

Maintaining Your **CDL** Operator License

To legally continue to drive a school bus in Florida you must:

- Hold a valid Class B CDL with Passenger and School Bus Endorsements
- **Annually** - Complete at least 8 hours of in-service training related to operator responsibilities for transporting students
- **Annually** - Pass the DOE Dexterity Test and maintain a valid Medical Examiners Certificate (MEC)
- Adhere to federal substance abuse testing and alcohol detection requirements

Field & Activity Trip Joint Responsibilities

Joint Responsibilities of Group Leaders and Operators include:

- Selecting rest, food, and fuel stops before departure
- Maintaining passenger control during the trip
- Ensuring that all aisles are clear and items secured
- **Never** blocking aisles with coolers or equipment (Rule 6A-3.0171, F.A.C.)



The **4-Rs** for Successful **Passenger** Management



- **Rules** - Clear, defined expectations about behavior
- **Reason** - Situations must be dealt with in a reasonable manner
- **Rapport** - Build a positive relationship with the students
- **Respect** - Treat Students with respect so that they, in turn, are more likely to treat you and the other students on the bus with respect

Making Turns

Under Florida law, you must still make a right turn from the right lane into the right lane. However, when making a left turn, you may turn into “any lane lawfully available or safe for the desired direction of travel.” (316.151 F.S.)

School Bus Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)

Type C: Traditional or Conventional

This type of school bus includes the cutaway truck chassis or truck chassis with a cab, with or without a left side door, and with a GVWR greater than 21,500 pounds, typically between 23,500 to 29,500.



Type D: Transit Style

This type of school bus is a body installed upon a stripped chassis, with a GVWR of greater than 21,500 pounds.



The School Bus as Defined by Florida Administrative Code (FAC)

All public school buses (bodies and chassis) owned, operated, rented, leased, and contracted by any public school board or charter school in Florida, used to transport children to and from school or school-related events, as specified in rule 6A-3.003, F.A.C., must:

- Meet or exceed the minimum requirements of Florida School Bus Specifications
- Meet all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)
- Meet or exceed the 2015 National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, except when in conflict with Florida's requirements - **Florida School Bus Specifications prevail**



The requirements specified are the minimum requirements for school buses in Florida. The date used to determine the applicability of these specifications is defined as the date the vendor receives the purchase order or signs a valid sales contract with the purchaser.

All school bus chassis and body manufacturers must certify to the Commissioner of Education, Florida Department of Education (department), by letter that all school buses offered for sale to or use by the public school systems, including charter schools, in Florida meet or exceed all standards, specifications, and requirements specified.

Used school buses purchased or operated by a public school board or charter school in Florida must meet or exceed all federal and state requirements for public school buses that were in effect on the date the vehicle was manufactured.

Following Distance on School Property



While traveling through the bus loops on school property, enough room between buses is essential should the bus in front of you need to use the rear emergency door exit. In addition, when buses line up at schools, vehicles should have enough space between them in case rear exits need to be used in an emergency.

A Note About Air-Brakes

It is important to understand the air brake system and how it works. A leak in the brake system causes the air to be lost and the brakes to engage. This occurs when the air pressure drops below 40 psi. As soon as a drop in air pressure is noticed:

- Get the vehicle off the road as quickly as possible before the spring applies the brake
- Regular performance of the air brake test can assist in detecting a leaking air brake system
- While inspecting the vehicle, always listen and look for any air leaks
- **If an air leak is detected, do not use the vehicle until the leak is repaired**

Operation Lifesaver

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) is a non-profit organization and nationally-recognized leader in rail safety education. Since 1972, OLI has been committed to preventing collisions, injuries, and fatalities on and around railroad tracks and highway-rail grade crossings, with the support of public education programs in states across the U.S.



OLI promotes **E**ducation, **E**nforcement, and **E**ngineering to keep people safe around the tracks and railway crossings all across the country.

