

Student Transportation Vehicle Signs

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Issue

Describe the law regulating the construction, dimensions, placement, and mounting of “CARRYING SCHOOL CHILDREN” signs displayed on student transportation vehicles.

Summary

By law, a student transportation vehicle is generally any motor vehicle other than a registered school bus used by certain carriers (e.g., local and regional school districts) for transporting students ([CGS § 14-212\(9\)](#)). State statutes and regulations detail the construction, dimensions, placement, and mounting of signs displayed on student transportation vehicles.

Specifically, the signs must be constructed of a planar, non-frangible material that is rigid enough to not bend, deform, or incline at highway speeds when attached to vehicles. They must also not have sharp edges, but perforations are permitted to reduce wind resistance so long as they do not interfere with the visibility of the words on the signs ([Conn. Agencies Reg. § 14-280-1](#)). The signs must display the words “CARRYING SCHOOL CHILDREN,” whose lettering must be at least three inches high in black on a yellow background. This lettering may be painted on or applied by a permanent decal. The words “STOP” or “STOP ON SIGNAL” are expressly prohibited from being included on the signs ([CGS § 14-280\(b\)](#); [Conn. Agencies Reg. § 14-280-3\(a\)](#)).

Displayed signs must be placed at least four feet above ground level, primarily on or above the roof and perpendicular to the sides of the vehicles. They must also be extended vertically upward so that the signs’ words are clearly visible to other drivers within 15 feet to 200 feet of the front and rear of the vehicles. If necessary, to provide the required visibility, a second sign may be added on the roof or rear of a vehicle, provided a rear-mounted sign does not (1) pose a danger to persons or

property or (2) interfere with the driver's vision or with ingress or egress to the vehicle ([CGS § 14-280\(b\)](#); [Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 14-280-2\(a\)](#) and [14-280-3\(a\)](#)).

The signs must be mounted securely, in a way that they will withstand 50 mile per hour winds and stay attached to a vehicle traveling at highway speeds. They may also be screwed, bolted, or otherwise fixedly secured in a way that permits their removal. A layer of protective or non-slip material may be used between a sign or its mounting hardware and a vehicle's surface. Any mounting brackets, straps, clamps, or mounting hardware used to secure a sign must (1) not interfere with the normal operation of a vehicle's windows or doors, (2) be strong enough to withstand the load applied by the sign, and (3) not endanger or interfere with vehicle occupants. Suction cups, magnets, and other easily detached devices are prohibited unless they are used in addition to other mounting hardware ([CGS § 14-280\(b\)](#); [Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 14-280-1](#), [14-280-2](#), and [14-280-3\(a\)](#)).

A first-time violation of these requirements is an infraction, currently punishable by a base fine of \$50. Each subsequent violation is punishable by base fines between \$100 and \$500. In addition to the base fines, violations are currently subject to fees and surcharges totaling \$67 (see [CGS § 14-280\(c\)](#) and the Superior Court's [Schedule of Fines](#) dated October 1, 2019).

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