

AN ACT concerning transportation.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Illinois Vehicle Code is amended by changing Sections 6-106.1 and 11-1414.1 as follows:

(625 ILCS 5/6-106.1)

Sec. 6-106.1. School bus driver permit.

(a) The Secretary of State shall issue a school bus driver permit for the operation of first or second division vehicles being operated as school buses, ~~or~~ a permit valid only for the operation of first division vehicles being operated as school buses, or a school bus permit with a restriction valid for the operation of a first division vehicle being operated as a school bus or a multifunction school activity bus designed to carry up to 15 passengers, including the driver, when being used for curriculum-related activities as set forth in Section 11-1414.1 of this Code, to those applicants who have met all the requirements of the application and screening process under this Section to insure the welfare and safety of children who are transported on school buses throughout the State of Illinois. Applicants shall obtain the proper application required by the Secretary of State from their prospective or current employer and submit the completed

application to the prospective or current employer along with the necessary fingerprint submission as required by the Illinois State Police to conduct fingerprint-based criminal background checks on current and future information available in the State system and current information available through the Federal Bureau of Investigation's system. Applicants who have completed the fingerprinting requirements shall not be subjected to the fingerprinting process when applying for subsequent permits or submitting proof of successful completion of the annual refresher course. Individuals who on July 1, 1995 (the effective date of Public Act 88-612) possess a valid school bus driver permit that has been previously issued by the appropriate Regional School Superintendent are not subject to the fingerprinting provisions of this Section as long as the permit remains valid and does not lapse. The applicant shall be required to pay all related application and fingerprinting fees as established by rule, including, but not limited to, the amounts established by the Illinois State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to process fingerprint-based criminal background investigations. All fees paid for fingerprint processing services under this Section shall be deposited into the State Police Services Fund for the cost incurred in processing the fingerprint-based criminal background investigations. All other fees paid under this Section shall be deposited into the Road Fund for the purpose of defraying the costs of the Secretary of State in

administering this Section. All applicants must:

1. be 21 years of age or older;
2. possess a valid and properly classified driver's license issued by the Secretary of State;
3. possess a valid driver's license, which has not been revoked, suspended, or canceled for 3 years immediately prior to the date of application, or have not had his or her commercial motor vehicle driving privileges disqualified within the 3 years immediately prior to the date of application;
4. successfully pass a first division or second division written test, administered by the Secretary of State, on school bus operation, school bus safety, and special traffic laws relating to school buses and submit to a review of the applicant's driving habits by the Secretary of State at the time the written test is given;
5. demonstrate ability to exercise reasonable care in the operation of school buses in accordance with rules promulgated by the Secretary of State;
6. demonstrate physical fitness to operate school buses by submitting the results of a medical examination, including tests for drug use for each applicant not subject to such testing pursuant to federal law, conducted by a licensed physician, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed physician assistant within 90 days of the date of application according to standards

promulgated by the Secretary of State;

7. affirm under penalties of perjury that he or she has not made a false statement or knowingly concealed a material fact in any application for permit;

8. have completed an initial classroom course, including first aid procedures, in school bus driver safety as promulgated by the Secretary of State and, after satisfactory completion of said initial course, an annual refresher course; such courses and the agency or organization conducting such courses shall be approved by the Secretary of State; failure to complete the annual refresher course shall result in cancellation of the permit until such course is completed;

9. not have been under an order of court supervision for or convicted of 2 or more serious traffic offenses, as defined by rule, within one year prior to the date of application that may endanger the life or safety of any of the driver's passengers within the duration of the permit period;

10. not have been under an order of court supervision for or convicted of reckless driving, aggravated reckless driving, driving while under the influence of alcohol, other drug or drugs, intoxicating compound or compounds or any combination thereof, or reckless homicide resulting from the operation of a motor vehicle within 3 years of the date of application;

