

Iowa Code: **Stop Arm Violations**

321.372 Discharging pupils--regulations.

Please read **Quick Reference** on Page 2!

1. The driver of a school bus used to transport children to and from a public or private school shall, when stopping to receive or discharge pupils, turn on flashing warning lamps at a distance of not less than three hundred feet nor more than five hundred feet from the point where the pupils are to be received or discharged from the bus if the speed limit at that point is forty-five miles per hour or greater and shall turn on flashing warning lamps at a distance of not less than one hundred fifty feet from the point where the pupils are to be received or discharged from the bus if the speed limit at that point is less than forty-five miles per hour. At the point of receiving or discharging pupils the driver of the bus shall bring the bus to a stop, turn off the amber flashing warning lamps, turn on the red flashing warning lamps, and extend the stop arm. After receiving or discharging pupils, the bus driver shall turn off all flashing warning lamps, retract the stop arm and proceed on the route. Except to the extent that reduced visibility is caused by fog, snow, or other weather conditions, a school bus shall not stop to receive or discharge pupils unless there is at least three hundred feet of unobstructed vision in each direction. However, the driver of a school bus is not required to use flashing warning lamps and the stop arm when receiving or discharging pupils at a designated loading and unloading zone at a school attendance center or at extracurricular or educational activity locations where students exiting the bus do not have to cross the street or highway.

If a school district contracts with an urban transit system to transport children to and from a public or private school, the school bus which is provided by the urban transit system shall not be required to be equipped with flashing warning lights and a stop arm. If the school bus provided by an urban transit system is equipped with flashing warning lights and a stop arm, the driver of the school bus shall use the flashing warning light and stop arm as required by law.

A school bus, when operating on a highway with four or more lanes shall not stop to load or unload pupils who must cross the highway, except at designated stops where pupils who must cross the highway may do so at points where there are official traffic control devices or police officers.

A school bus shall, while carrying passengers, have its headlights turned on.

2. All pupils shall be received and discharged from the right front entrance of every school bus and if said pupils must cross the highway, they shall be required to pass in front of the bus, look in both directions, and proceed to cross the highway only on signal from the bus driver.

3. The driver of a vehicle, including the driver of a vehicle operating on a private road or driveway, when meeting a school bus with flashing amber warning lamps shall reduce the vehicle's speed to not more than twenty miles per hour, and shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop when the school bus stops and the stop signal arm is extended. The vehicle shall remain stopped until the stop signal arm is retracted after which time the driver may proceed with due caution.

The driver of a vehicle, including the driver of a vehicle operating on a private road or driveway, overtaking a school bus shall not pass a school bus when red or amber warning signal lights are flashing. The driver shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop no closer than fifteen feet from the school bus when it is stopped and the stop arm is extended, and the vehicle shall remain stopped until the stop arm is retracted and the school bus resumes motion.

4. The driver of a vehicle upon a highway providing two or more lanes in each direction need not stop upon meeting a school bus which is traveling in the opposite direction even though the school bus is stopped.

Section History: Early form

[C31, 35, § 5079-c8, -c10, -c11; C39, § **5032.01, 5032.03**; C46, § 321.372, 321.374; C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 321.372; 81 Acts, ch 108, § 2, 3]

Section History: Recent form

91 Acts, ch 70, §1; 95 Acts, ch 118, §24

Internal References

Referred to in § 321.354, 321.372A, 321.373, 321.378, 321.380, 321.484, 331.653, 805.8(2k)

321.372A Prompt investigation of reported violation of failing to obey school bus warning devices.

The driver of a school bus who observes a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, may prepare a written report on a form provided by the department of public safety indicating that a violation has occurred. The school bus driver or a school official may deliver the report not more than seventy-two hours after the violation occurred to a peace officer of the state or a peace officer of the county or municipality in which the violation occurred. The report shall state the time and the location at which the violation occurred and shall include the registration plate number and a description of the vehicle involved in the violation.

Not more than seven calendar days after receiving a report of a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, from a school bus driver or a school official, the peace officer shall initiate an investigation of the reported violation and contact the owner of the motor vehicle involved in the reported violation and request that the owner supply information identifying the driver in accordance with section 321.484. If, from the investigation, the peace officer is able to identify the driver and has reasonable cause to believe a violation of section 321.372, subsection 3, has occurred, the peace officer shall prepare a uniform traffic citation for the violation and shall serve it personally or by certified mail to the driver of the vehicle.

Section History: Recent form

88 Acts, ch 1203, §1; 90 Acts, ch 1101, § 1

Internal References

Referred to in § 321.378, 321.380, 331.653

South Grandview Avenue

Dubuque, Iowa

Divided two-lane highway in opposite directions

Vehicles MUST STOP in BOTH lanes!

Quick Reference

1) Approaching the bus from the FRONT:

“...when meeting a school bus with flashing amber warning lamps shall reduce the vehicle's speed to not more than twenty miles per hour, and shall bring the vehicle to a complete stop when the school bus stops and the stop signal arm is extended.”

2) Approaching the bus from the REAR:

“...overtaking a school bus shall not pass a school bus when red or amber warning signal lights are flashing.”

3) Approaching the bus from the FRONT with MULTIPLE lanes:

“...two or more lanes in each direction need not stop upon meeting a school bus which is traveling in the opposite direction.” - Highways 20, 61, 151