

Illinois School Bus Driver's Pretrip Inspection Requirements

TITLE 92; CHAPTER I; SUBCHAPTER e; PART 458

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**Illinois Department
of Transportation**
Division of Traffic Safety

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TITLE 92: TRANSPORTATION
CHAPTER I: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SUBCHAPTER e: TRAFFIC SAFETY (EXCEPT HAZARDOUS MATERIALS)

PART 458
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER'S PRETRIP INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

Section

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AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 13-115 of the Illinois Vehicle Inspection Law [625 ILCS 5/13-115].

SOURCE: Adopted at 21 Ill. Reg.13664, effective October 1, 1997; amended at 36 Ill. Reg. 14428, effective September 6, 2012; amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 2076, effective January 8, 2016.

Section 458.1000 Purpose

- a) This Part prescribes the pretrip inspection requirements a school bus driver must follow each day a school bus is operated.
- b) The procedures prescribed in this Part are minimum requirements. School bus owners or operators may dictate more stringent requirements for the pretrip inspections of school buses.

(Source: Amended at 36 Ill. Reg. 14428, effective September 6, 2012)

Section 458.1010 Applicability

This Part applies to the following persons:

- a) School bus drivers;
- b) School bus owners and operators;
- c) Mechanics performing repairs and adjustments on school buses; and
- d) Department personnel.

Section 458.1020 Definitions

"Code" - The Illinois Vehicle Code [625 ILCS 5].

"Department" - The Department of Transportation of the State of Illinois, acting directly or through its duly authorized officers and agents. (Section 1-115.05 of the Code)

"Exempt Time" – The time when a school bus is not being used to transport school children (e.g., weekends, holidays, school not in session).

"Officer" - An employee of the Illinois Department of Transportation designated as a vehicle inspector or Department management.

"School Bus" - Every motor vehicle, except as provided below, owned or operated by or for any of the following entities for the transportation of persons regularly enrolled as students in grade 12 or below in connection with any activity of such entity:

Any public or private primary or secondary school;

Any primary or secondary school operated by a religious institution; or

Any public, private or religious nursery school.

This definition shall not include the following:

A bus operated by a public utility, municipal corporation or common carrier authorized to conduct local or interurban transportation of passengers when such bus is not traveling a specific school bus route but is:

On a regularly scheduled route for the transportation of other fare paying passengers;

Furnishing charter service for the transportation of groups on field trips or other special trips or in connection with other special events; or

Being used for shuttle service between attendance centers or other educational facilities.

A motor vehicle of the first division.

A multifunction school-activity bus. (Section 1-182 of the Code.)

"School Bus Driver" - Any person who is licensed to operate a school bus pursuant to Section 6-106.1 of the Code.

"School Bus Pretrip Inspection" - The inspection performed by a school bus driver on his/her school bus prior to the bus being operated each day to transport students. Some equipment may be inspected by persons other than the driver. The inspection consists of checking mechanical and safety equipment on the bus.

"School Bus Driver Pretrip Inspection Form" or "the Form" - The form prescribed by the Department to be used by school bus drivers to perform the required pretrip inspection. The form contains all of the vehicle's equipment that must be inspected by the driver or persons other than the driver (e.g., school bus mechanic). (See Illustration A)

"School Bus Mechanic" - Any person authorized by the school bus owner/operator to make necessary repairs and adjustments on a school bus. A school bus mechanic may also be responsible for inspecting mechanical equipment during the pretrip inspection.

(Source: Amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 2076, effective January 8, 2016)

Section 458.1030 Driver Requirements

- a) *Each day that a school bus is operated the driver shall conduct a pretrip inspection of the mechanical and safety equipment on the bus as prescribed by this Part. A person other than the driver may perform portions of the pretrip inspection as prescribed by this Part. (Section 13-115 of the Illinois Vehicle Inspection Law)*
- b) The pretrip inspection shall consist of inspecting mechanical and safety equipment on the school bus. The Form lists all equipment required to be inspected during the pretrip inspection. (See Illustration A - School Bus Driver Pretrip Inspection Form.)
- c) The Form shall be completed in duplicate. Forms are typically organized in a booklet format with 30 duplicate Forms in each booklet. Each bus shall have one booklet assigned to it. The booklet must remain on the bus until each duplicate copy has been on the bus for at least 30 days (see subsection (o)).

School bus owners or operators can either create the booklets in-house or purchase them from an outside vendor. Vendor options are available by contacting the Vehicle Inspection Unit Manager, Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety, 1340 North 9th Street, P.O. Box 19212, Springfield, IL 62794-9212 or by calling 217/785-3031.

- d) The pretrip inspection shall be performed each day a school bus is operated to transport students. If the same driver operates the same bus more than once a day, a new inspection is not required for each subsequent trip.
- e) If a bus is operated by a different driver for any subsequent trips during the day, an additional pretrip inspection is required. If a driver is required to complete his/her route in a bus different than the one he/she started the route in, a complete pretrip inspection must be performed on the replacement bus.
- f) The driver is required to complete a School Bus Driver's Pretrip Inspection Form in full each time an inspection is performed. Any defects found on the bus must be recorded on the Form.
- g) The following equipment must be inspected at least once every 24 hours when the bus is being operated to transport students. When the driver inspects this equipment, he or she is responsible for verifying that these and all other equipment listed on the Form have been inspected, as required. The driver's signature on the Form is verification that these items have been inspected, as required. Exempt times are excluded from the 24-hour period requirement (see definition of Exempt Time in Section 458.1020).
 - 1) Oil;
 - 2) Coolant;
 - 3) Battery;
 - 4) Transmission Fluid;
 - 5) Master Cylinder Brake Fluid;
 - 6) Power Steering Fluid;
 - 7) Washer Fluid;
 - 8) All belts (e.g., fan, alternator, power steering); and