11. not have been convicted of committing or attempting to commit any one or more of the following offenses: (i) those offenses defined in Sections 8-1, 8-1.2, 9-1, 9-1.2, 9-2, 9-2.1, 9-3, 9-3.2, 9-3.3, 10-1, 10-2, 10-3.1, 10-4, 10-5, 10-5.1, 10-6, 10-7, 10-9, 11-1.20, 11-1.30, 11-1.40, 11-1.50, 11-1.60, 11-6, 11-6.5, 11-6.6, 11-9, 11-9.1, 11-9.1A, 11-9.3, 11-9.4, 11-9.4-1, 11-14, 11-14.1, 11-14.3, 11-14.4, 11-15, 11-15.1, 11-16, 11-17, 11-17.1, 11-18, 11-18.1, 11-19, 11-19.1, 11-19.2, 11-20, 11-20.1, 11-20.1B, 11-20.3, 11-20.4, 11-21, 11-22, 11-23, 11-24, 11-25, 11-26, 11-30, 12-2.6, 12-3.05, 12-3.1, 12-3.3, 12-4, 12-4.1, 12-4.2, 12-4.2-5, 12-4.3, 12-4.4, 12-4.5, 12-4.6, 12-4.7, 12-4.9, 12-5.3, 12-6, 12-6.2, 12-7.1, 12-7.3, 12-7.4, 12-7.5, 12-11, 12-13, 12-14, 12-14.1, 12-15, 12-16, 12-21.5, 12-21.6, 12-33, 12C-5, 12C-10, 12C-20, 12C-30, 12C-45, 16-16, 16-16.1, 18-1, 18-2, 18-3, 18-4, 18-5, 19-6, 20-1, 20-1.1, 20-1.2, 20-1.3, 20-2, 24-1, 24-1.1, 24-1.2, 24-1.2-5, 24-1.6, 24-1.7, 24-2.1, 24-3.3, 24-3.5, 24-3.8, 24-3.9, 31A-1.1, 33A-2, and 33D-1, in subsection (A), clauses (a) and (b), of Section 24-3, and those offenses contained in Article 29D of the Criminal Code of 1961 or the Criminal Code of 2012; (ii) those offenses defined in the Cannabis Control Act except those offenses defined in subsections (a) and (b) of Section 4, and subsection (a) of Section 5 of the Cannabis Control Act; (iii) those offenses defined in the

Illinois Controlled Substances Act; (iv) those offenses defined in the Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act; (v) any offense committed or attempted in any other state or against the laws of the United States, which if committed or attempted in this State would be punishable as one or more of the foregoing offenses; (vi) the offenses defined in Section 4.1 and 5.1 of the Wrongs to Children Act or Section 11-9.1A of the Criminal Code of 1961 or the Criminal Code of 2012; (vii) those offenses defined in Section 6-16 of the Liquor Control Act of 1934; and (viii) those offenses defined in the Methamphetamine Precursor Control Act;

12. not have been repeatedly involved as a driver in motor vehicle collisions or been repeatedly convicted of offenses against laws and ordinances regulating the movement of traffic, to a degree which indicates lack of ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable care in the safe operation of a motor vehicle or disrespect for the traffic laws and the safety of other persons upon the highway;

13. not have, through the unlawful operation of a motor vehicle, caused a crash resulting in the death of any person;

14. not have, within the last 5 years, been adjudged to be afflicted with or suffering from any mental disability or disease;

15. consent, in writing, to the release of results of reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol testing under Section 6-106.1c of this Code by the employer of the applicant to the Secretary of State; and

16. not have been convicted of committing or attempting to commit within the last 20 years: (i) an offense defined in subsection (c) of Section 4, subsection (b) of Section 5, and subsection (a) of Section 8 of the Cannabis Control Act; or (ii) any offenses in any other state or against the laws of the United States that, if committed or attempted in this State, would be punishable as one or more of the foregoing offenses.

(a-5) If an applicant's driver's license has been suspended within the 3 years immediately prior to the date of application for the sole reason of failure to pay child support, that suspension shall not bar the applicant from receiving a school bus driver permit.

(a-10) By January 1, 2024, the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Illinois State Board of Education, shall develop a separate classroom course and refresher course for operation of vehicles of the first division being operated as school buses. Regional superintendents of schools, working with the Illinois State Board of Education, shall offer the course.

(b) A school bus driver permit shall be valid for a period specified by the Secretary of State as set forth by rule. It

shall be renewable upon compliance with subsection (a) of this Section.

(c) A school bus driver permit shall contain the holder's driver's license number, legal name, residence address, zip code, and date of birth, a brief description of the holder, and a space for signature. The Secretary of State may require a suitable photograph of the holder.

