



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Directors of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
FROM: Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer 
DATE: July 28, 2014
SUBJECT: Transportation for Students Receiving Transition/Vocational Services

It has come to the attention of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) that there may be some misunderstanding regarding the provision of transportation for students who, as part of an individualized education program (IEP), are participating in community-based transition services and employment worksite settings provided by school districts and/or transition/vocational service providers. **Connecticut regulations state that all operators and vehicles used to provide transportation for students with an IEP must comply with the statutes/regulations of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).** Connecticut special education regulations are as follows:

Sec. 10-76d-19. Transportation

Each board of education shall provide, as a related service, safe and appropriate transportation as required to implement the individualized education program for each child with a disability. . . .

(b) **Operators vehicles.** Operators of vehicles shall be given such inservice training as is necessary to acquaint them with the specific needs of the children being transported and to equip them to meet those needs. Operators of vehicles shall meet the licensure requirements of the department of motor vehicles.

(c) **Vehicles.** All vehicles shall comply with requirements of the department of motor vehicles and shall be equipped so as to ensure safe and appropriate transportation.

Therefore, students who are receiving special education/secondary transition services in a transition/vocational program as part of an IEP, including those programs that are operated by a transition/vocational service provider in the community, must be provided with transportation that complies with DMV student transportation statute/regulations. These can be accessed at the following links:

<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/lib/dmv/regulations/275c.pdf>

<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&q=244782>

The safety of all special education students who are transported to a school-related activity, including community-based worksites, is paramount. Therefore, districts and the organizations with which they contract to provide secondary transition/vocational services **MUST** follow all DMV student transportation statutes/regulations.

Directors of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services

July 28, 2014

Page 2

The DMV and the CSDE are collaborating to ensure that all special education students are transported to school-related activities safely. The DMV's law enforcement unit, Commercial Vehicle Safety Division (CVSD), is responsible for investigating any complaint concerning student transportation regulations. If an organization is found by the DMV to be out of compliance, besides any potential fines that may be levied by the DMV, CSDE will remove that organization from the qualified transition/vocational service provider list which may impact a district's ability to apply for the excess cost grant. Any service provider may be re-added to the list of qualified providers when violations have been corrected and documented by the DMV.

Please take the necessary actions to ensure that the transportation policies and practices of district programs and transition/vocational service providers that are transporting students to community-based activities and worksites are in compliance with DMV statutes/regulations especially as they apply to transportation vehicles and operator passenger endorsements. For additional information, a Frequently Asked Questions document regarding student transportation is attached.

If you have questions about DMV student transportation regulations, please contact: Lieutenant Garfield Green, DMV, CVSD at Garfield.Green@ct.gov / 860-263-5441.

For information related to secondary transition, contact: Dr. Patricia Anderson at CSDE: Patricia.Anderson@ct.gov / 860-713-6923.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

CRT:pla

cc: Superintendents of Schools
CSDE Transition/Vocational Service Providers
Lt. Garfield Green
Patricia Anderson

Attachment

Student Transportation

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does an organization that provides transition/vocational services to students (ages 17 – 21) know if the Connecticut General Statutes and regulations regarding student transportation apply to the organization's transportation situations?

Section 14-212 of the CT General Statutes defines the following transportation terms as:

(2) "**Carrier**" means (A) any local or regional school district, any educational institution providing elementary or secondary education or any person, firm or corporation under contract to such district or institution engaged in the business of transporting students, or (B) any person, firm or corporation engaged in the business of transporting primarily persons under the age of twenty-one years for compensation;

(8) "**Student**" means any person under the age of twenty-one years who is attending a preprimary, primary or secondary school program of education.

(9) "**Student transportation vehicle**" means any motor vehicle other than a registered school bus used by a carrier for the transportation of students to or from school, school programs or school-sponsored events; and

Therefore, the CT General Statutes and Regulations would apply to any organization that provides transportation to students up through the age of twenty-one to or from any school-sponsored events or activities (such as transition/vocational services to community or worksite locations).

2. Who is responsible for ensuring that districts and the organizations with whom they contract are in compliance with state statutes and regulations regarding student transportation?

The district is responsible for ensuring that all students in district-sponsored activities, including activities provided by organizations or individuals with whom the district contracts, are transported safely and in accordance with state statutes and regulations regarding student transportation. The Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) law enforcement unit, Commercial Vehicle Safety Division (CVSD), is responsible for investigating any complaint concerning student transportation statutes and regulations.

