

281—44.5(285) Type III vehicles.

44.5(1) General information. These vehicles may be used for student transportation in accordance with the following general provisions:

a. The vehicle will be an OEM product and manufactured as a family-type or multipurpose passenger vehicle (MPV).

Vehicles used exclusively for driver's education are exempt from these provisions.

b. The manufacturer's rated capacity of this vehicle, which is determined only by the OEM on the date of manufacture, will not exceed 12 persons including the driver. The capacity rating may not be changed or modified except by the OEM, dealer, or remanufacturer. Secondary stage or vehicle conversion manufacturers will not establish vehicle capacity. Seating capacities that vary from the OEM are required by NHTSA to be identified by an alterer's certification and information label that shall be affixed to the frame of the driver's door.

(1) Vehicles with a capacity of ten or fewer passengers including the driver may be acquired new or used.

(2) Vehicles with a capacity of 11 or 12 passengers, including the driver, may only be acquired used. For purposes of this subrule, "used" means a vehicle that has had a title transfer from a dealer to one or more previous retail owners.

c. Alteration of a vehicle, following manufacture by the OEM, is prohibited. This includes the addition or removal of seats and the addition of wheelchair lifts. The following exceptions apply:

(1) OEM options or other manufacturer's accessories not in violation of these standards may be installed.

(2) Seats may be added or removed as long as the seating capacity does not exceed the capacity as certified by the OEM or on the label installed according to paragraph 44.5(1) "b."

(3) Wheelchair ramps are allowed to be added to the passenger side of the vehicle only and will comply with all applicable FMVSS and ADA requirements. When wheelchair ramps are added, the vehicle must also be equipped with the appropriate wheelchair securement system, which must also meet all applicable FMVSS and ADA requirements.

d. The vehicle will not carry more passengers than there are seat belts as installed by the manufacturer.

e. The vehicle will not be painted the color known as National School Bus Glossy Yellow.

f. The vehicle will not be equipped with a stop arm or flashing warning signal lamps.

g. This vehicle will load and unload students off the traveled portion of the roadway.

44.5(2) Special equipment.

a. Interior liner. An interior liner that covers all exposed ceiling girders, sidewall posts, or other structural projections is to be provided and installed by the manufacturer.

b. The vehicle, while transporting students to and from school, will display a sign, visible to the rear, with the words "SCHOOL BUS." The sign will be National School Bus Glossy Yellow with black letters 6 inches high. The sign will be a type that can be removed, dismantled, or covered when the vehicle is not transporting pupils to and from school.

c. A sign with the words "THIS VEHICLE STOPS AT ALL RAILROAD CROSSINGS," visible to the rear, may be used where appropriate and not in conflict with current statutes. If used, the words will be black letters on a yellow background. The sign will be of a type that can be dismantled, turned down, or covered when the vehicle is not transporting pupils to and from school.

d. Special brake lamps. The vehicle may be equipped with two roof-mounted lights not greater than 4 inches in diameter and positioned horizontally on the roof at least 36 inches apart. The lights will be connected to the brake lamp circuit of the vehicle's electrical system and will operate only when the brakes are applied. When lit, the lamps will be red and visible only to the rear.

e. First aid kit. A first aid kit meeting the national recommendations (most current National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures Manual—first aid kit) is required on all vehicles used for student transportation.

f. Fire extinguisher. The vehicle will carry a dry chemical fire extinguisher of at least 2½-pound capacity with a rating of 2A-10BC. The extinguisher will be equipped with a calibrated or marked gauge. Plastic discharge heads and related parts are not acceptable.

g. Each vehicle will be equipped with a durable webbing cutter having a full-width handgrip and a protected, replaceable or noncorrodible blade. This device will be mounted in a location accessible to the seated driver in an easily detachable manner.

h. Each vehicle will be equipped with a body fluid cleanup kit.

i. Each vehicle will be equipped with a backup alarm beeper capable of a minimum of 112 db. NOTE: This is effective for 2007 model year vehicles and newer.

j. Trailer hitches are allowed on Type III vehicles in accordance with the manufacturer's rated towing capacity. Students are not allowed to be transported in the vehicle when the vehicle is being used to tow.

44.5(3) *Applicability of standards.* The above standards apply to all vehicles (except as noted in paragraph 44.5(2)“*i*”) of this type and those currently in service used to transport students.

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