

321.231 Authorized emergency vehicles and police bicycles.

1. The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected perpetrator of a felony or misdemeanor, or in response to an incident dangerous to the public, or when responding to but not upon returning from a fire alarm, may exercise the privileges set forth in [this section](#).

2. The driver of any authorized emergency vehicle, may:

a. Park or stand an authorized emergency vehicle, irrespective of the provisions of [this chapter](#).

b. Disregard laws or regulations governing direction of movement for the minimum distance necessary before an alternative route that conforms to the traffic laws and regulations is available.

c. Drive the vehicle on the shoulder or median of a highway.

d. Disregard laws or regulations governing turning the vehicle in specified directions.

e. Disregard laws or regulations governing overtaking or passing other motorists.

3. The driver of an official fire department vehicle, police vehicle, rescue vehicle, ambulance, emergency medical services vehicle, or emergency management vehicle, or a peace officer riding a police bicycle in the line of duty, may do any of the following:

a. Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down to or maintaining a speed deemed necessary for safe operation by the driver based on information known to the driver at the time.

b. Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as the driver does not recklessly endanger life or property.

4. A peace officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle may execute a pursuit intervention technique if such execution is reasonable under the circumstances based on the information perceived by the officer at the time, and the officer has completed a training course approved by the Iowa law enforcement academy that instructs participants in the proper execution of pursuit intervention techniques. For purposes of [this subsection](#), “*pursuit intervention technique*” means a method by which a peace officer operating a motor vehicle in pursuit of a fleeing motor vehicle causes or attempts to cause the fleeing motor vehicle to stop, including by use of reasonable force. [This subsection](#) shall not be construed to limit a peace officer’s objectively reasonable use of force in connection with a pursuit.

5. a. The exemptions granted to the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle under [subsection 2](#) and to the driver of an official fire department vehicle, police vehicle, rescue vehicle, ambulance, emergency medical services vehicle, or emergency management vehicle as provided in [subsection 3](#) shall apply only when such vehicle is making use of an audible warning device meeting the requirements of [section 321.433](#) or a visual signaling device authorized under [this chapter](#).

b. The exemption granted under [subsection 3](#), paragraph “b”, shall be granted to a peace officer or reserve peace officer operating an authorized emergency vehicle without using an audible warning device or visual signaling device if such action occurs over the shortest distance necessary, does not recklessly endanger persons or property, and if the officer is pursuing a suspected violator of the speed restrictions imposed by or pursuant to [this chapter](#) for the purpose of determining the speed of travel of such suspected violator, or if the officer reasonably believes based on the facts and circumstances at the time that a suspected violator’s knowledge of the officer’s proximity may cause the suspected violator to destroy evidence of a suspected felony or aggravated misdemeanor, evade apprehension, or endanger the public or the officer.

c. The exemption granted under [subsection 3](#), paragraph “b”, shall be granted to the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle transporting a patient to a hospital without using a visual signaling device or audible warning device if a certified emergency medical care provider reasonably believes the patient’s condition warrants rapid transport.

6. The provisions of [this section](#) shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle or the rider of a police bicycle from the duty to drive or ride with due regard for

the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver or rider from the consequences of the driver's or rider's reckless disregard for the safety of others.

[C39, §**5017.04**, **5017.05**, **5023.12**; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §321.231, 321.232, 321.296; C77, 79, 81, §321.231]

97 Acts, ch 71, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1080, §2; 98 Acts, ch 1100, §46; 2009 Acts, ch 133, §118; 2018 Acts, ch 1022, §2; 2022 Acts, ch 1087, §1 – 4, 11

Referred to in §321.231C, 613.17, 805.8A(11)(a)

For applicable scheduled fines, see §805.8A, subsection 11