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School Bus COVID-19 Safety Guidance (DSP142)

Issued: 06/29/2020

Background: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Division of State Patrol (DSP) has received a request to authorize additional optional equipment as authorized by Trans. 300.80. DSP is committed to provide a safe environment and has considered the requests for additional driver/passenger safety options. This approval is not all inclusive, and other options or items will be considered if requests are made.

For school bus transportation "best practice" protocols and guidance please see the [Wisconsin School Bus Association's Website](#). The best practice guidance should be posted on the WSBA's website by July 15th, 2020.

Question 1: May school bus providers add a protective barrier device to prevent body-fluid transmission from driver to passenger or passenger to driver?

Guidance: The DSP approves the install of a barrier device with the following requirements and conditions:

- The barrier device and all its components must be installed forward of the foremost right and left front seat barriers.
- If a barrier device is installed, the left front seat must remain empty for passenger transportation.
- The barrier device shall be made of a shatter proof material that is visually transparent. Materials used shall not be reflective or produce glare from sunlight that may restrict drivers view through the material.
- The barrier device shall not restrict sight lines to any mirrors or windows.
- The barrier device shall not restrict accessibility of the driver, chaperones, or monitors to the students in case of an emergency
- The barrier device shall not create any trip hazards, have any sharp edges, or block the aisle and stepwell.
- The barrier device shall not restrict driver access to any school bus controls including the shift lever, dash mounted controls, parking brake, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, or service door hand lever. This list is not all inclusive and only intended to give examples.
- All other State Statutes and Transportation Rules shall be reviewed prior to installation to ensure no other violation is created by the barrier install. As authorized by Wisconsin State Statute 347 and Chapter Trans 305.

Question 2: May school bus providers add a hand sanitizer dispenser in a school bus?

Guidance: Trans 300.81(12) allows hand sanitizer to be carried in a school bus as long as it is kept in the drivers compartment. The DSP approves the install of a permanently mounted hand sanitizer dispenser with the following requirements and conditions:

- The dispenser must be mounted in the driver’s compartment.
 - “Driver’s compartment” means the area forward of the rearmost portion of the driver’s seat across the entire width of the bus.
- The placement of the dispenser shall not restrict passenger or driver movement through the driver’s compartment.
- The dispenser shall not interfere with or obstruct the required emergency equipment or create a catch space in the stepwell area.

Question 3: May school bus providers add an additional rules page related to COVID-19 safety precautions in a school bus?

Guidance: The DSP approves one additional 8½ x 11 inch rules page pertaining to COVID-19 rider expectations and safety precautions. The rules page must be displayed in the drivers compartment, on the front bulkhead, and above the windshield.

Sincerely,
Lieutenant Karl L. Mittelstadt
Division of State Patrol – Motor Carrier Enforcement Section

Per Wis. Stat. ch. 227, content on this page falls under the definition of a Guidance Document and allows for public comment. Submit comments to: DOTDSPGuidanceDocs@dot.wi.gov and refer to DSP142.

CERTIFICATION

I have reviewed this guidance document or proposed guidance document and I certify that it complies with sections 227.10 and 227.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is not explicitly required or explicitly permitted by a statute or a rule that has been lawfully promulgated. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is more restrictive than a standard, requirement, or threshold contained in the Wisconsin Statutes.

/s/ David Pabst
Title: Director
Office: Bureau of Transportation Safety