

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TIPS

Kids - do you ride the bus to school? Here are some tips to keep you safe from the [American School Bus Council](#):

- Get to the bus stop early - at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- Never stand in the roadway or on the curb. Stay three giant steps away from the curb until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver opens the door.
- Never walk behind the school bus where the driver can't see you. When crossing in front of the bus, stay at least five giant steps away from the bus so the driver can see you.
- Look both ways for cars before stepping into the roadway. Look left, right, then left again to ensure it is safe to cross.
- If you drop something outside of the school bus - don't try to chase it or pick it up. Tell the bus driver and wait for his or her instructions.
- Use the handrails when getting on or off the bus.
- Secure loose or hanging objects - like extra-long straps or strings on backpacks or purses - so they do not get caught and cause you to trip or fall.
- Buckle up if seat belts are available.
- Stay in your seat and keep the center aisle free from books and bags.
- The school bus ride is not playtime. You should not yell or distract the driver. He or she needs to be able to hear other vehicles.
- What about that bully on the bus? Try sitting with friends or at the front right of the bus where the driver can see you. Do tell a trusted adult about the bullying. In Alachua County, bullying can be reported at reportbullyingnow@gm.sbac.edu or by calling 352-955-7200.



CONTACT US:

9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCIES

352-955-1818 FOR NON-EMERGENCIES

ACSO Important Phone Numbers

ACSO Main Administration	352.367.4000
Crime Prevention Unit	352.374.1800
Crime Stoppers & Gun Bounty	352.372.7867
Dept. of the Jail	352.491.4444
Evidence Section	352.367-4076
Human Resources	352.367.4040
Narcotics Tip Line	352.374.1849
Patrol	352.367.4101
Public Information	352.367.4050
Property Unit	352.367.4078
Records Bureau	352.367.4006
Victim Advocate Unit	352.367.4193



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Sheriff Chad D. Scott

P.O. Box 5489, Gainesville, FL 32627
2621 SE Hawthorne Road, Gainesville, FL 32641
<https://www.acso.us>



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ALACHUA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



SCHOOL BUS LAW

FLORIDA STATUTE 316.172

TRAFFIC TO STOP FOR SCHOOL BUS.

(1)(a) Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle on or over the roads or highways of this state shall, upon approaching any school bus which displays a stop signal, bring such vehicle to a full stop while the bus is stopped, and the vehicle shall not pass the school bus until the signal has been withdrawn. A person who violates this section commits a moving violation, punishable as provided in chapter [318](#).

(b) Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle that passes a school bus on the side that children enter and exit when the school bus displays a stop signal commits a moving violation, punishable as provided in chapter 318, and is subject to a mandatory hearing under the provisions of [s. 318.19](#).

(2) The driver of a vehicle upon a divided highway with an unpaved space of at least 5 feet, a raised median, or a physical barrier is not required to stop when traveling in the opposite direction of a school bus which is stopped in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(3) Every school bus shall stop as far to the right of the street as possible and shall display warning lights and stop signals as required by rules of the State Board of Education before discharging or loading passengers. When possible, a school bus shall not stop where the visibility is obscured for a distance of 200 feet either way from the bus.



www.flickr.com/photos/chriswaits

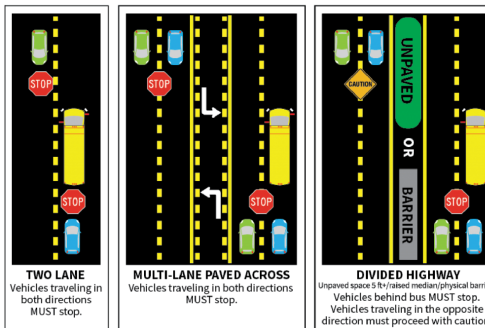
How comfortable are you with the laws surrounding school buses in Florida? In the first column, you can find the actual text of Florida State Statute [316.172](#).

To make it easy to remember, you are required to stop anytime you approach a stopped school bus displaying red flashing lights and an extended STOP arm.

The **ONLY EXCEPTION** is if you are on a divided highway that is separated by a raised barrier or at least five feet of unpaved (grassy) median. Even then, you need to slow down and watch for students loading or unloading from the bus.

In all other situations, such as on a two-lane road with vehicles traveling in both directions or a multi-lane road with a paved center lane or paved median, **you must stop** until the bus driver turns off the red lights, retracts the STOP arms, and resumes travel.

The below graphic from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles illustrates these rules.



PENALTIES

During 2023, law enforcement agencies across Florida issued 3,048 citations to drivers that failed to stop for a school bus, or who passed a stopped school bus. The penalties for passing a stopped school bus in Florida are steep. You will be subject to a citation. The minimum statewide

fine is \$165, although if you pass on the side where children enter and exit, the minimum fine is \$265.

On January 1, 2021, Florida doubled the fines for failure to stop for a school bus. If a second offense is committed within five years, your driver's license will be suspended for up to a year. If you passed on the side of the bus where children enter and exit, the higher fine for that offense will be doubled. A second offense within five years will cost you your license for up to two years.

Here in Alachua County, the minimum fine you can receive for failing to stop for a school bus is \$364. You will receive four points on your driver's license and will have to complete Basic Driver Improvement Course. If you pass a stopped school bus, the fine is \$564 with a mandatory court appearance.

CAMERON MAYHEW ACT

On July 1, 2017, the Cameron Mayhew Act took effect in Florida, increasing the penalties for drivers who injure or kill someone while illegally passing a school bus. The enhanced penalties include serving 120 hours in a trauma center or hospital, six points on your driver's license, a one-year suspension of your driver's license, and a \$1,500 fine. You must also participate in a victim impact panel. If one is not available, you will have to complete a FLHSMV-approved driver improvement course.

