

OFFICE OF FIRE FIGHTER TRAINING
Department of Labor and Economic Growth

EXCERPTS FROM THE MICHIGAN VEHICLE CODE
ACT 300, P.A. 1949

NOTE: This handout contains only those sections of Act 300 that are considered most pertinent to fire fighters. The last page lists additional statutes of importance to fire fighters operating motor vehicles.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

257.1b "Ambulance" defined.

Sec. 1b. "Ambulance" means a privately or publicly owned motor vehicle for highway use that is specially designed or constructed and equipped, and is intended to be used for and is maintained or operated for the transportation of persons who are sick, injured, wounded, or otherwise incapacitated or helpless, including dual purpose police patrol cars and funeral coaches or hearses, and which is equipped according to section 7 of Act No. 258 of the Public Acts of 1968, as amended, being section 257.1207 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

Add. 1975, Act 100 (07/01/76)

257.2 "Authorized emergency vehicle" defined.

**** Sec. 2.** "Authorized emergency vehicle" means either of the following:

(a) Vehicles of the fire department, police vehicles, ambulances, or privately owned motor vehicles of volunteer or paid fire fighters if authorized by the chief of an organized fire department, or privately owned motor vehicles of volunteer or paid members of a life support agency licensed by the department of consumer and industry services if authorized by the life support agency.

Am. 1997, Act 8 (5/16/97)

**** (b)** For purposes of section 698(5)(c) during an emergency, a vehicle owned and operated by a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization that is used exclusively for assistance during that emergency.

Add. 1997, Act 8 (5/16/97)

257.12 "Department" defined.

Sec. 12. "Department" means the department of state.

257.312e Group A, B, or C vehicle designation on operator's or chauffeur's license; H, N, P, T, and X vehicle endorsement; tests; holder of unexpired operator's or chauffeur's license; qualifications and fees for vehicle group designation and endorsement; F vehicle endorsement; exceptions; former endorsement; expiration; disposition of money received and collected under subsection (3); refund to county or municipality; compliance with SS 257.303 and 257.319b.

**** Denotes most recent amendments to Act 300, P.A. 1949.**

Sec. 312e. (1) Except as provided in subsections (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8), a person, before operating a vehicle towing a vehicle having a gross vehicle weight

rating over 10,000 pounds, shall procure a group A vehicle designation on his or her operator's or chauffeur's license. Unless an endorsement is required, a person licensed to operate a group A vehicle may operate a group B or C vehicle without taking another test. A person, before operating a single vehicle having a gross vehicle weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more, or any combination of vehicles having a gross combination weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more if the vehicle being towed does not have a gross vehicle weight rating over 10,000 pounds, shall procure a group B vehicle designation on his or her operator's or chauffeur's license. Unless an endorsement is required, a person licensed to operate a group B vehicle may operate a group C vehicle without taking another test. A person, before operating a school transportation vehicle or a single vehicle having a gross vehicle weight rating under **26,001** pounds or a combination of vehicles having a gross combination weight rating under **26,001** pounds if the vehicle being towed does not have a gross vehicle weight rating over 10,000 pounds and carrying hazardous materials on which a placard is required under 49 CFR parts 100 to 199 or designed to transport 16 or more passengers including the driver, shall procure a group C vehicle designation and a hazardous material or passenger vehicle endorsement on his or her operator's or chauffeur's license. An applicant for a vehicle group designation shall take knowledge and driving skills test that comply; with minimum federal standards prescribed in 49 CFR part 383 as required under this act. The license shall be issued, suspended, revoked, canceled, or renewed in accordance with this act. Except as provided in this subsection, all of the following apply:

- (a) A person who takes the driving test required under section 312f for a group A vehicle designation in a combination of vehicles having a gross combination weight rating under **26,001** pounds shall not operate a single vehicle having a gross vehicle weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more, or any combination of vehicles having a gross combination weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more if the vehicle being towed has a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 pounds or more or the towing vehicle has a gross vehicle weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more.
- (b) A person who has a group B vehicle designation that is not restricted under this subsection and who takes the driving test required under section 312f for a group A vehicle designation in a combination of vehicles having a gross combination weight rating under **26,001** pounds shall not operate any combination of vehicles having a gross combination weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more if the vehicle being towed has a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 pounds or more.
- (c) A person who takes the driving test required under section 312f for a group B vehicle designation in a combination of vehicles in which the towing vehicle has a gross vehicle weight rating under **26,001** pounds shall not operate a single vehicle having a gross vehicle weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more, or any combination of vehicles if the towing vehicle has a gross vehicle weight rating of **26,001** pounds or more.

