



## 103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

**HB4493**

Introduced 1/17/2024, by Rep. Travis Weaver

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

625 ILCS 5/3-699.23 new

625 ILCS 5/12-215

625 ILCS 5/12-601

from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 12-601

Amends the Illinois Vehicle Code. Provides that the Secretary of State may issue special registration plates to an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) chief. Provides that the fee for the plates shall be the same as the fee prescribed for standard plates for first division vehicles. Provides for the issuance of permanent license plates for EMS vehicles owned by a municipality or fire protection district. Allows EMS chiefs to equip their privately owned vehicles with emergency flashing lights if EMS chief special registration plates are affixed to the vehicle. Allows EMS chiefs to equip their privately owned vehicle with sirens.

LRB103 36374 MXP 66473 b

1 AN ACT concerning transportation.

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

4 Section 5. The Illinois Vehicle Code is amended by adding  
5 Section 3-699.23 and changing Section 12-215 and 12-601 as  
6 follows:

7 (625 ILCS 5/3-699.23 new)

8 Sec. 3-699.23. EMS chief license plates.

9 (a) The Secretary, upon receipt of a request from a  
10 municipality that operates a fire department or a fire  
11 protection district, accompanied by an application and the  
12 appropriate fee, may issue to an emergency medical services  
13 chief of the municipality or fire protection district, special  
14 registration plates designated as EMS chief license plates.  
15 The special plates issued under this Section shall be affixed  
16 only to passenger vehicles of the first division or motor  
17 vehicles of the second division weighing not more than 8,000  
18 pounds that are owned by an EMS chief, a municipality, or a  
19 fire protection district. Plates issued under this Section  
20 shall expire according to the multiyear procedure established  
21 by Section 3-414.1.

22 (b) The design and color of the special plates shall be  
23 wholly within the discretion of the Secretary. The plates are

1 not required to designate "Land of Lincoln" as prescribed in  
2 subsection (b) of Section 3-412. The Secretary may prescribe  
3 rules governing the requirements and approval of the special  
4 plates. The fee for this plate for a vehicle owned by an EMS  
5 chief shall be the same as the fee prescribed for first  
6 division vehicles under Section 3-806. Permanent license  
7 plates for EMS vehicles owned by a municipality or fire  
8 protection district shall be issued at the fee prescribed in  
9 subsection (b) of Section 3-808.1.

10 (625 ILCS 5/12-215)

11 Sec. 12-215. Oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights on  
12 motor vehicles. Except as otherwise provided in this Code:

13 (a) The use of red or white oscillating, rotating, or  
14 flashing lights, whether lighted or unlighted, is prohibited  
15 except on:

16 1. Law enforcement vehicles of State, federal, or  
17 local authorities;

18 2. A vehicle operated by a police officer or county  
19 coroner and designated or authorized by local authorities,  
20 in writing, as a law enforcement vehicle; however, such  
21 designation or authorization must be carried in the  
22 vehicle;

23 2.1. A vehicle operated by a fire chief, deputy fire  
24 chief, or assistant fire chief who has completed an  
25 emergency vehicle operation training course approved by

1 the Office of the State Fire Marshal and designated or  
2 authorized by local authorities, fire departments, or fire  
3 protection districts, in writing, as a fire department,  
4 fire protection district, or township fire department  
5 vehicle; however, the designation or authorization must be  
6 carried in the vehicle, and the lights may be visible or  
7 activated only when responding to a bona fide emergency;

8 3. Vehicles of local fire departments and State or  
9 federal firefighting vehicles;

10 4. Vehicles which are designed and used exclusively as  
11 ambulances or rescue vehicles; furthermore, such lights  
12 shall not be lighted except when responding to an  
13 emergency call for and while actually conveying the sick  
14 or injured;

15 4.5. Vehicles operated by an EMS chief that are  
16 affixed with EMS chief special registration plates or  
17 vehicles which are occasionally used as rescue vehicles  
18 that have been authorized for use as rescue vehicles by a  
19 volunteer EMS provider, provided that the operator of the  
20 vehicle has successfully completed an emergency vehicle  
21 operation training course recognized by the Department of  
22 Public Health; furthermore, the lights shall not be  
23 lighted except when responding to an emergency call for  
24 the sick or injured;

25 5. Tow trucks licensed in a state that requires such  
26 lights; furthermore, such lights shall not be lighted on

1 any such tow truck while the tow truck is operating in the  
2 State of Illinois;

3 6. Vehicles of the Illinois Emergency Management  
4 Agency, vehicles of the Office of the Illinois State Fire  
5 Marshal, vehicles of the Illinois Department of Public  
6 Health, vehicles of the Illinois Department of  
7 Corrections, and vehicles of the Illinois Department of  
8 Juvenile Justice;

