

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- LIGHTING EQUIPMENT AND REFLECTORS

Introduced By: Senators F. Lombardi, DiMario, Lawson, Britto, Ciccone, DiPalma, and Gallo

Date Introduced: February 16, 2023

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-24-31 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-24 entitled "Lighting
2 Equipment and Reflectors" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-24-31. Flashing lights — Forward viewing or rotary beam lights.**

4 (a) Flashing lights are prohibited, except on an authorized emergency vehicle, school bus,
5 snow-removal equipment, or on any vehicle as a means for indicating a right or left turn. However,
6 the requirements of § 31-24-33 shall be deemed to be satisfied if the vehicle is equipped with lamps
7 at the front mounted at the same level, displaying simultaneously flashing white or amber lights,
8 and at the rear mounted at the same level, and displaying simultaneously flashing red lights, all of
9 which lights shall be visible from a distance of not less than five hundred feet (500').

10 (b) Forward viewing or rotating beam lights may be installed on and shall be restricted to
11 the following categories of vehicles, and these lights shall be of color designated:

12 (1) Emergency response vehicles of any fire, rescue, or ambulance department, fire chiefs,
13 assistant fire chiefs, deputy chiefs, captains; any privately owned vehicle of any authorized
14 volunteer member of a fire, rescue, or ambulance department; emergency management agency
15 directors, assistant directors, assistant medical examiners and/or forensic pathologists of the office
16 of state medical examiners; rescue vehicles, emergency response vehicles of the department of
17 environmental management and the office of the state fire marshal; school buses; hospital
18 emergency response vehicles; and two (2) American Red Cross disaster vehicles: Red, white and/or

1 alternating flashing white;

2 (2) Wrecker trucks, service station trucks, state and town safety and maintenance vehicles;
3 snowplows and tractors; light company trucks, telephone company trucks, water company trucks,
4 oil company trucks, and other utilities' trucks; vehicles of television, radio and press photographers;
5 newspaper motor route carriers; rural mail carriers; all motor-propelled vehicles owned by the
6 Northern Rhode Island REACT (radio emergency associated citizens team); all motor-propelled
7 vehicles owned by or under contract to the Rhode Island department of transportation when on
8 official state business; [vehicle of election officials designated by the board of canvassers as](#)
9 [primarily responsible for the supervision of polling locations](#); and vehicles marking the beginning
10 and end of funeral processions: Amber, provided, however, that wrecker and transportation vehicles
11 operated pursuant to a public utilities commission license, and roadside assistance vehicles of any
12 type operated for that purpose by the American Automobile Association shall be permitted to use
13 flashing amber lights at the front and rear of the vehicle, to be activated only in the course of
14 providing assistance to or transportation for a disabled vehicle. A fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25)
15 shall be charged for the issuance of a flashing lights permit to every vehicle identified in this
16 subsection, with the exception of flashing lights permits issued to state, town or fire district safety
17 and maintenance vehicles, which shall not be charged a fee.

18 (3) Police units, state and local: Center rotating beam lights: Blue or red; Outboard mounted
19 lights: Blue or red.

20 (4) Violations of this section are subject to fines enumerated in § 31-41.1-4.

21 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 authorize designated state and local election officials with supervisory
- 2 responsibility over polling locations the use of amber flashing safety lights on their vehicles.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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