

Highway Safety Law Awareness Week February 16 – February 21, 2020

Steer Clear Law

- Pennsylvania's "Steer Clear" law was enacted to help prevent injuries and save lives of first responders.
- It requires drivers to move over or slow down when they encounter an emergency scene, traffic stop, or disabled vehicle.
- Drivers must move over or slow down for all responders, including police, fire, and ambulance crews, as well as stopped tow trucks and maintenance vehicles.
- In 2018, a similar law went into effect to protect trash and recycling workers. Drivers must slow down and move one lane away (if possible) when approaching a stationary trash or recycling truck.

Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement (AWZSE)

- The Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement (AWZSE) program was established by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in [Act 86 of 2018](#) to reduce work zone speeds, change driver behavior, and improve work zone safety for workers and motorists.
- The program entered a mandatory pre-enforcement period on January 4, 2020, and will begin enforcement on March 4, 2020.
- During the pre-enforcement period, automated speed enforcement units will be deployed in active work zones, but violations will not be issued. Work zones are selected to maximize the effectiveness of the systems and will be marked with signage in advance of the enforcement area.
- AWZSE systems are only operational in active work zones where workers are present. Once enforcement begins on March 4, registered owners will receive a warning letter for a first offense, a violation notice and \$75 fine for a second offense, and a violation notice and \$150 fine for third and subsequent offenses. These violations are civil penalties only; no points will be assessed to driver's licenses.
- Pennsylvania's AWZSE program uses portable, vehicle-mounted systems to detect and record motorists exceeding posted work zone speed limits by 11 miles per hour or more using electronic speed timing devices.
- In 2018, there were 1,804 work zone crashes in Pennsylvania, resulting in 23 fatalities, and 43 percent of work zone crashes resulted in fatalities and/or injuries. Since 1970, PennDOT has lost 89 workers in the line of duty. The PA Turnpike has lost 45 workers since 1945.

Helmet Laws

- **Motorcycle Helmet Law**
 - Pennsylvania Law requires that any person who operates or rides a motorcycle (including an autocycle) must wear protective headgear unless he or she is 21 years of age or older and has either two years of riding experience or has completed a motorcycle safety course approved by PennDOT or the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.
 - In addition, the operator or an occupant of a three-wheeled motorcycle or autocycle equipped with an enclosed cab is exempt from wearing a helmet.

- The [Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program](#) offers free motorcycle safety courses to Pennsylvania residents and active-duty military with a valid Pennsylvania driver's license and motorcycle permit.
- **Bicycle Helmet Law**
 - Pennsylvania law requires everyone under the age of 12 to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.
 - This applies to anyone operating the bicycle, riding as a passenger, or riding in an attached restraining seat or trailer.
 - The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation strongly recommends that all bicyclists wear helmets whenever they ride.
 - Ensure a proper helmet fit using these guidelines:
https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/8019_fitting-a-helmet.pdf

Seat Belt Laws

- Pennsylvania's primary seat belt law requires drivers and passengers under 18 years of age to buckle up anywhere in the vehicle.
 - Also, drivers under 18 may not operate a vehicle where the number of passengers exceeds the number of available seat belts.
- Under Pennsylvania's Primary Child Passenger Safety Law, children under the age of four must be properly restrained in an approved child safety seat anywhere in the vehicle and children ages 4-8 must be restrained in an appropriate booster seat.
 - The "Child Passenger Safety" law update, which went into effect in August 2016, states that children are required to be buckled into a rear-facing car seat until they are age 2 or meet the maximum weight or height requirements set by the manufacturer of the seat.
- Pennsylvania's secondary seat belt law requires drivers and passengers 18 years and older wear a seat belt when behind the wheel or in the front passenger seat. If you are a driver 18 or older and police pull you over for another violation, you'll receive a second ticket if you or your front-seat passengers aren't wearing seat belts.

School Bus Stopping Law

- When you meet or overtake a stopped school bus with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you **MUST STOP**.
- When you approach an intersection where a school bus is stopped with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you **MUST STOP**.
- You **MUST STOP** at least ten (10) feet away from the school bus.
- You **MUST WAIT** until the red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm has been withdrawn before moving.
- **DO NOT MOVE** until all the children have reached a place of safety.
- If you are convicted of violating Pennsylvania's School Bus Stopping Law, you will receive all of the following penalties: 60-Day Driver's License Suspension; Five (5) points on your driving record; and \$250 Fine.
 - Annually, more than 700 drivers are convicted for passing a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing.
- If in Doubt, **STOP!**

- **School Bus Speed Cameras:** Act 159 of 2019 permits side stop signal arm speed enforcement systems (SASES) for failure to stop for a school bus with flashing red lights, creates a surcharge for illegally passing a school bus, and establishes the School Bus Safety Grant Program Account. The stop arm cameras start recording once the side stop signal arm and red signal light is deployed. The recording captures violations and, after review by law enforcement, citations for violations can be issued.

When to stop for school buses: On two-lane roadways, four-lane roadways without a median separation, two-lane roadways with a center turning lane, and roadways with four lanes or more with a center turning lane, when a school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.

Separate roadways: Drivers may proceed on a highway with clearly defined dividing sections or physical barriers providing separate roadways. This only applies when the school bus is on the opposite side of the road. Clearly defined dividing sections include trees or shrubs, rocks or boulders, a stream, grass, etc. Physical barriers include concrete median barriers, metal median barriers, guide rails, etc.

Pennsylvania's School Bus Stopping Law Fact Sheet:

<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BDL/BDL%20Publications/Pub%2097.pdf>

Animated graphic demonstrating when traffic must stop:

<https://www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/Safety/TrafficSafetyAndDriverTopics/PublishingImages/School-Bus-Stopping.gif>