

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



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# Bill 246

## An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act

**Mr. M. Harris**

**Private Member's Bill**

1st Reading      February 16, 2021

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The *Highway Traffic Act* is amended to require school buses manufactured on or after January 1, 2005 to be equipped with four overhead amber signal-lights and four overhead red signal-lights. The amendments require drivers of those school buses to actuate the overhead amber signal-lights when beginning to slow down for the purpose of stopping to receive or discharge children or adults with developmental disabilities and to actuate the red signal-lights and school bus stop arm as soon as the bus is stopped. Consequential amendments are also made.

## An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

**1 (1) Section 175 of the *Highway Traffic Act* is amended by adding the following subsection:**

**Overhead signal-lights**

(4.1) Every school bus registered in Ontario that is manufactured on or after January 1, 2005 shall be equipped with four overhead red signal-lights and four overhead amber signal-lights mounted outside of the bus at or near the roof line in the following configuration:

1. One red signal-light and one amber signal-light on each side of the bus at the front.
2. One red signal-light and one amber signal-light on each side of the bus at the rear.

**(2) Subsection 175 (5) of the Act is amended by striking out “subsection (3), (3.1) or (4)” at the end and substituting “(3), (3.1), (4) or (4.1)”.**

**(3) Subsection 175 (6) of the Act is amended by striking out the portion before clause (a) and substituting the following:**

**School bus driver, signals**

(6) Subject to subsection (9), every driver of a school bus that is not equipped with overhead amber signal-lights,

. . . . .

**(4) Section 175 of the Act is amended by adding the following subsection:**

**Same, buses equipped with overhead amber signal-lights**

(6.1) Subject to subsection (9), every driver of a school bus that is equipped with overhead amber signal-lights,

- (a) who begins to slow down the school bus for the purpose of stopping on a highway to receive or discharge children or receive or discharge adults who have developmental disabilities, shall actuate the overhead amber signal-lights on the bus;
- (b) as soon as the bus is stopped for a purpose set out in clause (a), shall actuate the overhead red signal lights and school bus stop arm; and
- (c) while the bus is stopped for a purpose set out in clause (a) on a highway, shall continue to operate the overhead red signal-lights and stop arm until the passengers have been received or discharged and until all passengers having to cross the highway have completed the crossing.

**(5) Subsection 175 (7) of the Act is amended by adding “or (6.1)” at the end.**

**(6) Subsection 175 (8) of the Act is repealed and the following substituted:**

**School buses, restriction on use of signals**

(8) No person shall actuate the overhead signal-lights or the stop arm on a school bus on a highway under any circumstances other than those set out in subsections (6) and (6.1).

**(7) Subsection 175 (13) of the Act is amended by striking out “subsection (6) does” and substituting “subsections (6) and (6.1) do”.**

**(8) Subsection 175 (15) of the Act is amended by adding the following clause:**

- (c.1) governing the use of equipment on or in vehicles referred to in clause (a), including requiring the use of any equipment and prescribing the standards and specifications of the equipment;

**Commencement**

**2 This Act comes into force on September 1, 2022.**

**Short title**

**3 The short title of this Act is the *Safer School Buses Act, 2021*.**