Operation Lifesaver Materials for School Buses

[https://oli.org/materials?name=&file_type=All
&material_type=All&audience=138&topic=All](https://oli.org/materials?name=&file_type=All&material_type=All&audience=138&topic=All)

Unsafe Operators at Railroad Crossings



AVOID these operator characteristics at EVERY railroad crossing:

- The operator who has a heavy foot and drives too fast for the conditions
- The daydreamer who does not pay attention
- The operator who overdrives his/her headlights
- The operator who is overly tired and dozes at the wheel
- The operator who has become complacent and thinks he/she knows when a train will be coming
- **A train can come at any time!**
- The impatient operator who drives around the gates
- The follow-the-leader operator who does not look before crossing train tracks

Standard Traffic Sign Shapes

- **Octagon:** Exclusively for stop signs
- **Horizontal Rectangle:** Generally for guide signs
- **Triangle:** Exclusively for yield signs
- **Pennant:** Advance warning of no passing zones
- **Diamond:** Exclusively to warn of existing or possible hazards
- **Vertical Rectangle:** Generally for regulatory signs
- **Pentagon:** School advance warning and school crossing signs
- **Round:** Railroad advance warning signs
- **Crossbuck:** Railroad crossing





Driver **Safety** Formula

Skill + Knowledge + Conditioning + Concentration =
Fewer Critical Driving Situations

Several components can reduce critical driving situations and prevent those situations from progressing.

- If an operator is already distracted before getting behind the wheel, his/her responses to any given situation are hindered
- An operator needs a clear mindset when operating a commercial motor vehicle
- An operator's mental and physical condition plays a key role in the safe and efficient operation of the vehicle
- Distracted driving is unsafe to the operator, passengers, and other roadway users

Reporting **Crashes**



By law, school bus drivers should immediately notify local law enforcement if any crash results in injury or death of any persons or damage to any vehicle or other property of at least \$500.

The requirement for school districts and charter schools to report school bus crashes to the FDOE was eliminated. Crash data is already collected by the investigating law enforcement agencies and is available to school districts and other entities via the

[Florida Crash Dashboard](https://www.flhsmv.gov/traffic-crash-reports/crash-dashboard/).

<https://www.flhsmv.gov/traffic-crash-reports/crash-dashboard/>

However, school districts and charter schools commonly still report crashes to the department as a courtesy.



www.schooltrainingsolutions.com



REPORTING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

MYFLFAMILIES.COM

Florida law requires that ANY person in Florida who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused, neglected, or abandoned by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare **MUST immediately report that knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Department of Children and Families via the [Florida Abuse Hotline: myflfamilies.com](https://myflfamilies.com).**

- The penalty for failing to report is a felony of the third degree.
- There are also financial penalties for failing to report.

Remember, it is not your job to know whether abuse has occurred or not, **IT IS YOUR JOB TO REPORT CONCERNS!!**

If you know or suspect that a child under the age of 18 is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of being abused or neglected, you are required to file a report with the [Florida Abuse Hotline: myflfamilies.com](https://myflfamilies.com).

This toll-free number is available 24/7 with counselors ready to assist.

Telephone: 1-800-962-2873

Florida Relay: 711

TTY: 1-800-955-8771

Fax: 1-800-914-0004

Online: <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>



ELDT: CDL Class B Miscellaneous Information



To drive a commercial motor vehicle, the driver must be:

- Proficient in speaking, reading, and writing the English language
- Able to understand and complete required vehicle inspections forms
- Able to read and understand roadway traffic signs

Disqualifications for operating a CMV requiring hazardous material endorsements include:

- Not passing the proper background checks
- Failure to remain current on licensure

Other Disqualifications

- Operating on more than one license, which results in a fine of up to \$5,000, losing all licenses, and jail sentencing
- As a CDL operator, you are required to report any violations to your current employer and the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles within 30 days

Hours of Service

- Short-Haul Exception - A driver is exempt from the requirements of §395.8 and §395.11 if the driver operates within a 150 air-mile radius of the normal work reporting location and does not exceed a maximum duty period of 14 hours. Drivers using the short-haul exception in §395.1(e)(1) must report and return to the normal work reporting location within 14 consecutive hours and stay within a 150 air-mile radius of the work reporting location.

Records of Duty Status (RODS)

- Exception - School bus operators qualify under the RODS Exception. However, Class B operators employed in interstate commercial driving operations are required to comply with the hours of service and logbook-keeping regulations.

Weigh Stations

- Although school buses are not required to stop at weigh stations, the operator must still be knowledgeable regarding the weight and size of the unit he/she is operating due to weight restrictions on bridges and low-limit roads
- Awareness of weight and axle limit signs must become a priority when operating a CMV
- Some CDL Class B operators who drive other commercial motor vehicles, such as dump trucks, concrete, waste collection/disposal and some fuel or oil carrying CMV, may require stopping at weigh stations

