



General Assembly

February Session, 2016

***Raised Bill No. 5406***

LCO No. 1987



Referred to Committee on PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Introduced by:  
(PS)

***AN ACT PERMITTING PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL TO USE BLUE LIGHTS.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 14-96q of the 2016 supplement to the general  
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
3 (*Effective October 1, 2016*):

4 (a) A permit is required for the use of colored or flashing lights on  
5 all motor vehicles or equipment specified in this section except: (1)  
6 Motor vehicles not registered in this state used for transporting or  
7 escorting any vehicle or load, or combinations thereof, which is either  
8 oversize or overweight, or both, when operating under a permit issued  
9 by the Commissioner of Transportation pursuant to section 14-270; or  
10 (2) motor vehicles or equipment that are (A) equipped with lights in  
11 accordance with this section, (B) owned or leased by the federal  
12 government, the state of Connecticut, or any other state,  
13 commonwealth or local municipality, and (C) registered to such  
14 governmental entity. When used in this section the term "flashing"  
15 shall be considered to include the term "revolving".

16 (b) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, or such other person  
17 specifically identified in this section, is authorized to issue permits for  
18 the use of colored or flashing lights on vehicles in accordance with this  
19 section, at the commissioner's or such person's discretion. Any person,  
20 firm or corporation other than the state or any metropolitan district,  
21 town, city or borough shall pay an annual permit fee of twenty dollars  
22 to the commissioner for each such vehicle. Such fee shall apply only to  
23 permits issued by the commissioner.

24 (c) A blue light or lights, including flashing blue lights, may be used  
25 on a motor vehicle operated by an active member of a volunteer fire  
26 department or company, [or an active member of an] organized civil  
27 preparedness auxiliary fire company, volunteer ambulance association  
28 or company, volunteer canine search and rescue team, as defined in  
29 section 5-249, or volunteer underwater search and rescue team who  
30 has been issued a permit by the chief executive officer of such  
31 department, [or] company, association or team to use such a light  
32 while on the way to or at the scene of a fire or other emergency  
33 requiring such member's services. Such permit shall be on a form  
34 provided by the commissioner and may be revoked by such chief  
35 executive officer or successor. The chief executive officer of each  
36 volunteer fire department or company, [or] organized civil  
37 preparedness auxiliary fire company, volunteer ambulance association  
38 or company, volunteer canine search and rescue team or volunteer  
39 underwater search and rescue team shall keep on file, [the] on forms  
40 provided by the commissioner, the names and addresses of members  
41 who have been authorized to use flashing blue lights as provided in  
42 this subsection. Such listing shall also designate the registration  
43 number of the motor vehicle on which authorized flashing blue lights  
44 are to be used.

45 [(d) A green light or lights, including flashing green lights, may be  
46 used on a motor vehicle operated by an active member of a volunteer  
47 ambulance association or company who has been issued a permit by  
48 the chief executive officer of such association or company to use such a

49 light, while on the way to or at the scene of an emergency requiring  
50 such member's services. Such permit shall be on a form provided by  
51 the commissioner and may be revoked by such chief executive officer  
52 or successor. The chief executive officer of each volunteer ambulance  
53 association or company shall keep on file on forms provided by the  
54 commissioner, the names and addresses of members who have been  
55 authorized to use flashing green lights as provided in this subsection.  
56 Such listing shall also designate the registration number of the vehicle  
57 on which the authorized flashing green lights are to be used.]

58 [(e)] (d) The commissioner may issue a permit for a red light or  
59 lights, including flashing red lights, which may be used on a motor  
60 vehicle or equipment (1) used by paid fire chiefs and their deputies  
61 and assistants, up to a total of five individuals per department, (2)  
62 used by volunteer fire chiefs and their deputies and assistants, up to a  
63 total of five individuals per department, (3) used by members of the  
64 fire police on a stationary vehicle as a warning signal during traffic  
65 directing operations at the scene of a fire or emergency, (4) used by  
66 chief executive officers of emergency medical service organizations, as  
67 defined in section 19a-175, the first or second deputies, or if there are  
68 no deputies, the first or second assistants, of such an organization that  
69 is a municipal or volunteer or licensed organization, (5) used by local  
70 fire marshals, or (6) used by directors of emergency management.

71 [(f)] (e) The commissioner may issue a permit for a yellow or amber  
72 light or lights, including flashing yellow or amber lights, which may be  
73 used on motor vehicles or equipment that are (1) specified in  
74 subsection [(e)] (d) of this section, (2) maintenance vehicles as defined  
75 in section 14-1, or (3) vehicles transporting or escorting any vehicle or  
76 load or combinations thereof, which is or are either oversize or  
77 overweight, or both, and being operated or traveling under a permit  
78 issued by the Commissioner of Transportation pursuant to section 14-  
79 270. A yellow or amber light or lights, including flashing yellow or  
80 amber lights, may be used without obtaining a permit from the  
81 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles on wreckers registered pursuant to

82 section 14-66, or on vehicles of carriers in rural mail delivery service.

83        [(g)] (f) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may issue a permit for  
84 a white light or lights, including flashing white lights, which may be  
85 used on a motor vehicle or equipment as specified in subdivision (1),  
86 (2), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection [(e)] (d) of this section. A vehicle being  
87 operated by a member of a volunteer fire department or company or a  
88 volunteer emergency medical technician may use flashing white head  
89 lamps, provided such member or emergency medical technician is on  
90 the way to the scene of a fire or medical emergency and has received  
91 written authorization from the chief law enforcement officer of the  
92 municipality to use such head lamps. Such head lamps shall only be  
93 used within the municipality granting such authorization or from a  
94 personal residence or place of employment, if located in an adjoining  
95 municipality. Such authorization may be revoked for use of such head  
96 lamps in violation of this subdivision. For the purposes of this  
97 subsection, the term "flashing white lights" shall not include the  
98 simultaneous flashing of head lamps.

99        [(h)] (g) The commissioner may issue a permit for emergency  
100 vehicles, as defined in subsection (a) of section 14-283, to use a blue,  
101 red, yellow, or white light or lights, including flashing lights or any  
102 combination thereof.

103        [(i)] (h) The commissioner may issue a permit for ambulances, as  
104 defined in section 19a-175, which may, in addition to the flashing  
105 lights allowed in subsection [(h)] (g) of this section, use flashing lights  
106 of other colors specified by federal requirements for the manufacture  
107 of an ambulance. If the commissioner issues a permit for any  
108 ambulance, such permit shall be issued at the time of registration and  
109 upon each renewal of such registration.

110        [(j)] (i) Use of colored and flashing lights except as authorized by  
111 this section shall be an infraction.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2016</i>	14-96q

**Statement of Purpose:**

To allow members of a volunteer ambulance association or company, volunteer canine search and rescue team and volunteer underwater search and rescue team to use blue lights while on the way to or at the scene of an emergency requiring the services of such members.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*