

SCHOOL BUS LAWS REFERENCE GUIDE

Each state has different laws concerning when it is legal/illegal to pass a stopped school bus. This information has been compiled from Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) manuals for each state. This is ONLY a guide. Laws are subject to change. If you have ANY questions about the laws/regulations below, contact your local DMV.

CONNECTICUT	You must stop for a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road, or at an intersection you are approaching. You are not required to stop if the bus is traveling towards you and a median or other physical barrier separates the roadway.
GEORGIA	Once the flashing lights have turned red and the stop signs have extended from the side of the bus, it is unlawful for any vehicle to pass the stopped school bus while it is loading or unloading passengers. On a highway divided by a median, cars traveling on the opposite side from the stopped school bus are not required to stop.
ILLINOIS	You must stop before meeting or overtaking a school bus loading or unloading passengers on a two-lane roadway. You must remain stopped until the stop signal arm is no longer extended and the flashing lights are turned off or the driver signals you to pass. You do not always need to stop when meeting a stopped school bus on a roadway with four or more lanes or if you are traveling in the opposite direction of the bus, but you should drive cautiously.
INDIANA	You must stop when you approach a school bus with flashing red lights activated and stop arm extended. If you are driving on a highway that is divided by a barrier or unimproved median, you are required to stop only if you are traveling in the same direction as the school bus. You do not have to stop if you and a school bus are traveling in opposite directions on a road that has more than two lanes and is separated by a median strip not for vehicle travel.
KENTUCKY	When you come to a school or church bus that is stopped on any roadway to load or unload passengers, you must STOP. By law you must remain stopped until all people are clear of the roadway and the bus is in motion. A stop is NOT required when approaching a stopped bus from the opposite direction upon a highway of four or more lanes.
MAINE	It is illegal to pass a stopped school bus with red lights flashing on school property, on any undivided highway or parking area in Maine. If you are approaching a stopped school bus from either direction, with its red lights flashing, you must bring your vehicle to a complete stop in front or rear of the school bus and wait while children are getting on or off the bus. You must not proceed until the bus resumes motion or until signaled by the school bus driver to do so. The operator of a vehicle on a way separated by curbing or other physical barrier need not stop on meeting or passing a school bus if traveling in a lane separated by the barrier from the lane in which that operator is traveling.
MICHIGAN	When the red overhead lights are flashing, stop at least 20 feet from the school bus. Remain stopped until the flashing red lights are turned off or the bus resumes its travels. It is not necessary to stop for a school bus stopped on the other side of a divided highway where the road is separated by a barrier, such as a concrete or grass median, island, or other structures that separate the flow of traffic.
MINNESOTA	Flashing red lights warn motorists that the school bus is loading or unloading students. When a school bus is stopped with its red lights flashing and its stop arm extended, you must stop your vehicle at least 20 feet from the bus. Oncoming traffic and motorists approaching the bus from behind may not move until the stop arm is retracted and the red lights are no longer flashing. You are not required to stop for a school bus with its red lights flashing if it is on the opposite side of a separated roadway.

MISSOURI	When the school bus is stopped, the alternate flashing red lights and the stop signal arm are activated. Oncoming and following traffic must stop before they reach the bus when these signals are activated. You must stop on a 2-lane road where the vehicles travel in either direction and on a 2-lane road that is a one-way street. You do not need to stop when you are traveling the opposite direction of a school bus on a highway divided by a median where the vehicles traveling one direction are on a totally separate road from the vehicles traveling the opposite direction nor when you are traveling the opposite direction of a school bus on a highway containing four or more lanes of traffic.
NEW JERSEY	A motorist must stop for a school bus with flashing red lights. State law requires motorists to stop at least 25 feet away if he/she is traveling on a two-lane road or on a multi-lane highway where lanes are only separated by lines or on a privately maintained road. When traveling on a dual-lane highway, a motorist should slow to 10 mph if on the other side of a safety island or raised median. A motorist should only proceed after the bus signals have been turned off, and even then, he/she must watch for children.
NEW YORK	When a stopped school bus flashes its red light(s), traffic approaching from either direction, even in front of the school and in school parking lots, must stop before reaching the bus. You should stop at least 20 feet (6 m) away from the bus. This law applies on all roadways in New York State. You must stop for a school bus even if it is on the opposite side of a divided highway.
OHIO	When the bus comes to a complete stop, the amber lights stop flashing and four red lights—two in front and two in back—start flashing while the children enter or leave the bus. In addition, a stop arm with flashing red lights is automatically extended beneath the window on the left side of the bus. If the bus is stopped on a street or road which has fewer than four lanes, all traffic approaching the bus from either direction must stop at least 10 feet from the front or rear of the bus and remain stopped until the bus begins to move or the bus driver signals motorists to proceed.
PENNSYLVANIA	If red lights are flashing on the school bus, the law requires that motorists approaching from either direction come to a full stop and remain stopped until the bus' red lights no longer flash. This requirement applies not only on public highways but also on private roads and in parking lots.
TENNESSEE	If you approach a school bus from either direction and the bus is displaying alternately flashing red lights, you must stop. Do not pass the school bus until: the school bus has resumed motion, or you are signaled by the driver to proceed, or the red lights are no longer flashing. It isn't necessary to stop when passing a school bus on a different road or when on a controlled-access highway where the bus is stopped in a loading zone and pedestrians aren't permitted to cross.
WEST VIRGINIA	On all undivided highways (without a median), traffic in both directions must stop at least 20 feet from a stopped school bus that has its red lights flashing. You must not pass the bus until the lights are turned off or the bus starts moving. On divided highways (with a median you cannot cross), traffic coming toward a school bus stopped on the other side of the median does not have to stop. You must also stop for a stopped school bus which is receiving or discharging students on school property or private property.
WISCONSIN	You must stop a minimum of 20' from a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing. You must stop whether the school bus is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road or at an intersection that you are approaching. After the school bus red lights have stopped flashing, watch for children along the side of the road. Do not go until they have completely left the roadway. Unless signs say otherwise, you are not required to stop for a school bus if you are driving in the opposite direction on a divided highway.