

Utah School Bus Driver Instruction and Certification Standard

A. Instruction and Certification of Bus Drivers

A program of instruction shall be offered by the State Office of Education to permit pupil transportation personnel the opportunity to attain a high degree of competence and knowledge of their duties. The goal is to instruct all personnel so that the performance of their duties results in a safer trip for the students who are transported. Since January 1, 1997, the position of Utah Certified Pupil Transportation Instructor (State, district or local level) has existed. A certified instructor must successfully complete the Utah Pupil Transportation Instructor Certification Program.

B. Pupil Transportation Instructors

1. School districts, charter schools, private schools, Head Start, and all other pupil transportation providers who operate school buses in the state of Utah (with the approval of these standards by the Utah Department of Transportation) shall have or contract with one of the following:
 - a. A Utah State Certified Pupil Transportation Instructor (state level)
 - b. A Pupil Transportation District Instructor (district or local level)
 - c. A delegated behind-the-wheel Instructor (delegated by the district or pupil transportation provider)(Note: Each district or pupil transportation provider shall have, or contract with, at least one delegated behind-the-wheel instructor.)
2. A suggested ratio would be one instructor for every 25 drivers.
3. District/local-level instructors shall be certified by the state-level instructors.
4. A delegated behind-the-wheel instructor shall be certified by a state, district or local-level instructor.
5. Driver instruction (pre-service, behind-the-wheel, basic course, and state-required portions of the driver's in-service) shall be taught by a certified instructor annually at the state and district levels.

C. School Bus Driver Recertification

School bus drivers in the state of Utah, in order to operate a school bus in the state, shall satisfactorily complete required annual in-service, recertification instruction and thorough testing by a state or district/local-level instructor.

(Note: School bus drivers must be approved for service each year between May 1 and November 15 by a certified state, district, or local-level instructor.)

1. School bus drivers shall complete a cumulative of six (6) hours of recertification for each one-year period during recertification.

2. Drivers who discontinue driving duties, upon returning to duty, shall become current with recertification requirements before transporting students. Returning drivers must show competency in all behind-the-wheel instruction.
3. New drivers who already hold a CDL and apply for a school bus endorsement may have a license expiration date of less than five years.
 - a. New drivers may have a transition period before re-licensing and recertification dates match. If this transition period is less than 12 months, drivers are not required to begin recertification until license renewal.
 - b. New drivers who have 13 months or more until license renewal shall complete a minimum of six (6) hours of recertification for each one-year period.
 - c. Drivers who have a full five-year recertification period must complete the full 30 hours of recertification.

D. Behind-the-Wheel Instruction

School bus operators in the State of Utah shall be taught behind-the-wheel techniques on a school bus by one of three individuals:

1. A state-certified Instructor
2. A district/local level Instructor
3. A delegated behind-the-wheel instructor

State-level instructors are certified to instruct statewide. District/local-level instructors are certified to instruct in their district or local area or, if accompanied by a state-level instructor, to teach in other districts. Delegated behind-the-wheel instructors are certified to instruct in their district or local area. All behind-the-wheel, road appraisal and safety skills instruction shall be given by a state-level certified instructor, district-level certified instructor, or a delegated behind-the-wheel instructor.

E. State-Level Instructors

The Utah State Board of Education recommends that state-level instructors attend the state transportation conference for the purpose of developing the state annual in-service program. The Utah State Certified Pupil Transportation Instructor (USCPTI) Committee has the responsibility to provide a superior instructional program designed to ensure statewide consistency and promote professionalism among all school bus drivers. (Note: This Committee works under the direction of the USBE and laws as adopted by the USCPTI.)

F. Beginning Bus Driver Instruction

1. Minimum pre-service. This required course will include the following classes before driving a school bus:

a. District Procedures	60 mins.
b. Drug and Alcohol	60 mins.
c. Blood-Borne Pathogen Information	60 mins.
d. Behind-the-Wheel Driving & Skills Appraisal	720 mins.
e. Classroom Instruction	
i. Unit 2—Vehicle Components	60 mins.

ii. Unit 3—Loading/Unloading	90 mins.
iii. Unit 4—Emergency Procedures	60 mins.
iv. Unit 5—Behavior Management	120 mins.
v. Unit 6—Defensive Driving	120 mins.
vi. Unit 7—Activity/Field Trips	60 mins.
vii. Unit 8—Public Relations	30 mins.
viii. Unit 9—Special Education	<u>90 mins.</u>
Total	1530 mins.

2. The following required instruction may be completed during pre-service or within the first 90 working days of employment.

a. Operation Lifesaver	60 mins.
b. Sexual Harassment Information	60 mins.
c. Defensive Driving (approved by the USOE)	360 mins.
d. First Aid/CPR (approved by the USOE)	360 mins.
e. Standards for Utah School Buses	<u>30 mins.</u>
Total	870 mins.

Total Beginning Bus Driver Instruction 2400 mins.