(2) This section does not apply to a fire fighter operating an authorized emergency vehicle who has met the driver training standards of the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council.

Am. 1991, Act 100 (01/01/93)

Sec. 602. A person shall not refuse to comply with a lawful order or direction of a police officer when that officer, for public interest and safety, is guiding, directing, controlling, or regulating traffic on the highways of this state.

Am. 1975, Act 209 (08/25/75)

257.603

Applicability of chapter to government vehicles; exemption of authorized emergency vehicle conditions; exemption of police vehicle not sounding audible signal; exemption of persons, vehicles, and equipment working on surface of highway.

Sec. 603. (a) The provisions of this chapter applicable to the drivers of vehicles upon the highway shall apply to the drivers of all vehicles owned or operated by the United States, this state, or a county, city, town, district, or any other political subdivision of the state, subject to the specific exceptions as are set forth in the chapter with reference to authorized emergency vehicles.

- (b)** The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle when responding to an emergency call, but not while returning from an emergency call, may exercise the privileges set forth in this section, subject to the conditions of this section.
- (c)** The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may:
 - (1)** Park or stand, irrespective of the provisions of this act.
 - (2)** Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down as may be necessary for safe operation.
 - (3)** Exceed the prima facie speed limits so long as he does not endanger life or property.
 - (4)** Disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified direction.
- (d)** The exemptions granted in this section to an authorized emergency vehicle shall apply only when the driver of the vehicle while in motion sounds an audible signal by bell, siren, air horn, or exhaust whistle as may be reasonably necessary except as provided in subsection (e), and when the vehicle is equipped with at least 1 lighted lamp displaying a flashing, oscillating, or rotating red or blue light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet in a 360 degree arc except where it is deemed advisable not to equip a police vehicle operating as an authorized emergency vehicle with a flashing, oscillating or rotating light which is visible in a 360 degree arc. In those cases a police vehicle shall display a flashing, oscillating, or rotating red or blue light which is visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of the vehicle. Only police vehicles which are publicly owned shall be equipped with a flashing, oscillating, or rotating blue light which when activated shall be visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet in a 360 degree arc.
- (e)** A police vehicle shall retain the exemptions granted in this section to an authorized emergency vehicle without sounding an audible signal if the police vehicle is engaged in an emergency run where silence is required.
- (f)** The exemptions provided for by this section shall apply to persons, teams, motor vehicles, and other equipment while actually engaged in work upon the surface of a highway but shall not apply to those persons and vehicles when traveling to or from work. The provisions of this chapter governing the size and width of vehicles shall not apply to vehicles owned by public highway authorities when the vehicles are proceeding to or from work on public highways.

Am. 1976, Act 347 (12/21/76)

257.632

Exemption from speed limitations; police vehicles, fire department or fire patrol vehicles, and ambulances; conditions.

Sec. 632. The speed limitation set forth in this chapter shall not apply to vehicles when operated with due regard for safety under the direction of the police when traveling in emergencies or in the chase or apprehension of violators of the law or of persons charged with or suspected of a violation, nor to fire department or fire patrol vehicles when traveling in response to a fire alarm, nor to public or private ambulances when traveling in emergencies. This exemption shall apply only when the driver of the vehicle while in motion sounds an audible signal by bell, siren or exhaust whistle as may be reasonably necessary or when the vehicle is equipped with at least 1 lighted lamp displaying a flashing, oscillating or rotating red or blue light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of such vehicles, unless the nature of the mission requires that a law enforcement officer travel without giving warning to suspected law violators. This exemption shall not however protect the driver of the vehicle from the consequences of a reckless disregard of the safety of others.