- 9) Wiring.
- h) The equipment listed in subsection (g) may be inspected by someone other than the driver (e.g., school bus mechanic or bus attendant). If any person other than the driver inspects the equipment listed in subsection (g), that person is responsible for the inspection of the equipment and must provide his or her signature on the Form, along with the date and time the equipment was inspected. (Writing "Shop" on the signature line is not acceptable.) That person's signature is valid for a 24 hour period (i.e., the corresponding line may be blank on the next day's Form). Exempt times are excluded from the 24 hour period (see definition of Exempt Time in Section 458.1020).
 - i) If defects are discovered, the driver must notify the school bus owner/operator each day before the trip is started so the defects can be corrected.
 - j) The Department recommends that all defects be corrected before any bus is used to transport children. Each school district or contractor must establish policies to govern procedures that are to be followed when any equipment is found to be unsatisfactory.
 - k) Each day before a school bus is operated, the driver must examine the previous Form to verify all defects have been corrected. If all defects have not been corrected, the driver must immediately notify the school bus owner/operator or his or her designee.
 - l) The original Form shall be presented to the school bus owner/operator, or his or her designee, before the trip is started each day an inspection is completed. The owner/operator, or his or her designee, shall be responsible for insuring the repairs/adjustments are made as soon as practicable.
 - m) After any repairs are made, the school bus mechanic performing the repairs/adjustments must sign and date the Form.
 - n) The original copy shall be maintained by the owner/operator for 180 days (i.e., six months) from the date of inspection.
 - o) The duplicate copy shall remain in the bus for 30 days (i.e., one month) from the date of inspection. Duplicate copies more than 30 days old must be removed from the bus.
 - p) The original Forms shall be organized in an orderly fashion and made available for inspection at any time by officers of the Department as authorized by 92 Ill. Adm. Code 456.60(mm).

- q) The owner/operator is responsible for providing Forms to the drivers.
- r) Each school bus must be equipped with an adequate supply of Forms.
- s) Forms must not be filled out in advance and each individual equipment must be checked or marked with individual checkmarks while the Form is being completed. If any equipment listed on the Form was not present on the bus at the time of manufacture (e.g., clutch), the equipment must be marked out and “Not Applicable” or “N/A” must be written beside the equipment.
- t) A copy of Illustration A can be used or a form can be developed which contains all the information found in Illustration A. Additional equipment may be added to the equipment listed in Illustration A as the bus owner/operator deems necessary (e.g., wheelchair lift).
- u) The Department must approve all variations of the Form before they can be used. Forms submitted for approval must be submitted to the address provided in subsection (c).
- v) The Form shall contain general information about the bus and must list the equipment that is required to be inspected by the driver (see Illustration A). A Remarks Section must be provided for the driver to detail specific defects. A signature line must be provided for the driver and, if applicable, the mechanic who performed any inspection of mechanical equipment. A signature and date line must also be provided for the school bus mechanic performing any repairs/adjustments.
- w) The Department must approve any variance from the procedures prescribed in this Part. A request for a procedural variance must be submitted in writing to the address provided in subsection (c).
- x) Procedural changes may include, but are not limited to, recording the inspection of the equipment listed in subsection (g) on a supplemental form. This type of variance may help expedite the inspection of larger fleets when an employee may be responsible for inspecting the equipment listed in subsection (g). The supplemental form must list each piece of equipment (i.e., fluids and belts) listed in subsection (g) and whether the equipment is in satisfactory or unsatisfactory condition. The supplemental form must provide space for each school bus to be listed by unit number along with the date and time of the fluids/belts inspection. The person who performs the inspection must provide his or her signature on the supplemental form that confirms he or she is responsible for the inspection of the fluids and belts. The supplemental form

must provide the school bus owner's or operator's name. The Form shall also be modified to indicate that the inspection of the equipment listed in subsection (g) has been recorded on a supplemental form. Department officers must be provided access to all inspection information, when requested.

- y) If the bus is not being used as a school bus (e.g., if it is being driven to obtain maintenance/repair work), this Part does not apply.
- z) Electronic pretrip inspection systems may be used to meet the requirements of this Part. This variance must be approved, upon request, before an electronic system is implemented. The request must be submitted in writing to the address provided in subsection (c). Provided prior approval is granted, electronic systems may be exempt from recordkeeping procedures (e.g., pretrip forms stored on the bus and/or data stored on electronic readers for 30 days). Electronic pretrip inspections must include the equipment listed on the Form. Upon request, Department officers must be provided access to all data collected and stored.
- aa) In the event that an electronic pretrip system is not functioning or is not meeting the requirements of this Part, Illustration A must be completed, as required by this Part.
- bb) Inventory of existing preprinted forms may be used until depleted. Illustration A must be used after all existing forms are depleted from a school bus owner's or operator's inventory.

AGENCY NOTE: School bus drivers may need to be equipped with a flashlight in order to perform pretrip inspections before sunrise or after sunset. A two-person system may also be helpful when performing pretrip inspections to verify the lights on the rear of the bus are functioning properly.

(Source: Amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 2076, effective January 8, 2016)

Section 458.ILLUSTRATION A School Bus Driver's Pretrip Inspection Form

(SEE NEXT PAGE)

