

2026 -- H 7381

LC003198

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- SIZE, WEIGHT, AND LOAD LIMITS

Introduced By: Representatives Cortvriend, Speakman, Donovan, Finkelman, Edwards,
and Fellela

Date Introduced: January 28, 2026

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 31-25-21 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-25 entitled "Size, Weight, and Load Limits" is hereby amended to read as follows:

31-25-21. Power to permit excess size or weight of loads.

(a) The department of transportation, with respect to highways under its jurisdiction, may, in its discretion, upon application in writing and good cause being shown for it, approve the issuance of a special permit in writing authorizing the applicant to operate or move a vehicle, or combination of vehicles, of a size or weight of vehicle or load exceeding eighty thousand pounds (80,000 lbs.) or otherwise not in conformity with the provisions of chapters 1 — 27 of this title upon any highway under the jurisdiction of the party granting the permit and for the maintenance of which the party is responsible. Permits that have been issued for a full year shall not be required to be renewed for the period of time for which payment has been made and the application and other required documentation has been completed and filed. Provided, that neither the department of transportation nor the local authorities may approve the issuance of permits for divisible loads weighing in excess of the limits set by the director of the department of transportation by and through the rules and regulations promulgated by the department of transportation entitled "rules and regulations regarding overweight and oversize vehicle permits".

(1) Provided, however, that for milk products, any vehicle carrying fluid milk products shall be considered a load that cannot be easily dismantled or divided.

(b) The director of the department of transportation may enter into agreements with other

1 states, the District of Columbia, and Canadian provinces providing for the reciprocal enforcement
2 of the overweight or over-dimensional vehicle permit laws of those jurisdictions entering into the
3 agreement.

4 (c) **Single trip non-divisible permit fee.** A fee of forty dollars (\$40.00) shall be paid to
5 the department of transportation for the issuance of each non-divisible single trip permit. Upon
6 approval of the application, the department of transportation shall provide the approved permit. The
7 driver must possess the permit and documentation as required by the permit at all times.

8 (d) **Annual blanket permit fee.** An annual fee of four hundred dollars (\$400) paid to the
9 department of transportation shall exempt the payor from the necessity of paying single trip permit
10 fees for non-divisible construction equipment loads, boats, or marine assets of less than one
11 hundred thirty thousand pounds (130,000 lbs.) as found in subsection (c). However, payment of the
12 fee shall not be deemed to authorize noncompliance with the rules and regulations promulgated by
13 the department of transportation entitled “rules and regulations regarding overweight and oversize
14 vehicle permits”.

15 (e) Blanket permits may be issued, as determined by the department of transportation, for
16 intrastate movement of non-divisible construction equipment loads, boats, or marine assets upon
17 payment of the fee set forth in subsection (d). If used in conjunction with an annual divisible load
18 permit, the limits and requirements of the blanket permit shall supersede the requirements of the
19 divisible load permit. The driver must possess both permits and all required documentation. The
20 duration of the blanket permit may not exceed one year. The blanket permit load shall be limited
21 to a minimum overall length of fifty-five feet (55’), a maximum overall length of eighty feet (80’),
22 a maximum width of twelve feet four inches (12’ 4”), a maximum gross weight of one hundred
23 thirty thousand pounds (130,000 lbs.), and a maximum axle weight of twenty-five thousand pounds
24 (25,000 lbs.); provided, that the department of transportation, with respect to highways under its
25 jurisdiction, may, in its discretion and upon application and for good cause shown, approve the
26 issuance of a single trip non-divisible permit authorizing the applicant to exceed one hundred thirty
27 thousand pounds (130,000 lbs.) for non-divisible loads. A flashing amber light shall be in operation
28 above the highest point of the vehicle and shall be visible from both the front and rear of the vehicle;
29 and signs and red warning flags shall be affixed to all extremities. All blanket permits issued in
30 accordance with this section shall be effective during daylight and night-time hours for all over-
31 dimensional moves made and travel shall be allowed on state highways. The specifically described
32 vehicle must be certified originally by the manufacturer to possess the braking and carrying
33 capacity for the weight specified on the application.

34 (f) Permission to travel is always subject to weather and road conditions. The following

restrictions on travel times shall apply to all vehicles over eight feet six inches (8' 6") wide, over eighty feet (80') long, or over one hundred thirty thousand pounds (130,000 lbs.):

(1) Freeways and arterial roadways.

No travel will be allowed between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. or between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

(2) [Deleted by P.L. 2022, ch. 178, § 1 and P.L. 2022, ch. 179, § 1.]

(3) Holidays.

Memorial Day, Victory Day, Labor Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Columbus Day — No Saturday, Sunday, or Monday day or night travel.

Thanksgiving Day — No travel on Wednesday through Sunday of Thanksgiving week in any calendar year.

Independence Day, Veterans Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day — No day or night travel and no travel the previous night.

Easter Sunday. No Saturday night or Sunday travel.

(4) Violations of this section are subject to fines enumerated in § 31-25-24.

(g) Blanket permits shall not be granted for travel over the following bridges:

Blackstone River Viaduct 750 carrying I-295 northbound and southbound over the Blackstone River;

Kingston Road Bridge No. 403 carrying I-95 northbound and southbound over Kingston Road.

(h) Travel of blanket permits through zones with reductions in lane width such as construction zones will not be allowed. Prior to travel, blanket permit holders are responsible to verify the location of construction zones and lane width reductions. Locations of lane width reduction zones are available through the state department of transportation's construction office.

(i) Upon approval of the annual blanket permit application, the department of transportation shall provide the approved permit. The driver must possess the permit and documentation as required by the permit at all times.

(j) Any carrier or persons found to be operating without a required permit, or in excess of their permit limits, three (3) times within a one-year period shall be revoked of their ability to use and receive permits within the state for up to thirty (30) days. Additional violations shall result in revocation of up to ninety (90) days.

(k) Operation of any vehicle in excess of the requirements of any permit shall void that permit and result in the imposition of fines as provided in this chapter.

[\(l\)\(1\) Annual self-propelled crane blanket permit and fee. An annual self-propelled crane](#)

1 blanket permit allows movement of cranes, without restricting movement other than requiring
2 cranes to abide by posted bridge limits. This permit shall be obtained only by operators of self-
3 propelled cranes. Separate permits are required for each crane and are not transferable. A fee of
4 four hundred dollars (\$400) paid to the department of transportation shall exempt the payor from
5 the necessity of obtaining and paying single trip permit fees.

6 (2) The following provisions shall apply:

7 (i) Permits shall have duration of one year from the effective date.

8 (ii) Self-propelled cranes with an annual blanket permit may move twenty-four (24) hours
9 a day, Monday through Sunday without escort.

10 (iii) The annual blanket permit holder is required and responsible for obtaining current
11 travel restrictions prior to movement with blanket permits.

12 (iv) Payment of the annual fee shall not be deemed to authorize noncompliance with the
13 rules and regulations promulgated by the department of transportation entitled "rules and
14 regulations regarding overweight and oversized vehicle permits" (290-RICR-40-00-1).

15 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 the department of transportation to issue a blanket permit to and
2 collect a fee from operators to allow the movement of self-propelled cranes on state roads and
3 highways, which cranes are in excess of size and weight load requirements.
4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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