9 7. Vehicles operated by a local or county emergency  
10 management services agency as defined in the Illinois  
11 Emergency Management Agency Act;

12 8. School buses operating alternately flashing head  
13 lamps as permitted under Section 12-805 of this Code;

14 9. Vehicles that are equipped and used exclusively as  
15 organ transplant vehicles when used in combination with  
16 blue oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights;  
17 furthermore, these lights shall be lighted only when the  
18 transportation is declared an emergency by a member of the  
19 transplant team or a representative of the organ  
20 procurement organization;

21 10. Vehicles of the Illinois Department of Natural  
22 Resources that are used for mine rescue and explosives  
23 emergency response;

24 11. Vehicles of the Illinois Department of  
25 Transportation identified as Emergency Traffic Patrol; the  
26 lights shall not be lighted except when responding to an

1 emergency call or when parked or stationary while engaged  
2 in motor vehicle assistance or at the scene of the  
3 emergency; and

4 12. Vehicles of the Illinois State Toll Highway  
5 Authority with a gross vehicle weight rating of 9,000  
6 pounds or more and those identified as Highway Emergency  
7 Lane Patrol; the lights shall not be lighted except when  
8 responding to an emergency call or when parked or  
9 stationary while engaged in motor vehicle assistance or at  
10 the scene of the emergency.

11 (b) The use of amber oscillating, rotating, or flashing  
12 lights, whether lighted or unlighted, is prohibited except on:

13 1. Second division vehicles designed and used for  
14 towing or hoisting vehicles; furthermore, such lights  
15 shall not be lighted except as required in this paragraph  
16 1; such lights shall be lighted when such vehicles are  
17 actually being used at the scene of a crash or  
18 disablement; if the towing vehicle is equipped with a flat  
19 bed that supports all wheels of the vehicle being  
20 transported, the lights shall not be lighted while the  
21 vehicle is engaged in towing on a highway; if the towing  
22 vehicle is not equipped with a flat bed that supports all  
23 wheels of a vehicle being transported, the lights shall be  
24 lighted while the towing vehicle is engaged in towing on a  
25 highway during all times when the use of headlights is  
26 required under Section 12-201 of this Code; in addition,

1           these vehicles may use white oscillating, rotating, or  
2           flashing lights in combination with amber oscillating,  
3           rotating, or flashing lights as provided in this  
4           paragraph;

5           2. Motor vehicles or equipment of the State of  
6           Illinois, the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, local  
7           authorities, and contractors; furthermore, such lights  
8           shall not be lighted except while such vehicles are  
9           engaged in maintenance or construction operations within  
10          the limits of construction projects;

11          3. Vehicles or equipment used by engineering or survey  
12          crews; furthermore, such lights shall not be lighted  
13          except while such vehicles are actually engaged in work on  
14          a highway;

15          4. Vehicles of public utilities, municipalities, or  
16          other construction, maintenance, or automotive service  
17          vehicles except that such lights shall be lighted only as  
18          a means for indicating the presence of a vehicular traffic  
19          hazard requiring unusual care in approaching, overtaking,  
20          or passing while such vehicles are engaged in maintenance,  
21          service, or construction on a highway;

22          5. Oversized vehicle or load; however, such lights  
23          shall only be lighted when moving under permit issued by  
24          the Department under Section 15-301 of this Code;

25          6. The front and rear of motorized equipment owned and  
26          operated by the State of Illinois or any political

1 subdivision thereof, which is designed and used for  
2 removal of snow and ice from highways;

3 6.1. The front and rear of motorized equipment or  
4 vehicles that (i) are not owned by the State of Illinois or  
5 any political subdivision of the State, (ii) are designed  
6 and used for removal of snow and ice from highways and  
7 parking lots, and (iii) are equipped with a snow plow that  
8 is 12 feet in width; these lights may not be lighted except  
9 when the motorized equipment or vehicle is actually being  
10 used for those purposes on behalf of a unit of government;

11 7. Fleet safety vehicles registered in another state,  
12 furthermore, such lights shall not be lighted except as  
13 provided for in Section 12-212 of this Code;

14 8. Such other vehicles as may be authorized by local  
15 authorities;

16 9. Law enforcement vehicles of State or local  
17 authorities when used in combination with red oscillating,  
18 rotating, or flashing lights;

19 9.5. Propane delivery trucks;

20 10. Vehicles used for collecting or delivering mail  
21 for the United States Postal Service provided that such  
22 lights shall not be lighted except when such vehicles are  
23 actually being used for such purposes;