(d) The employer shall be responsible for conducting a pre-employment interview with prospective school bus driver candidates, distributing school bus driver applications and medical forms to be completed by the applicant, and submitting the applicant's fingerprint cards to the Illinois State Police that are required for the criminal background investigations. The employer shall certify in writing to the Secretary of State that all pre-employment conditions have been successfully completed including the successful completion of an Illinois specific criminal background investigation through the Illinois State Police and the submission of necessary fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for criminal history information available through the Federal Bureau of Investigation system. The applicant shall present the certification to the Secretary of State at the time of submitting the school bus driver permit application.

(e) Permits shall initially be provisional upon receiving certification from the employer that all pre-employment conditions have been successfully completed, and upon

successful completion of all training and examination requirements for the classification of the vehicle to be operated, the Secretary of State shall provisionally issue a School Bus Driver Permit. The permit shall remain in a provisional status pending the completion of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's criminal background investigation based upon fingerprinting specimens submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation by the Illinois State Police. The Federal Bureau of Investigation shall report the findings directly to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State shall remove the bus driver permit from provisional status upon the applicant's successful completion of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's criminal background investigation.

(f) A school bus driver permit holder shall notify the employer and the Secretary of State if he or she is issued an order of court supervision for or convicted in another state of an offense that would make him or her ineligible for a permit under subsection (a) of this Section. The written notification shall be made within 5 days of the entry of the order of court supervision or conviction. Failure of the permit holder to provide the notification is punishable as a petty offense for a first violation and a Class B misdemeanor for a second or subsequent violation.

(g) Cancellation; suspension; notice and procedure.

(1) The Secretary of State shall cancel a school bus driver permit of an applicant whose criminal background

investigation discloses that he or she is not in compliance with the provisions of subsection (a) of this Section.

(2) The Secretary of State shall cancel a school bus driver permit when he or she receives notice that the permit holder fails to comply with any provision of this Section or any rule promulgated for the administration of this Section.

(3) The Secretary of State shall cancel a school bus driver permit if the permit holder's restricted commercial or commercial driving privileges are withdrawn or otherwise invalidated.

(4) The Secretary of State may not issue a school bus driver permit for a period of 3 years to an applicant who fails to obtain a negative result on a drug test as required in item 6 of subsection (a) of this Section or under federal law.

(5) The Secretary of State shall forthwith suspend a school bus driver permit for a period of 3 years upon receiving notice that the holder has failed to obtain a negative result on a drug test as required in item 6 of subsection (a) of this Section or under federal law.

(6) The Secretary of State shall suspend a school bus driver permit for a period of 3 years upon receiving notice from the employer that the holder failed to perform the inspection procedure set forth in subsection (a) or

(b) of Section 12-816 of this Code.

(7) The Secretary of State shall suspend a school bus driver permit for a period of 3 years upon receiving notice from the employer that the holder refused to submit to an alcohol or drug test as required by Section 6-106.1c or has submitted to a test required by that Section which disclosed an alcohol concentration of more than 0.00 or disclosed a positive result on a National Institute on Drug Abuse five-drug panel, utilizing federal standards set forth in 49 CFR 40.87.

The Secretary of State shall notify the State Superintendent of Education and the permit holder's prospective or current employer that the applicant (1) has failed a criminal background investigation or (2) is no longer eligible for a school bus driver permit; and of the related cancellation of the applicant's provisional school bus driver permit. The cancellation shall remain in effect pending the outcome of a hearing pursuant to Section 2-118 of this Code. The scope of the hearing shall be limited to the issuance criteria contained in subsection (a) of this Section. A petition requesting a hearing shall be submitted to the Secretary of State and shall contain the reason the individual feels he or she is entitled to a school bus driver permit. The permit holder's employer shall notify in writing to the Secretary of State that the employer has certified the removal of the offending school bus driver from service prior to the

start of that school bus driver's next work shift. An employing school board that fails to remove the offending school bus driver from service is subject to the penalties defined in Section 3-14.23 of the School Code. A school bus contractor who violates a provision of this Section is subject to the penalties defined in Section 6-106.11.

All valid school bus driver permits issued under this Section prior to January 1, 1995, shall remain effective until their expiration date unless otherwise invalidated.