3. What are the requirements for student transportation vehicles?

- A. Student transportation vehicles - General, Sec. 14-275c** - Regulations re: school buses and motor vehicles used to transport students. . . (b) The commissioner [of the Department of Motor Vehicles] shall adopt regulations . . . governing: (1) the inspection, registration, operation and maintenance of motor vehicles used by any carrier to transport students, and (2) the licensing of operators of such vehicles.
- B. Student transportation vehicles - Insurance, Sec. 14-29** - Owners of . . . school transportation vehicles . . . (a) The commissioner shall not register any . . . student transportation vehicle or service bus and no person may operate or cause to be operated upon any public highway any such motor vehicle until the owner or lessee thereof has procured insurance which shall indemnify the insured against any legal liability for personal injury, the death of any person or property damage.
- C. Student transportation vehicles - Registration, Sec. 14-25c** - Registration of motor vehicle used as a student transportation vehicle. Distinctive marker plates. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall issue distinctive registration marker plates for each vehicle . . . that is used as a student transportation vehicle. Each such registration of a student transportation vehicle shall be issued for a period of one year and . . . may be renewed annually by the owner.
- D. Student transportation vehicles – Inspection, Sec. 14-102a** – Each student transportation vehicle shall be inspected for safety before its initial registration and shall pass annual inspection before each renewal of registration. Any student transportation vehicle that transports individuals in wheelchairs shall meet the requirements of subsection (e) of section 14-100a in order to pass inspection.
- E. Student transportation vehicles – Signage, Sec. 14-275b** - Equipment and information displayed on student transportation vehicles.
- (b) Any student transportation vehicle, as defined in section 14-212, regularly used by any town, regional school district, private school or entity contracting with such town, regional school district or private school to transport school children to and from school or school activities, shall have conspicuously painted on the rear and sides of such student transportation vehicle, in black lettering of a size to be determined by the commissioner [MV], the name of the owner or operator of such student transportation vehicle, the telephone number of such owner or operator and the fleet number of such student transportation vehicle.
- F. Student transportation vehicles – Portable Signs, Sec. 14-280** - Display of signs and signals by student transportation vehicles.
- (a) Any student transportation vehicle, when engaged in the transportation of school children to and from school or school activities, shall display a sign or signs, as described in subsection (b) of this section. Any portable signs, as described in subsection (b) of this section, may be removed or covered when the vehicle is not being used for transporting students.

(b) The sign or signs permitted or required under subsection (a) of this section may be portable signs securely mounted on the roof or decal or painted signs, either of which shall be placed at a height of at least four feet and shall display the wording "CARRYING SCHOOL CHILDREN" in black lettering at least three inches high on yellow background visible to operators of vehicles approaching from front and rear. The words "Stop" or "Stop on signal" shall not be used.

4. What are the requirements for an operator of a student transportation vehicle with a public passenger endorsement?

A. Student transportation vehicles – Operator’s Licenses, Sec. 14-44 - License endorsement for operators of commercial motor vehicles used for student transportation -

(a) (3) No person shall operate a student transportation vehicle, as defined in section 14-212, until such person has obtained an operator's license of the proper classification bearing an appropriate endorsement from the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, issued in accordance with the provisions of this section and section 14-36a.

(a) (e) Prior to issuing an operator's license bearing a school endorsement or bearing the appropriate type of endorsement for operation of a student transportation vehicle, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall require each applicant to submit to state and national criminal history records checks . . . and a check of the state child abuse and neglect registry.

B. Student transportation vehicles – Operator’s License Endorsements, Sec. 14-36a, c -

Classification of operators' licenses. Designations; endorsements. (c) A commercial driver's license or a class D license [passenger vehicle] that contains any of the following public passenger endorsements evidences that the holder meets the requirements of section 14-44:

Types of Connecticut Public Passenger Endorsements:

“S” endorsement: required before operating a school bus or any vehicle that requires a “V,” “A” or “F” endorsement.

“V” endorsement: required before operating a student transportation vehicle transporting students to and from school, including vehicles transporting special education students, or any vehicle that requires an “A” or “F” endorsement. A certificate of safety training (R360) is also required. (Available through school bus companies) NOTE: No motor vehicle with a seating capacity of more than ten passengers other than a school bus conforming to the provision of Connecticut State Statutes Sec. 14-275 may be used for the transportation of such students to and from school.

“A” endorsement: required before operating a student transportation vehicle (or other vehicle that requires an "F" endorsement) used in connection with school-sponsored events and activities, but not used to transport students to and from school.

C. Student transportation operators - Public Passenger Endorsements , Sec. 14-276 – Operators of student transportation vehicles: Regulations; qualifications; training; drug testing

Eligibility Requirements - (<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=805&q=244782>)

- Must have a valid Connecticut Driver’s License
- Must be at least 18 years of age;
- Must have [acceptable driving record](#);
- Must possess good moral character;
- Must pass a review of their [criminal record](#); and
- Must be subject to medical review and meet the physical requirements outlined on the medical examination form.

(a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall adopt regulations for the physical examination and safety training of operators of student transportation vehicles. Such regulations shall provide for minimum physical requirements for such operators. The safety training administered by the commissioner shall include instruction relative to the location, contents and use of the first aid kit in the motor vehicle.

(b) No person shall operate a student transportation vehicle as defined in section 14-212, for the purpose of transporting school children unless such person has prior to the issuance or renewal of his license endorsement:

- (1) Furnished evidence to the satisfaction of the commissioner that he meets the minimum physical requirements set by the commissioner for operation of a student transportation vehicle;
- (2) Successfully completed a course in safety training administered by the commissioner.

(d) A carrier shall require each person whom it intends to employ to operate a student transportation vehicle, as defined in section 14-212, to submit to a urinalysis drug test and shall require each person it employs to operate such vehicles to submit to a urinalysis drug test on a random basis.

For More Information:

Regarding DMV student transportation regulations, contact: Lieutenant Garfield Green at DMV, CVSD: Garfield.Green@ct.gov / 860-263-5441

Regarding secondary transition, contact: Dr. Patricia Anderson at CSDE: Patricia.Anderson@ct.gov / 860-713-6923