

## To report illegal passing of stopped school buses



**Dial 1-888-STOP-4-KIDS  
(1-888-786-7454)**

With help from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Florida Department of Education has initiated a toll free WATS line (1-888-**STOP-4-Kids**) for citizens to report motorists who pass school buses stopped to pick up or discharge students. When a person calls the "Hotline" they will be asked to leave the tag number, vehicle state of origin, and the time, date and location where the illegal pass was witnessed. The Department will send a letter to the registered vehicle owner informing them about the potentially tragic consequences of not stopping for a school bus. The letter will also advise them of Florida law stating when they must stop for school buses, including the penalties for violation. Persons may also call the number to simply request information, which will be mailed to them.

### **The following is a summary of the school bus stop law requirements:**

- Except as specified below, motorists approaching a school bus from either direction must stop when the bus is displaying the stop signal (flashing red warning lights and extended stop signal arm(s) on the left (driver's) side of the bus).
- Motorists traveling in the opposite direction as the school bus are not required to stop only when there is an unpaved median or space of at least five feet or a raised median or physical barrier between the lanes of traffic traveling in opposite directions.
- Regardless of the type of roadway, drivers traveling in the same direction as the bus are always required to stop.
- Drivers violating this law are subject to a penalty of \$100 for the first offense and are assessed four points against their license.
- Additionally, starting October 1, 1997 drivers who illegally pass on the side of the bus that children enter and exit (right side) are subject to a penalty of \$200 and a mandatory court appearance.

Interested parties should refer to sections 316.172, 318.18, and 318.19, Florida Statutes, for the specific language in the law.

On the reverse side of this page you will find the revised s. 316.172, FS, effective October 1, 1997. **Please note paragraph three of this revised law includes the responsibilities of the school bus driver related to school bus stops.** State Board of Education Rules for school bus stop procedures to be followed by school bus drivers are also included on the next page.

**Effective October 1, 1997**  
**Revised s.316.172, FS,**  
**Motor Vehicle Laws**

**316.172 Traffic to stop for school bus. ---**

(1) (a) Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle on or over the roads or highways of this state shall, upon approaching any school bus which displays a stop signal, bring such vehicle to a full stop while the bus is stopped, and the vehicle shall not pass the school bus until the signal has been withdrawn. A person who violates this section commits a moving violation, punishable as provided in chapter 3 18.

(b) Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle that passes a school bus on the side that children enter and exit when the school bus displays a stop signal commits a moving violation, punishable as provided in chapter 3 18, and is subject to a mandatory hearing under the provisions of s. 318.19.

(2) The driver of a vehicle upon a divided highway with an unpaved space of at least 5 feet, a raised median, or a physical barrier is not required to stop when traveling in the opposite direction of a school bus which is stopped in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(3) Every school bus shall stop as far to the right of the street as possible and shall display warning lights and stop signals as required by rules of the State Board of Education before discharging or loading passengers. When possible, a school bus shall not stop where the visibility is obscured for a distance of 200 feet either way from the bus.

**State Board of Education Rules**

**6A-3.017(2)(e) 3. k. Responsibilities of the school bus driver:**

k. To observe all procedures incorporated in the Florida Department of Education Basic School Bus Driver's Curriculum, as incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-3.0141(4)(b), FAC.

**Unit VIII**

**Florida Department of Education Basic School Bus Driver's Curriculum**

Unit VIII of the Florida Department of Education Basic School Bus **Driver's** Curriculum states in part: (It is the school bus driver's responsibility) To actuate the amber lights at a point approximately two hundred (200) feet from the student stop or at such greater distance as is necessary due to traffic speed and road conditions, as a warning to traffic that the bus is approaching a student passenger stop. Pull as far to the right as possible, staying on the traveled portion of the roadway. When the bus has stopped and before the door is opened, the amber lights shall be deactivated and the stop signal arm supplemented by flashing red lights, shall be displayed as due warning that students are being loaded or unloaded. The bus door shall not be opened to unload students until approaching traffic in the immediate vicinity of the bus has stopped.

The driver of a school bus, before resuming motion, shall deactivate flashing lights and permit stopped traffic to proceed in a manner which will allow congested traffic to disperse by keeping the bus as near to the right side of the road as can be done with safety.

Pupil warning lights are not to be used for reasons other than loading or unloading school children.