

Bus Facts & Laws

What kind of vehicle is considered a “school bus”?

Under Texas law, a “school bus” is ” a bus designated to transport more than 15 passengers, including the operator, and used for purposes that include regularly transporting students to and from school-related events”.

Why are school busses yellow?

Texas law actually require school buses to meet many requirements and to have special features, including the color. The State of Texas required the exterior color of a school bus be “school bus yellow”. The State also required that the lettering on a bus be decals or be painted with a “first quality black enamel” paint.

Maximum Speed Limit. A school bus is required to follow the same speed limits as other vehicles, with the following exceptions:

- If the bus is on a highway that is not an Interstate Highway, its maximum speed limit is 50 miles per hour.
- If the school bus is on an Interstate Highway, its maximum speed limit is 55 miles per hour.

If you approach a school bus on the highway, please keep these speed limits on mind. The school bus, with its precious cargo, will probably be going slower than other traffic.

Disabled School Buses. Like all vehicles, school buses sometimes break down on the road. Please keep this in mind if you see a disabled school bus on the roadway or shoulder. Although you are not required to stop when approaching a disabled school bus, please slow down and be very cautious when you pass the bus. Children may be unloading to transfer into substituted vehicles, and may attempt to cross the road. At that time, they would be at great risk, and need your thoughtfulness to protect them.

Railroad Crossings. School Buses stop for ALL railroad crossings! A school bus operator is required by law to stop at railroad crossings, even if there are no trains in sight. The driver is required to listen and to look in both directions before proceeding through the crossings. Do not tailgate a school bus approaching a railroad crossing.

Disruption of Transportation. S37.126

- Except as provided by Section 37.125, a person commits an offense if the person intentionally disrupts, prevents, or interferes with the lawful transportation of children to or from school or an activity sponsored by a school on a vehicle owned or operated by a county or independent school district.
- An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor. The fine is \$180.00 minimum to \$500.00 maximum plus court costs.

Texas Education Code EDUC 42.155

To ride the bus a student must reside two or more miles from the student's campus of regular attendance in order to be considered a "regular eligible student" unless that student falls into a special needs category (Section 29.003)

Undivided Roads and Highways, the general School Bus Rule: On undivided roads and highways (those without medians or barriers in the middle), the general rule is that if you are approaching a school bus that has stopped in the road, STOP! No matter which direction you are approaching the bus from, you MUST stop.

This rule applies to all roads that do not have driving medians or barriers, the rule applies to roads with turning lanes, and the rule applies no matter how many lanes the road has.

Criminal Offenses. Any violation of the rules requiring drivers to stop for school buses is a MISDEMEANOR CRIMINAL OFFENSE, punishable by a fine of at least \$200.00 and up to \$1000.00. If the person is two (2) time or more offender, the Court has the power to suspend the violator's driver's license for a period up to six months. If the Offender does not pay the fine, the Court may order the offender to perform community service.

Most importantly, failing to stop for a school bus puts our children in danger.