorization or from a personal residence or place of employment, if located in an adjoining

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EMS POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

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Reference #201E

municipality. Such authorization may be revoked for use of such head lamps in violation of this subdivision.

- (4) Flashing or revolving white lights may not be displayed upon a motor vehicle except
- (A) on fire emergency apparatus,
 - (B) on motor vehicles of paid and volunteer fire chiefs and their first and second deputies or their first and second assistants should there be no deputies,
 - (C) as a means of indicating a right or left turn,
 - (D) in conjunction with flashing red lights on an ambulance responding to an emergency call, or
 - (E) on the top rear of any school bus. For the purpose of this subsection, the term "handicapped students" means mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech-impaired, visually handicapped, emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired or other health-impaired students, or students with specific learning disabilities, who by reason thereof, require special education and related services; and the term "flashing white lights" shall not include the simultaneous flashing of head lamps.