

**RULES GOVERNING PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLES OF
VOLUNTEER FIREMEN AND VOLUNTEER RESCUE MEMBERS
AS DEFINED IN OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 4511.01(E)**

1. AUTHORITY.

The State Fire Marshal and the Ohio Department of Health are hereby designated as Official Inspection Agencies to perform the functions of the Ohio Revised Code Section 4513.02, concerning motor vehicle inspections, with respect to the personal vehicles of volunteer firemen and volunteer rescue service members under their jurisdiction.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR INSPECTION STATIONS.

All Official Inspection Stations designed by the Official Inspection Agencies must have proper tools, equipment, and trained personnel competent to inspect: all types of brakes (including an adequate brake testing area unless mechanical testing devices are used), all lights and turn signals, steering mechanism, horns and warning devices, windshields and all window glass, mirrors, exhaust system, windshield wipers, tires and/or any other equipment as required by the Superintendent of the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

3. EQUIPMENT TO BE INSPECTED.

(A) All Official Inspection Stations engaging in motor vehicle inspection shall inspect and test each motor vehicle to determine if it is safe, equipped as required by law, that its equipment is in proper adjustment or repairs, and that it is not in violation of the equipment provisions of Chapter 4513 of the Revised Code.

(B) Such inspection shall be made with respect to the brakes, lights, turn signals, steering, horns and warnings devices, glass, mirrors, exhaust system, windshield wipers, tires, and such other items of equipment as designated by the Superintendent of the Ohio State Highway Patrol by rules or regulations adopted pursuant to Section 119.01 to 119.13, inclusive of the Revised Code.

4. RETENTION OF RECORDS.

All Official Inspection Stations engaging in motor vehicle inspection shall maintain records for submission to the Department of Highway Safety through their respective Agencies, on a quarterly basis, or more frequent intervals as volume may dictate, of the following information: date of inspection, make of vehicle, model year, license plate identification number, and odometer reading on the vehicle. Such quarterly, or more frequent reports, shall also indicate any removal from the records of previously inspected vehicles when the volunteer is no longer affiliated with his or her respective Agency.

5. ISSUANCE OF SAFETY STICKER.

(A) All Official Inspection Stations engaging in motor vehicle inspection, upon determining that a vehicle complies with the requirements of Chapter 4513 of the Revised Code and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Superintendent of the Ohio State Highway Patrol (Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 4501:2-1), shall affix a safety sticker of the type issued for designating "Public Safety Vehicle" to the lower right-hand corner of the windshield of said vehicle, in compliance with Section 4513.24 of the Revised Code.

(B) Said safety sticker, in addition to the imprinted information on the face, shall include the following information on the reverse side of each sticker: date of inspection, identification of issuing inspection station, designation of vehicle function (i.e., volunteer fireman - VF; volunteer rescue service VRS; or both VF VRS) designation of members' unit of locality.

(C) In a case where an Official Inspection Station designates that a volunteer is both a fireman and a rescue service member, it shall be incumbent upon such Station to determine that the volunteer is both in the fire department service and in a volunteer rescue service certified by the Department of Health. Satisfactory evidence of current participation in both services shall be provided prior to issuance of the public safety sticker.

6. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR STEERING.

Steering will be inspected to determine if:

- (A) Steering assembly operates normally;
- (B) There is not more than one quarter (1/4) turn (play) in steering wheel;
- (C) Sector shaft is secure (determine by pulling steering wheel up toward driver);
- (D) There is no binding or lash in the steering assembly.

7. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR TIRES.

All tires must have a minimum of one-sixteenth (1/16) of one inch depth of tread on the road surface. All tires shall be free of major bumps or bulges, breaks, thrown tread, or any condition which would constitute an unsafe condition.

8. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR WHEEL AND RIMS.

Wheels and rims must not be badly bent or twisted. Lug bolts must be securely tightened.

9. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR BRAKES.

(A) Definitions.

- (1) Service brakes: primary brake for retarding, stopping and controlling a vehicle.
- (2) Emergency brake: a brake system independent in application from the service brake used for stopping or holding a vehicle in an emergency or while parked.
- (3) Pedal reserve: amount of total pedal travel left in reserve when the pedal is depressed to the "brake applied" position.