Am. 1976, Act 164 (06/21/76)

257.653

Immediate approach of authorized emergency vehicle; duty of driver of another vehicle; duty of streetcar operator; violation as civil infraction.

Sec. 653. (1) Upon the immediate approach of an authorized emergency vehicle equipped with not less than 1 lighted flashing, rotating, or oscillating lamp exhibiting a red or blue light visible under normal atmospheric condition from a distance of 500 feet to the front of the vehicle and when the driver is giving audible signal by siren, exhaust whistle, or bell:

- (a) The driver of another vehicle shall yield the right of way and shall immediately drive to a position parallel to and as close as possible to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway, clear of an intersection, and shall stop and remain in that position until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer.
 - (b) The operator of a streetcar shall immediately stop the car, clear of an intersection, and shall keep it in that position until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer.
- (2) This section does not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of persons using the highway.
- (3) A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

Am. 1978, Act 510 (08/01/79)

257.679

Following or parking within certain distance of fire apparatus; violation as civil infraction.

Sec. 679. (1) The driver of a vehicle other than a vehicle on official business shall not follow any fire apparatus traveling in response to a fire alarm closer than 500 feet or drive into or park the vehicle within 500 feet where fire apparatus has stopped in answer to a fire alarm.

- (2) A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

Am. 1978, Act 510 (08/01/79)

257.680

Driving over unprotected fire hose; violation as civil infraction.

Sec. 680. (1) A streetcar or vehicle shall not be driven over an unprotected hose of a fire department when laid down on a street, private driveway, or streetcar track, to be used at a fire or alarm of fire, without the consent of the fire department official in command.

(2) A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

Am. 1978, Act 510 (08/01/79)

257.698

Side cowl or fender lamps; running board courtesy lamp; backing lights; lamp or reflector; flashing, oscillating, or rotating lights; private motor vehicle of security guard agency or alarm company; use of lights authorized or required under section 257.697, 257.697a, and 257.698a; violation as civil infraction.

Sec. 698. (3) Backing lights of red, amber, or white may be mounted on the rear of a motor vehicle if the switch controlling the light is so arranged that the light may be turned on only if the vehicle is in reverse gear. The backing lights when unlighted shall be covered or otherwise arranged so as not to reflect objectionable glare in the eyes of a driver of a vehicle approaching from the rear.

(4) Unless both covered and unlit, a vehicle driven on the highways of this state shall not be equipped with a lamp or a part designed to be a reflector unless expressly required or permitted by this chapter or that meets the standards prescribed in 49 CFR 671.108. A lamp or a part designed to be a reflector, if visible from the front, shall display or reflect a white or amber light; if visible from either side, shall display or reflect an amber or red light; and if visible from the rear, shall display or reflect a red light, except as otherwise provided by law.

(5) The use or possession of flashing, oscillating, or rotating lights of any color is prohibited except as otherwise provided by law, or under the following circumstances:

(b) A fire vehicle or ambulance available for public use or for use of the United States, the state, or any unit of the state, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights and used as required for safety.

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(c) An authorized emergency vehicle as defined in section 2 may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights for use when responding to an emergency call if when in use the flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights are mounted on the roof section of the vehicle, either as a permanent installation or by means of suction cups or magnets and are clearly visible in a 360 degree arc from a distance of 500 feet when in use. A person operating lights under this subdivision at any time other than when responding to an emergency call is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Am. 1997, Act 8 (5/16/97)

(g) An authorized emergency vehicle may display flashing, rotating, or oscillating white lights in conjunction with an authorized emergency light as prescribed in this section.

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Denotes most recent amendments to Act 300, P.A. 1949.

(6) A person shall not sell, loan, or otherwise furnish a flashing, rotating, or oscillating blue or red light designed primarily for installation on an authorized emergency vehicle to a person except a police officer, sheriff, deputy sheriff, authorized physician, volunteer or paid fire fighter, volunteer ambulance driver, licensed ambulance driver or attendant of the state, a county or municipality within the state, a person engaged in the business of operating an ambulance

or wrecker service, or a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization which owns and operates an emergency support vehicle used exclusively for emergencies. This subsection does not prohibit an authorized vehicle, equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating blue or red lights, from being operated by a person other than a person described in this section if the person receives authorization to operate the emergency vehicle from a police officer, sheriff, deputy sheriff, authorized physician, volunteer or paid fire fighter, volunteer ambulance driver, licensed ambulance driver or attendant, a person operating an ambulance or wrecker service, or a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization which owns and operates an emergency support vehicle used exclusively for emergencies, except that the authorization shall not permit the person to operate lights as described in subsection (5)(a), (b), (c), (g), or (h), or to exercise the privileges described in section 603. A person who operates an authorized emergency vehicle in violation of the terms of an authorization is guilty of a misdemeanor.

