

OPERATIONAL SERVICES

Administrative Procedure – Bus Driver Communication Devices; Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection; and Bus Driving Comments

Bus Driver Communication Devices

State law prohibits a school bus driver from operating a school bus while using a cellular radio telecommunication device. It requires each school bus to contain either an operating cellular radio telecommunication device or two-way radio while the school bus driver is in possession of the school bus. The cellular radio telecommunication device or two-way radio must be turned on and adjusted in a manner that would alert the driver of an incoming communication request 625 ILCS 5/12-813.

Bus drivers may still have cell phones although they are prohibited from using cell phones for anything, including personal use, while operating a bus except: (1) in an emergency situation to communicate with an emergency response operator; a hospital; a physician's office or health clinic; an ambulance service; a fire department, fire district, or fire company; or a police department; (2) in the event of a "mechanical breakdown or other mechanical problem;" (3) to communicate with authorities or their designees about bus operation or the welfare and safety of any passengers on the bus; or (4) when the bus is parked 625 ILCS 5/12-813.1(c).

Bus/Vehicle Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Inspection

All school bus drivers, whether employed by the School District or private sector school bus company shall perform each of the following:

1. Comply with the applicable pre-trip inspection of the mechanical and safety equipment on the school bus listed on the School Bus Driver Pre-Trip Inspection Form (92 Ill.Admin. Code §§458.1030 and 458.Illustration A. Scholl Bus Driver's Pre-Trip Inspection Form). Note: 92 Ill. Admin. Code §458.1030(u) requires any variations from the form to be approved by the Dept. of Transportation by calling 217/785-30301 or writing to:
Vehicle-Inspection Unit Manager
Ill. Dept. of Transportation, Div. of Traffic Safety
1340 North 9th St.
P.O. Box 19212
Springfield, IL 62974-9212
2. Test the cellular radio communication device or two-way radio and ensure that it is functioning properly before the bus is operated 625 ILCS 5/12-816.
3. Perform a visual sweep for children or other passengers at the end of a route, work shift or workday by:
 - a. Activating interior lights of the school bus to assist the driver in searching in and under each seat, (625 ILCS 5/12-816(c)) and
 - b. Walking to the rear of the school bus/vehicle checking in and under each seat (625 ILCS 5/12-816(b)).

If a mechanical post-trip inspection reminder system is installed, the driver shall comply with the requirements of that system 625 ILCS 5/12-816(d).

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