24 10.5. Vehicles of the Office of the Illinois State  
25 Fire Marshal, provided that such lights shall not be  
26 lighted except for when such vehicles are engaged in work



1 for the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal;

2 11. Any vehicle displaying a slow-moving vehicle  
3 emblem as provided in Section 12-205.1;

4 12. All trucks equipped with self-compactors or  
5 roll-off hoists and roll-on containers for garbage,  
6 recycling, or refuse hauling. Such lights shall not be  
7 lighted except when such vehicles are actually being used  
8 for such purposes;

9 13. Vehicles used by a security company, alarm  
10 responder, control agency, or the Illinois Department of  
11 Corrections;

12 14. Security vehicles of the Department of Human  
13 Services; however, the lights shall not be lighted except  
14 when being used for security related purposes under the  
15 direction of the superintendent of the facility where the  
16 vehicle is located; and

17 15. Vehicles of union representatives, except that the  
18 lights shall be lighted only while the vehicle is within  
19 the limits of a construction project.

20 (c) The use of blue oscillating, rotating, or flashing  
21 lights, whether lighted or unlighted, is prohibited except on:

22 1. Rescue squad vehicles not owned by a fire  
23 department or fire protection district and vehicles owned  
24 or operated by an EMS chief as provided in subsection (a);  
25 a+ voluntary firefighter; a paid firefighter; a part-paid  
26 firefighter; a call firefighter; a member of the board of

1 trustees of a fire protection district; a paid or unpaid  
2 member of a rescue squad; a paid or unpaid member of a  
3 voluntary ambulance unit; or a paid or unpaid members of a  
4 local or county emergency management services agency as  
5 defined in the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act,  
6 designated or authorized by local authorities, in writing,  
7 and carrying that designation or authorization in the  
8 vehicle.

9 However, such lights are not to be lighted except when  
10 responding to a bona fide emergency or when parked or  
11 stationary at the scene of a fire, rescue call, ambulance  
12 call, or motor vehicle crash.

13 Any person using these lights in accordance with this  
14 subdivision (c)1 must carry on his or her person an  
15 identification card or letter identifying the bona fide  
16 member of a fire department, fire protection district,  
17 rescue squad, ambulance unit, or emergency management  
18 services agency that owns or operates that vehicle. The  
19 card or letter must include:

20 (A) the name of the fire department, fire  
21 protection district, rescue squad, ambulance unit, or  
22 emergency management services agency;

23 (B) the member's position within the fire  
24 department, fire protection district, rescue squad,  
25 ambulance unit, or emergency management services  
26 agency;

1 (C) the member's term of service; and

2 (D) the name of a person within the fire  
3 department, fire protection district, rescue squad,  
4 ambulance unit, or emergency management services  
5 agency to contact to verify the information provided.

6 2. Police department vehicles in cities having a  
7 population of 500,000 or more inhabitants.

8 3. Law enforcement vehicles of State or local  
9 authorities when used in combination with red oscillating,  
10 rotating, or flashing lights.

11 4. Vehicles of local fire departments and State or  
12 federal firefighting vehicles when used in combination  
13 with red oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights.

14 5. Vehicles which are designed and used exclusively as  
15 ambulances or rescue vehicles when used in combination  
16 with red oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights;  
17 furthermore, such lights shall not be lighted except when  
18 responding to an emergency call.

19 6. Vehicles that are equipped and used exclusively as  
20 organ transport vehicles when used in combination with red  
21 oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights; furthermore,  
22 these lights shall only be lighted when the transportation  
23 is declared an emergency by a member of the transplant  
24 team or a representative of the organ procurement  
25 organization.

26 7. Vehicles of the Illinois Emergency Management

1 Agency, vehicles of the Office of the Illinois State Fire  
2 Marshal, vehicles of the Illinois Department of Public  
3 Health, vehicles of the Illinois Department of  
4 Corrections, and vehicles of the Illinois Department of  
5 Juvenile Justice, when used in combination with red  
6 oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights.

7 8. Vehicles operated by a local or county emergency  
8 management services agency as defined in the Illinois  
9 Emergency Management Agency Act, when used in combination  
10 with red oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights.

11 9. Vehicles of the Illinois Department of Natural  
12 Resources that are used for mine rescue and explosives  
13 emergency response, when used in combination with red  
14 oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights.

15 (c-1) In addition to the blue oscillating, rotating, or  
16 flashing lights permitted under subsection (c), and  
17 notwithstanding subsection (a), a vehicle operated by a  
18 voluntary firefighter, a voluntary member of a rescue squad,  
19 or a member of a voluntary ambulance unit may be equipped with  
20 flashing white headlights and blue grill lights, which may be  
21 used only in responding to an emergency call or when parked or  
22 stationary at the scene of a fire, rescue call, ambulance  
23 call, or motor vehicle crash.