- (9) A person who violates subsection (1), (2), (3), or (4) is responsible for a civil infraction.

Am. 1994, Act 101 (04/19/94)

257.706

Horn or other warning device; siren, whistle, air horn, or bell; theft alarm signal device.

Sec. 706. (b) A vehicle shall not be equipped with nor shall a person use upon a vehicle a siren, whistle, or bell, except as otherwise permitted in this section.

- (d) An authorized emergency vehicle may be equipped with a siren, whistle, air horn, or bell capable of emitting sound audible under normal conditions from a distance of not less than 500 feet, but the siren shall not be used except when the vehicle is operated in response to an emergency call or in the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law. In those cases the driver of the vehicle shall sound the siren when necessary to warn pedestrians and other drivers of the approach of the vehicle.

Am. 1978, Act 55 (03/10/78)

257.733

Release of accident information to nongovernmental agency.

Sec. 733. (1) The department shall not release information relating to an accident on the record of a driver to a nongovernmental agency unless the driver was subsequently convicted of or determined responsible for a violation of this act in connection with the accident.

Am. 1978, Act 545 (10/01/79)

- (2) The department shall not release information relating to an accident on the record of a police officer, fire fighter, or a person authorized to operate an ambulance or other emergency vehicle to a nongovernmental agency if the accident occurred while the person was operating the vehicle during the course of his or her employment.

Add. 1994, Act 50 (03/25/94)

OFFICE OF FIRE FIGHTER TRAINING
Department of Labor and Economic Growth

**ADDITIONAL STATUTES AFFECTING FIRE FIGHTER'S
 MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATIONS**

EXEMPTION OF FIREMEN FROM CARRYING CERTAIN PAPERS

MCLA 29.391. Firemen; papers required to be on his person, exemption.

Sec. 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, any fireman while responding to or returning from a fire alarm or while actually engaged in fighting a fire shall be exempt from carrying on his person any certificate, license or any paper or writing required by law to be on his person or presented upon demand of a peace officer.

Act 69, 1968 (5/28/68)

MICHIGAN INSURANCE CODE OF 1956

MCLA 500.3262. Peace officers, fire fighters or ambulance drivers; cancellation of private automobile insurance.

Sec. 3262. An insurer shall not cancel or refuse to renew a policy of insurance of any peace officer, fire fighter, or ambulance driver on his or her private automobile due to accident rate statistics compiled by the peace officer, fire fighter, or ambulance driver while driving police vehicles, fire department vehicles, or ambulances in the pursuit of his or her duties as a peace officer, fire fighter, or ambulance driver. As used in this section "ambulance driver" means a person authorized to drive an ambulance pursuant to part 207 of the public health code, Act No. 368 of the Public Acts of 1978, being sections 333.20701 to 333.20773 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

Am. 1986, Act 190 (8/1/86)

MICHIGAN PENAL CODE

Act 328 of 1931

MCLA 750.508 Equipping vehicle with radio able to receive signals on frequencies assigned for police purposes; permit required; exceptions; misdemeanor; penalty; radar detectors not applicable.

Sec. 508. (1) Any person who shall equip a vehicle with a radio receiving set that will receive signals sent on frequencies assigned by the federal communications commission of the United States of America for police purposes, or use the same in this state unless the vehicle is used or owned by a peace officer, or a bona fide amateur radio operator holding a technician class, general, advanced, or extra class amateur license issued by the federal communications commission, without first securing a permit so to do from the director of the department of state police upon application as he or she may prescribe, is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(2) This section does not apply to the use of radar detectors.

Am. 2002, Act 672, (03/31/03)