(B) Brakes will be inspected to determine if:

- (1) There is sufficient brake pedal. Hydraulic brake system should be tested with the vehicle in a stopped position. Drivers should be able to maintain brake pedal height under moderate foot force (40 - 60 pounds) for one minute.
- (2) There is insufficient brake pedal reserve. With vehicle in stopped position and brake pedal depressed under moderate foot force (40 - 60 pounds for non-powered systems and 15-20 pounds in power assisted systems) there should be a minimum of approximately one-third of the total available pedal travel (manufactures specification) remaining on non-powered assisted systems. On power assisted systems, checking with motor running, there should be one-fifth or more of the total available pedal travel remaining when pedal is depressed under moderate foot force.
- (3) The service brake will stop the vehicle in the distance required by law. Visual inspection will be made for leakage of brake cylinders on all wheels. Tests may be made using a mechanical testing device approved by the Superintendent of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, or on a level, dry, smooth, hard surface, free of loose material, oil or grease, using the service brake only to stop the vehicle.

Vehicles having brakes on all wheels shall come to a stop in thirty (30) feet or less from a speed of twenty (20) miles per hour. Vehicles not having brakes on all wheels shall come to a stop in forty (40) feet or less from a speed of twenty (20) miles per hour.

- (4) The emergency brake will hold the vehicle on any grade on which it is operated under all conditions of loading, on a surface free from snow, ice or loose material and be adequate to stop the vehicle in the event the service brake should fail.

The emergency brake should hold the vehicle in stopped position when less than two-thirds (2/3) of the actuator stroke is used. Tests will be made by setting the emergency brake and moving the vehicle in reverse.

10. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR LIGHTING.

- (A) Headlights - Every motor vehicle shall be equipped with at least two headlights with at least one near each side of the front of the motor vehicle. Said lights shall be in working order. Every motor vehicle having multiple beam road lighting equipment shall be equipped with a beam indicator which shall be in working order and lighted whenever the uppermost distribution of light from the headlights is in use, and shall not otherwise be lighted. Said indicator shall be so designed and located that, when lighted, it will be readily visible without a glare to the driver of the vehicle.
- (B) Focus and aim of headlights - The focus and aim of every headlight shall be so adjusted so as not to interfere with the vision of the driver of any other vehicle. There shall be an uppermost distribution of a light, or composite beam, so aimed and of such intensity as to reveal persons and vehicles at a distance of at least 350 feet ahead for all conditions of loading. There shall be a lowermost distribution of light, or composite beam, so aimed and of sufficient intensity to reveal persons and vehicles at a distance of at least 100 feet ahead.
- (C) Color of lights - No vehicle shall be equipped with a light of any color other than white or amber mounted on the front thereof. A vehicle which qualifies as a public safety vehicle pursuant to these rules may exhibit and use such other lights as provided by statute. When operating as a public safety vehicle, and at no other time, such lights shall be activated and emit the appropriate colored lighting.
- (D) Taillights - Every motor vehicle shall have at least one taillight mounted on the rear, in working order, which when lighted shall emit a red light visible from a distance of five hundred feet to the rear.
- (E) License illumination light - Every motor vehicle shall be equipped with a white light in working order placed in such a manner as to illuminate the rear registration plate and render it legible from a distance of fifty feet to the rear. Any taillight, together with any separate light for illuminating the rear registration plate, shall be so wired as to be lighted whenever the headlights or auxiliary driving lights are lighted.
- (F) Headlights (high and low beam), taillights, brake lights, license plate light, and turn signals shall be inspected to determine if they are operable and comply with the foregoing requirements.

11. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS TURN SIGNALS.

- (A) All motor vehicles manufactured or assembled on or after January 1, 1954, must be equipped with an electrical or mechanical directional signal device capable of clearly indicating an intention to turn either to the right or to the left and which shall be visible from both the front and rear. Said signals shall be in working order.
- (B) Turn signal lamps shall be visible at a distance of not less than three hundred feet in normal sunlight.

12. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR GLASS.

“Safety Glass” means any product composed of glass so manufactured, fabricated, or treated as substantially to prevent shattering and flying of the glass when it is struck or broken.

Every motor vehicle shall be equipped with safety glass wherever glass is used in the windshields, doors, partitions, rear windows, and windows on each side immediately adjacent to the rear window. Such glass shall be free of discoloration or diffusion, cracks, non-transparent materials, and unauthorized obstructions, including but not limited to material upon the glass designed to prohibit detection of persons or objects inside the vehicle by means of one way transparency.

13. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR SEAT BELTS.

Every motor vehicle manufactured on or after January 1, 1962, must be equipped with seat belt assemblies consisting of a belt, anchor attachment assembly, and a buckle or closing device.

14. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR LICENSE PLATES.

Every motor vehicle shall have displayed, on the front and rear, the distinctive number and registration mark, furnished by the Director of Highway Safety. Such number plates shall be securely fastened so as not to swing and shall not be obscured.

15. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR EXHAUST SYSTEMS.

- (A) Every motor vehicle with an internal combustion engine shall at all times be equipped with an exhaust system which is in good working order and in constant operation. No vehicle shall be equipped with a muffler cutout, bypass or similar device which would produce excessive smoke or gas, or permit any other chemical to flow into or upon the exhaust pipe or muffler of such vehicle, or equipped in any other way to produce or emit smoke or dangerous or annoying gases from any portion of such vehicle, other than the ordinary gases emitted by the exhaust of an internal combustion engine under normal operation.
- (B) No motor vehicle shall be equipped with an exhaust system which would produce any excessive and/or unusual noise.
- (C) Every motor vehicle shall at all times be equipped with a standard muffler for said type of vehicle or one that meets all of the above requirements.

16. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR REAR VIEW MIRROR.

Every motor vehicle shall be equipped with a mirror so located as to reflect to the operator a view of the highway to the rear of such vehicle. The operator shall have a clear unobstructed view to the rear and both sides of the vehicle by mirror.

17. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR WINDSHIELD WIPERS AND WASHERS.

Every motor vehicle which shall be equipped with a device for cleaning rain, snow, or other moisture from the windshield, which device shall be maintained in good working order and so constructed as to be controlled or operated by the operator of the vehicle.

Every motor vehicle manufactured after January 1, 1968, shall be equipped with a windshield washer maintained in operable condition at all times and capable of cleaning the windshield in such a fashion as to leave the driver a clear view of the highway or any intersecting highway.

18. MOTOR VEHICLE EQUIPMENT STANDARDS FOR HORN AND WARNING DEVICES.

- (A) Every motor vehicle shall be equipped with a horn which is in good working order and capable of emitting sound audible, under normal conditions, for a distance of not less than two hundred feet.
- (B) Every public safety vehicle may be equipped with a siren, whistle, or bell, capable of emitting sound audible, under normal conditions, for a distance of not less than five hundred feet. When operating as a public safety vehicle, and at no other time, such siren, whistle, or bell shall be activated and emit the appropriate sound.
- (C) The horn shall be clearly identifiable as a motor vehicle horn. The device for operating the horn shall be located so it may be easily controlled by the driver.

19. DANGEROUS CONDITION OF VEHICLE BODY.

No motor vehicle shall be equipped with or permitted to have protruding objects or broken sharp edges of body or vehicle parts, which would be dangerous to any person coming in contact with same.

20. FUEL SYSTEM.

Every motor vehicle manufactured on or after January 1, 1968, must be equipped with a certified motor vehicle pollution control device which is correctly installed and in good working order at all times.

21. MANDATORY INSPECTION PRIOR TO ISSUANCE.

All motor vehicles of volunteer firemen and volunteer rescue service members, prior to receiving approval as a public safety vehicle, shall be inspected by the appropriate Official Inspection Station having jurisdiction over such volunteer, notwithstanding the possession or display of any other certificate of inspection whether of Ohio or any other jurisdiction.

22. REMOVAL OF SAFETY STICKERS.

Any public safety sticker issued pursuant to successful inspection and certification under these rules shall be immediately removed upon disposal or transfer of ownership of the vehicle.

23. FREQUENCY OF INSPECTION.

Each vehicle, in order to receive approval as a public safety vehicle and to retain such approval, must be inspected at least annually as to compliance with the foregoing standards of vehicle safety.

24. DISPLAY OF SAFETY STICKERS.

No vehicle shall be operated as a public safety vehicle by a volunteer fireman or volunteer rescue service member without displaying a safety sticker reflecting inspection during the current calendar year, except that a sticker for the next immediate succeeding year may be displayed no more than ninety days prior to January 1 of the succeeding year. The effective date of all decals is from January 1 to December 31 of the particular year imprinted thereon.