(h) When a school bus driver permit holder who is a service member is called to active duty, the employer of the permit holder shall notify the Secretary of State, within 30 days of notification from the permit holder, that the permit holder has been called to active duty. Upon notification pursuant to this subsection, (i) the Secretary of State shall characterize the permit as inactive until a permit holder renews the permit as provided in subsection (i) of this Section, and (ii) if a permit holder fails to comply with the requirements of this Section while called to active duty, the Secretary of State shall not characterize the permit as invalid.

(i) A school bus driver permit holder who is a service member returning from active duty must, within 90 days, renew a permit characterized as inactive pursuant to subsection (h) of this Section by complying with the renewal requirements of subsection (b) of this Section.

(j) For purposes of subsections (h) and (i) of this

Section:

"Active duty" means active duty pursuant to an executive order of the President of the United States, an act of the Congress of the United States, or an order of the Governor.

"Service member" means a member of the Armed Services or reserve forces of the United States or a member of the Illinois National Guard.

(k) A private carrier employer of a school bus driver permit holder, having satisfied the employer requirements of this Section, shall be held to a standard of ordinary care for intentional acts committed in the course of employment by the bus driver permit holder. This subsection (k) shall in no way limit the liability of the private carrier employer for violation of any provision of this Section or for the negligent hiring or retention of a school bus driver permit holder.

(l) The Secretary may adopt rules to implement this Section.

(Source: P.A. 102-168, eff. 7-27-21; 102-299, eff. 8-6-21; 102-538, eff. 8-20-21; 102-726, eff. 1-1-23; 102-813, eff. 5-13-22; 102-982, eff. 7-1-23; 102-1130, eff. 7-1-23; 103-605, eff. 7-1-24; 103-825, eff. 1-1-25.)

(625 ILCS 5/11-1414.1) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 11-1414.1)

Sec. 11-1414.1. School transportation of students.

(a) Every student enrolled in grade 12 or below in any

entity listed in subsection (a) of Section 1-182 of this Code must be transported in a school bus or a vehicle described in subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (b) of Section 1-182 of this Code for any curriculum-related school activity, except a student in any of grades 9 through 12 or a student in any of grades K through 12 with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) with a staff to student ratio of 1 to 5, and attending Acacia Academy, Alexander Leigh, Marklund, Helping Hands Center, Connections Organization, Soaring Eagle Academy, or New Horizon Academy may be transported in a multifunction ~~multi-function~~ school activity bus (MFSAB) as defined in Section 1-148.3a-5 of this Code for any curriculum-related activity except for transportation on regular bus routes from home to school or from school to home. The use of a MFSAB for curriculum-related activities is 7 subject to the following conditions:

(i) A MFSAB may not be used to transport students under this Section unless the driver holds a valid school bus driver permit.

(ii) The use of a MFSAB under this Section is subject to the requirements of Sections 6-106.11, 6-106.12, 12-707.01, 13-101, and 13-109 of this Code.

"Curriculum-related school activity" as used in this subsection (a) includes transportation from home to school or from school to home, tripper or shuttle service between school attendance centers, transportation to a vocational or career

center or other trade-skill development site or a regional safe school or other school-sponsored alternative learning program, or a trip that is directly related to the regular curriculum of a student for which he or she earns credit.

(b) Every student enrolled in grade 12 or below in any entity listed in subsection (a) of Section 1-182 of this Code who is transported in a vehicle that is being operated by or for a public or private primary or secondary school, including any primary or secondary school operated by a religious institution, for an interscholastic, interscholastic-athletic, or school-sponsored, noncurriculum-related activity that (i) does not require student participation as part of the educational services of the entity and (ii) is not associated with the students' regular class-for-credit schedule shall transport students only in a school bus or vehicle described in subsection (b) of Section 1-182 of this Code. A student participating in an agrarian-related activity may also be transported in a second division pick-up truck registered under paragraph 7 of subsection (b) of Section 3-808.1. For purposes of this subsection, "pick-up truck" means a truck weighing 12,000 pounds or less with an enclosed cabin that can seat up to 6 passengers with seatbelts, including the driver, and an open cargo area. This subsection (b) does not apply to any second division vehicle used by an entity listed in subsection (a) of Section 1-182 of this Code for a parade, homecoming, or a

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similar noncurriculum-related school activity.

(Source: P.A. 102-544, eff. 8-20-21.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1, 2026.