

2025 -- S 0547

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- OPERATORS' AND CHAUFFEURS'  
LICENSES

Introduced By: Senators de la Cruz, Rogers, Paolino, Zurier, Dimitri, and Burke

Date Introduced: February 26, 2025

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-10-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-10 entitled "Operators'  
2 and Chauffeurs' Licenses" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-10-5. Special restrictions for drivers for compensation.**

4 (a) No person who is under the age of twenty-one (21) years shall drive any school bus  
5 transporting school children or any motor vehicle when in use for the transportation of persons or  
6 property for compensation nor in either event until he or she has been licensed as a chauffeur for  
7 either purpose and the license so indicates. Colleges and universities shall be exempt from the  
8 requirement for a public plate for vehicles used to shuttle only students or employees to various  
9 points within the college or university campus or if a college or university owned or leased vehicle  
10 is used for the occasional transportation of college or university employees or students either on or  
11 off campus provided that the vehicle is operated by a college or university employee possessing a  
12 valid Rhode Island chauffeur's license or a commercial drivers license with a passenger  
13 endorsement. Provided, however, that the college or university shall operate the shuttle service and  
14 there shall be no specific charge for the transportation of students or employees. The division of  
15 motor vehicles shall not issue a chauffeur's license for either purpose unless the applicant has had  
16 at least one year of driving experience prior to the application, and has filed with the division of  
17 motor vehicles one or more certificates signed by a total of at least three (3) responsible people to  
18 whom he or she is well known certifying to the applicant's good character and habits and the

1 administrator of the division of motor vehicles is fully satisfied as to the applicant's competency  
2 and fitness to be so employed.

3 (b) In addition to the requirements provided in subsection (a) of this section, any person  
4 attempting to obtain a chauffeur's license to drive a school bus transporting school children shall,  
5 prior to being certified:

6 (1) Successfully complete a ten (10) hour school bus driver training course conducted by  
7 the department of revenue or the department of revenue's designee and file a certificate of  
8 successful completion with the division of motor vehicles. The curriculum of that course and the  
9 accreditation of courses offered shall be pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the  
10 division of motor vehicles;

11 (2) Pass a written examination prepared and given by the department of revenue or the  
12 department of revenue's designee.

13 (3) Pass a driving test in a school bus of a like type which that person will be employed to  
14 drive. The test will be prepared and given by the department of revenue.

15 (c) Prior to issuing a certificate to any person who intends to drive a school bus, the division  
16 of motor vehicles shall conduct a search of that person's motor vehicle record. Any violation of  
17 any safety regulation or conviction of any motor vehicle law in this or any other state shall be  
18 grounds for refusing to issue a certificate.

19 (d) Notwithstanding any general, public, or special law to the contrary, any current  
20 Massachusetts or Connecticut school bus driver holding a valid CDL license in good standing in  
21 the state of Massachusetts or Connecticut and and who presents such documentation to receive a  
22 chauffeur's license to drive a school bus transporting children in Rhode Island shall be granted an  
23 exemption from any requirements of this chapter relating to licensing and shall be granted the  
24 chauffeur's license pursuant to this section to transport school children.

25 (e) Licenses permitted pursuant to this section shall comply with any additional  
26 requirements the director may require and, following the first year of employment in Rhode Island,  
27 must comply with the provisions of § 31-10-5.1.

28 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would allow school bus drivers in Massachusetts and Connecticut who have a  
2 valid CDL license in good standing would be exempt from the licensing requirements in Rhode  
3 Island to transport school children.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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