24 (c-2) In addition to the blue oscillating, rotating, or  
25 flashing lights permitted under subsection (c), and  
26 notwithstanding subsection (a), a vehicle operated by a paid

1 or unpaid member of a local or county emergency management  
2 services agency as defined in the Illinois Emergency  
3 Management Agency Act, may be equipped with white oscillating,  
4 rotating, or flashing lights to be used in combination with  
5 blue oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights, if  
6 authorization by local authorities is in writing and carried  
7 in the vehicle.

8 (d) The use of a combination of amber and white  
9 oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights, whether lighted or  
10 unlighted, is prohibited except on second division vehicles  
11 designed and used for towing or hoisting vehicles or motor  
12 vehicles or equipment of the State of Illinois, local  
13 authorities, contractors, and union representatives;  
14 furthermore, such lights shall not be lighted on second  
15 division vehicles designed and used for towing or hoisting  
16 vehicles or vehicles of the State of Illinois, local  
17 authorities, and contractors except while such vehicles are  
18 engaged in a tow operation, highway maintenance, or  
19 construction operations within the limits of highway  
20 construction projects, and shall not be lighted on the  
21 vehicles of union representatives except when those vehicles  
22 are within the limits of a construction project.

23 (e) All oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights referred  
24 to in this Section shall be of sufficient intensity, when  
25 illuminated, to be visible at 500 feet in normal sunlight.

26 (f) Nothing in this Section shall prohibit a manufacturer

1 of oscillating, rotating, or flashing lights or his  
2 representative or authorized vendor from temporarily mounting  
3 such lights on a vehicle for demonstration purposes only. If  
4 the lights are not covered while the vehicle is operated upon a  
5 highway, the vehicle shall display signage indicating that the  
6 vehicle is out of service or not an emergency vehicle. The  
7 signage shall be displayed on all sides of the vehicle in  
8 letters at least 2 inches tall and one-half inch wide. A  
9 vehicle authorized to have oscillating, rotating, or flashing  
10 lights mounted for demonstration purposes may not activate the  
11 lights while the vehicle is operated upon a highway.

12 (g) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (a),  
13 (b), (c), or (d) of this Section who without lawful authority  
14 stops or detains or attempts to stop or detain another person  
15 shall be guilty of a Class 2 felony.

16 (h) Except as provided in subsection (g) above, any person  
17 violating the provisions of subsection (a) or (c) of this  
18 Section shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

19 (Source: P.A. 102-842, eff. 1-1-23; 102-982, eff. 7-1-23;  
20 103-154, eff. 6-30-23.)

21 (625 ILCS 5/12-601) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 12-601)

22 Sec. 12-601. Horns and warning devices.

23 (a) Every motor vehicle when operated upon a highway shall  
24 be equipped with a horn in good working order and capable of  
25 emitting sound audible under normal conditions from a distance

1 of not less than 200 feet, but no horn or other warning device  
2 shall emit an unreasonable loud or harsh sound or a whistle.  
3 The driver of a motor vehicle shall when reasonably necessary  
4 to insure safe operation give audible warning with his horn  
5 but shall not otherwise use such horn when upon a highway.

6 (b) No vehicle shall be equipped with nor shall any person  
7 use upon a vehicle any siren, whistle, or bell, except as  
8 otherwise permitted in this Section. Any authorized emergency  
9 vehicle or organ transport vehicle as defined in Chapter 1 of  
10 this Code or a vehicle operated by a fire chief, deputy fire  
11 chief, assistant fire chief, EMS chief, or the Director or  
12 Coordinator of a municipal or county emergency services and  
13 disaster agency may be equipped with a siren, whistle, or bell  
14 capable of emitting sound audible under normal conditions from  
15 a distance of not less than 500 feet, but such siren, whistle,  
16 or bell shall not be used except when such vehicle is operated  
17 in response to an emergency call or in the immediate pursuit of  
18 an actual or suspected violator of the law in either of which  
19 events the driver of such vehicle shall sound such siren,  
20 whistle, or bell when necessary to warn pedestrians and other  
21 drivers of the approach thereof.

22 (c) Trackless trolley coaches, as defined by Section 1-206  
23 of this Code, and replica trolleys, as defined by Section  
24 1-171.04 of this Code, may be equipped with a bell or bells in  
25 lieu of a horn, and may, in addition to the requirements of  
26 subsection (a) of this Section, use a bell or bells for the

1 purpose of indicating arrival or departure at designated stops  
2 during the hours of scheduled operation.

3 (Source: P.A. 102-448, eff. 1-1-22.)