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4511.24 EMERGENCY VEHICLES EXCEPTED FROM SPEED LIMITATIONS

The prima-facie speed limitations set forth in section 4511.21 of the Revised Code do not apply to emergency vehicles or public safety vehicles when they are responding to emergency calls and are equipped with and displaying at least one flashing, rotating, or oscillating light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of fire hundred feet to the front of the vehicle and when the drivers thereof sound audible signals by bell, siren, or exhaust whistle. This section does not relieve the driver of an emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons using the street or highway.

4511.45 RIGHT-OF-WAY OF PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLES

Upon the approach of a public safety vehicle, equipped with at least one flashing, rotating or oscillating light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of fire hundred feet to the front of such vehicle and the driver is giving audible signal by siren, exhaust whistle, or bell, the driver of every other vehicle shall yield the right of way, immediately drive to a position parallel to, and as dose as possible to the right edge or curb of the highway clear of-any intersection, and stop and remain in such position until the public safety vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer.

Upon the approach of a public safety vehicle, as stated in the first paragraph of this section, the operator of every streetcar or trackless trolley shall immediately stop such car clear of any intersection and keep it in such position until the public safety vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer.

This section does not relieve the driver of a public safety vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property upon the highway.

HISTORY: GC Sec. 63077-44; 119 v 766(782), Sec 44; 124 v 514; Bureau of Code Revisions, 10-1-53; 132 v H 878 (Eff 12-14-67); 132 v Sec 451. (Eff 2-29-68).

CASE NOTES AND OAG

1. (1982) A police cruiser loses the preferential right of way granted in RC Sec 4511.45 when it is driven without an audible signal: *Akron v. Charley*, 2 OMisc2d 1,2 OBR 51, 440 NE2d 837 (MC).
2. (1984) An emergency vehicle responding to an emergency with lights flashing and having sounded its siren, may travel left of center to avoid stopped traffic as long as due regard is maintained for the safety of others. (RC sections 4511.25, 4511.29, and 4511.45, construed.): *Semple v. Hope*, 15 OS3d 372, 15 OBR 491, 474 NE2d 314.

4511.45.1 (4511.451) FUNERAL PROCESSION HAS RIGHT OF WAY

As used in this section "funeral procession" means two or more vehicles accompanying a body of a deceased person in the daytime when each of such vehicles has its headlights alighted and is displaying a purple and white pennant attached to each vehicle in such a manner as to be clearly visible to traffic approaching from any direction.

Excepting public safety vehicles proceeding in accordance with section 4511.45 of the Revised Code or when directed otherwise by a police officer, pedestrians and the operators of all vehicles, street cars, trackless trolleys shall yield the right of way to each vehicle which is part of a funeral procession.

4511.45.2 (4511.452) PEDESTRIANS YIELD RIGHT-OF-WAY TO PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLE

(A) Upon the immediate approach of a public safety vehicle, as stated in section 4511.45 of the Revised Code, every pedestrian shall yield the right-of-way to the public safety vehicle.

(B) This section shall not relieve the driver of a public safety vehicle from the duty to exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian.

HISTORY: 135 V H 995. (Eff 1-1-75).

4511.72 FOLLOWING AN EMERGENCY OR PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLE PROHIBITED

The driver of any vehicle, other than an emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle on official business, shall not follow any emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle traveling in response to an alarm closer than five hundred feet, or drive into or park such vehicle within the block where fire apparatus has stopped in answer to a fire alarm, unless directed to do so by a police officer or fireman.

HISTORY: GC Sec 6307-70; 119 v 766 (790). Sec 70; 124 v 514 (525); Bureau of Code Revisions, 10-1-53; 132 v H 878 (Eff 12-14-67).

4511.73 DRIVING OVER UNPROTECTED FIRE HOSE (GC Sec 6307-71)

No streetcar, trackless trolley, or vehicle shall, without the consent of the fire department official in command, be driven over any unprotected hose of a fire department, when said hose is laid down on any street, private driveway, or streetcar track to be used at any fire or alarm of fire.

HISTORY: GC Sec 6307-71; 119 v 766(790); Sec 71; Bureau of Code Revision, Eff 10-1-53.

