

NOTICE OF PROPOSED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

September State Patrol Law of the Month on School Bus laws

Pursuant to Wis. Stat. s. 227.112, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is hereby seeking comment on a news release for the September 2019 State Patrol Law of the Month regarding safety while driving near school buses (Chapter 346.48) and school crossing guards (346.46(2m)), a proposed guidance document.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Comments may be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for 21 days by:

1. Department's website:

<https://trust.dot.state.wi.us/act369/?id=OPA260&uri=file:Septemberbussafety&division=OPA>

2. Mailing written comments to: Office of
Public Affairs
Wisconsin Department of Transportation 4822
Madison Yards Way
PO Box 7910
Madison, WI 53707-7910

WEBSITE LOCATION OF FINAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The final version of this guidance document will be posted at wisconsin.gov to allow for ongoing comment.

AGENCY CONTACT

DOTOPAGuidanceDocs@DOT.WI.GOV

September 9, 2019

Wisconsin State Patrol September Law of the Month

Contact: (Rank, first name, last name,) Commander, (Region—Post) (Phone #)

As another school year gets underway, drivers asked to watch for buses/students
State Patrol Law of the month reviews school bus, crossing guard laws

As students across Wisconsin head back to school, motorists are being reminded to keep a sharp eye out for students, school buses and crossing guards. The State Patrol's September Law of the Month details state laws designed to protect students as they head to and from school activities.

Many Wisconsin school buses are now fitted with amber lights. When flashing, the amber lights tell drivers to slow down because the red flashing lights will soon be activated and the bus is about to stop. Drivers can carefully pass a school bus with amber lights activated, but should do so cautiously.

Wisconsin law ([346.48](#)) requires drivers to stop at least 20 feet from a stopped school bus that has its red warning lights flashing. The law applies when approaching a school bus from either direction. The only exception is if you are traveling on the other side of a divided roadway separated by a median or other physical barrier. When passed illegally, school bus drivers are authorized to report violations to law enforcement. A citation for failure to stop for a school bus costs \$326 and four demerit points. Last year in Wisconsin, there were 1,016 traffic convictions for failure to stop for a school bus.

"Passing a stopped school bus that has its red lights flashing is illegal and very dangerous," said (Rank, first name, last name) of the Wisconsin State Patrol (region/post). "Children are easily distracted and don't always think about their own safety, so drivers need to be extra alert."

State law also requires drivers to yield when directed to stop by a school crossing guard ([346.46 \(2m\)](#)). Like bus drivers, crossing guards have the authority to report violations to law enforcement.

School buses are among the safest vehicles on the roadways due to their design, construction and because of careful bus drivers. The Wisconsin State Patrol inspects every Wisconsin school bus annually, conducting about 12,000 inspections each year. Inspectors look at mechanical equipment like steering, brakes and lights along with emergency equipment such as first aid kits and fire extinguishers.

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Note: This document and other State Patrol Laws of the Month can be found on the WisDOT [website](#).