

Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles



School Transportation Vehicle Usage Guide



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School Transportation Vehicle Usage Guide

School Transportation - Vehicle Types

School Bus



A school bus is a motor vehicle designed to seat 9 or more passengers including the driver which is used to transport students from home to school, school to home. Motor vehicles designed to seat 16 passengers including the driver will be considered school buses when transporting students to and from school sponsored activities. School buses may be owned by a public / governmental agency or privately owned and operated for compensation.

Vehicle Requirements

The vehicle must be manufactured in accordance with all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) as were in effect on the date of manufacture and must have a federal classification as a “School Bus”. Detailed requirements can be found in [280-RICR-30-15-10](#)

Operator Requirements

Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

The operator must hold a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with Passenger endorsement and a School Bus endorsement. If the bus is equipped with air brakes, an air brakes test must also be passed. More information can be found at: <http://www.dmv.ri.gov/licenses/commercial/index.php>

School Bus Operator's Certificate (White Card)

The operator must also hold a valid School Bus Driver Certification card issued by the Rhode Division of Motor Vehicles. More details on the steps required to obtain this certification can be found at <http://www.dmv.ri.gov/licenses/bus/>



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Pupil Transportation Vehicle



A pupil transportation vehicle is a motor vehicle designed and constructed to seat not more than eight (8) passengers including the operator, used by a school committee to provide the transportation services required by law or regulation to students being conveyed along a fixed school transportation route.

Vehicle Requirements

Must be originally designed to seat not more than eight (8) passengers including the operator. Must display a “School Bus” sign with warning lights. Must be display a valid “Pupil Transportation” inspection sticker issued by the Rhode Island DMV to verify compliance with all applicable regulations. Detailed requirements can be found in the [RI PTV Manual](#)

Operator Requirements

Pupil Transportation Certificate

[All persons operating a pupil transportation vehicle to convey students shall hold a Rhode Island chauffeur license or CDL with Passenger endorsement and shall have passed a written test as may](#) be prescribed by the division of motor vehicles. In addition, all persons who operate a pupil transportation vehicle to convey students shall submit to a national and state wide criminal and driving record background check by the hiring agency. More details on the steps required to obtain this certification can be found at <http://www.dmv.ri.gov/licenses/bus/>



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Child Care Vehicle



A motor vehicle owned or leased by a licensed child day care center that does not exceed fifteen (15) passengers and is being used to transport children from schools to child care facilities and/or from child care facilities to schools or other activities of the child day care center. Two (2) door sedans shall not be considered child care vehicles or school extra-curricular vehicles.

Vehicle Requirements

Must be originally designed to seat not more than fifteen (15) passengers including the operator. Must be registered with Public Service plates and display a valid “Public Carrier” inspection sticker issued by the Rhode Island DMV. Detailed requirements can be found in [RIGL § 31-22-11.6](#)

Operator Requirements

Chauffeurs' Endorsement

All persons operating a Child Care vehicle shall hold a [Rhode Island chauffeur license or CDL](#) with Passenger endorsement and shall have passed a written test as may be prescribed by the division of motor vehicles. In addition, all persons who operate a child care vehicle to convey children shall submit to a national and state wide criminal and driving record background check by the hiring agency.



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School Extracurricular Vehicle



A vehicle designed to transport fewer than fifteen (15) students to and from school sponsored activities including athletics, internships, work experiences, and extra-curricular activities where school buses are not used because of the small number of students being transported.

Vehicle Requirements

Must be originally designed to seat not more than fifteen (15) passengers including the operator. Must be registered with Public Service plates and display a valid “Public Carrier” inspection sticker issued by the Rhode Island DMV. Detailed requirements can be found in [RIGL § 31-22-11.6](#) and [280-RICR-30-15-8](#)

All school extracurricular vehicles designed with a capacity of at least eleven (11) and not more than fifteen (15) people including the driver must be classified as a [Multifunction School Activity Bus \(MFSAB\)](#) and thereby meet the requirements of 49 C.F.R. Part 571. This includes 49 C.F.R. § 571.220, 49 C.F.R. § 571.221, and 49 C.F.R. § 571.222.

Operator Requirements:

Chauffers' Endorsement All persons operating a school extracurricular vehicle shall hold a [Rhode Island chauffeur license or CDL](#) with Passenger endorsement and shall have passed a written test as may be prescribed by the division of motor vehicles. In addition, all persons who operate a school extracurricular vehicle to convey children shall submit to a national and state wide criminal and driving record background check by the hiring agency.



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School Transportation Options Flowchart