4513.17 NUMBER OF LIGHTS PERMITTED; RED AND FLASHING LIGHTS

(D) Except a person operating a public safety vehicle, as defined in division (E) of section 4511.01 of the Revised Code, or a school bus, no person shall operate, move, or park upon, or permit to stand within the right-of-way of any public street or highway any vehicle or equipment which is equipped with and displaying a flashing red or flashing combination red and white light, or an oscillating or rotating red light, or a combination red and white oscillating or rotating light; and except a public law enforcement officer, or other person sworn to enforce the criminal and traffic laws of the state, operating a public safety vehicle when on duty, no person shall operate, move, or park upon, or permit to stand within the right-of-way of any street or highway any vehicle or equipment which is equipped with, or upon which is mounted, and displaying a flashing blue or flashing combination blue and white light, or an oscillating or rotating blue light, or a combination blue and white oscillating or rotating light. This section shall not prohibit the use of warning lights required by law or the simultaneous flashing of turn signals on disabled vehicles.

HISTORY: GC Sec 6307-90; 119 v 766(790). Sec 90 Bureau of Code Revised. 10-1-53; 126 v 790 (Eff 9-14-55) 127 v 54 (Eff 8-27-57); 128 v. 591 (Eff 11-2-59); 131 v 1112 (Eff 4-1-66); 131 v 113 (Eff 10-13-65) 132 v H 878 (Eff 12-14-67); 135 v-H 956 (Eff 7-26-74); 136 v H 272 (Eff 1-1-76).

4513.21 HORNS, SIRENS AND WARNING DEVICES

Every motor vehicle or trackless trolley when operated upon a highway shall be equipped with a horn which is in good working order and capable of emitting sound audible, under normal conditions, from a distance of not less than two hundred feet

No motor vehicle or trackless trolley shall be equipped with, nor shall any person use upon a vehicle, any siren, whistle, or bell. Any vehicle may be equipped with a theft alarm signal device which shall be so arranged that it cannot be used as an ordinary warning signal. Every, emergency vehicle shall be equipped with a siren, whistle, or bell, capable of emitting sound audible under normal conditions from a distance of not less than five hundred feet and a of a typed approved by the director of highway safety. Such equipment shall not he used except when such vehicle is operated in response to an emergency call or is in the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, in which case the driver of the emergency vehicle shall sound such equipment when it is necessary to warn pedestrians and other drivers of the approach thereof.

HISTORY: GC Sec 6307-93: 119 V 766(797). Sec. 93; Bureau of Code Revision. 10-1-53; 135 v H 200 (Eff 9-28-73).

CASE NOTES AND OAG

4. A vehicle must be equipped with a siren, whistle, or bell of a type approved by the director of highways before it can be classified as an emergency vehicle: 1947 OAG No. 2249.

5. Unless a vehicle is equipped with a siren, whistle or bell in accordance with this section, a volunteer fireman is not entitled to the privileges granted to a drive of an emergency vehicle; 1947 OAG No. 2249.

3303.13 STAFFING, DRIVING OF AMBULANCES

(A) No person who drives an ambulance that is equipped for emergency medical care, is required by sections 3303.08 to 3303.24 of the Revised Code to be certified as an EMT-A, ADV EMT-A, or paramedic.

(B) During each emergency run made by an ambulance that is equipped for emergency medical care and is operated by an emergency medical service that does not utilize any volunteer emergency medical service personnel, the ambulance shall be staffed by at least two individuals who are EMT-As, ADV EMT-As, or paramedics. At any time a patient is being transported in an ambulance that is equipped for emergency medical care and is operated by an emergency medical services that utilizes volunteer emergency medical service personnel, the ambulance shall be staffed by at least two individuals who are EMT-As, ADV EMT-As, or paramedic. At all other times during an emergency run, the ambulance shall be staffed by at least one individual who is an EMT-A, AVD EMT-A, or paramedic. When an ambulance is so staffed, it may be driven by a person who is not certified as an EMT-A, ADV EMT-A, or paramedic.

As used in this section, "volunteer emergency medical service personnel" means emergency medical service personnel serving on less Than a permanent full-time basis.

HISTORY: RC Sec 4731.84.1 137 v H 1092 (Eff 7-21-78); RC Sec 3303.13, 141 v H 222. (Eff 5-15-86)