G. Bus Driver Recertification Instruction

1. Recertification with CDL license renewal is required, at minimum, every five years. The following are to be completed by experienced drivers within a five-year period before license renewal.

a. First Aid/ CPR (approved by the USOE)	360 mins.
b. Defensive Driving (approved by the USOE)	360 mins.
c. Operation Lifesaver	60 mins.
d. Standards for Utah School Buses	<u>30 mins.</u>
Total	810 mins.

2. Classroom Instruction

a. Unit 2—Vehicle Components	60 mins.
b. Unit 3—Loading/Unloading	90 mins.
c. Unit 4—Emergency Procedures	90 mins.
d. Unit 5—Behavior Management	120 mins.
e. Unit 6—Defensive Driving	120 mins.
f. Unit 7—Activity /Field trips	60 mins.
g. Unit 8—Public Relations	60 mins.
h. Unit 9—Special Education	<u>90 mins.</u>
Total	690 mins.

3. Road Performance Appraisal/Safety Skills Course **300 mins.**

Total Bus Driver Recertification Instruction 1800 mins.

4. For every 60 minutes of instruction credit, a minimum of 50 minutes of actual instruction/discussion time is required. Drivers completing recertification may meet the above classroom requirements by attending courses taught at a network of certified statewide classroom sites, allowing for greater flexibility and less duplication of effort. These classes may include both pre-service and re-certification drivers. **Drivers failing to recertify according to these standards will be disqualified from service.**

H. Annual In-service Instruction

1. All employees holding a CDL with passenger and school bus endorsements who may transport students as part of their job duties shall recertify annually according to these standards.
2. The state eight-hour in-service instruction is required annually. Returning drivers who fail to attend an annual in-service by November 15 will be disqualified from service until an annual in-service is attended. New drivers hired after their pupil transportation providers annual in-service who are unable to attend any remaining in-service will not be required to attend an annual in-service until the next calendar year in-service is offered.
 - a. Annual in-service instruction each year shall include drug and alcohol awareness training and blood-borne pathogens training as mandated by federal standards.
 - b. Other topics such as updates on federal, state, and local laws and regulations and current issues of concern for school busing shall be discussed under the guidance of the Pupil Transportation Specialist of the Utah State Office of Education.

I. Recertification for Supervisors, Shop Technicians, and/or Office Personnel

Supervisors, shop technicians and/or office personnel must meet recertification requirements to transport school children in Utah. If supervisors, shop technicians, and/or office personnel will not transport school children, they are not required to maintain recertification; if not assigned to a route, they are not required to complete a road performance appraisal.

J. Recertification for District-Level Instructors

1. District-level instructors shall attend an annual professional development recertification class.
 - a. In the event an instructor does not attend professional development recertification, they will become a provisional instructor and the district will be notified of the provisional status.
 - b. In the event an instructor does not attend for a second year, the district will be notified that they are no longer authorized to facilitate the instruction using USOE curriculum and documentation forms.
 - c. To renew certification an instructor must complete a professional development recertification class.
2. District-level instructors shall conduct at least 10 hours of instruction annually. This may include behind-the-wheel, classroom, and annual in-service instruction.

K. Recertification for Behind-the-Wheel Instructors

Behind-the-wheel instructors shall attend an annual in-service instruction and shall conduct at least 10 hours of behind-the-wheel and/or road performance and skills appraisal of drivers annually.

L. Annual In-service Certification

State- and district-level instructors are required to attend the annual in-service instruction certification to be eligible to facilitate/instruct during the current year of in-service.

M. Drug and Alcohol Awareness Program

1. Instructors who present the 60 minutes of drug and alcohol awareness instruction as part of original certification of new drivers or annual in-service for drivers are required to certify in the two-hour certification for supervisors and instructors.
2. Instructors who facilitate 60 minutes of annual drug and alcohol awareness instruction as part of annual in-service for drivers or original certification of new drivers are required to attend the annual recertification for supervisors and instructors, or present under the direct oversight of a supervisor who has attended the annual recertification for supervisors and instructors.

Stopping for School Bus and School Bus Headlights – Utah Requirements

Utah Addition to 2005 National Specifications:

Utah Code Annotated 1953, Section 41-6a-1302:

1. A school bus when operated for the transportation of school children, shall:
 - (a) bear on the front and rear of the bus a plainly visible sign containing the words “school bus” in letters not less than eight inches in height, which shall be removed or covered when the vehicle is not in use for the transportation of school children; and
 - (b) be equipped with alternating flashing amber and red light signals visible from the front and rear, of a type approved and mounted as required under Section 41-6a-1301 and prescribed by the department under Section 41-6a-1601.

2. The operator of any vehicle upon a highway, upon meeting or overtaking any school bus equipped with signals required under this section which is displaying alternating flashing:
 - (a) amber warning light signals, shall slow the vehicle, but may proceed past the school bus using due care and caution at a speed not greater than specified in Subsection 41-6a-601(2) for school zones for the safety of the school children that may be in the vicinity; or
 - (b) red light signals visible from the front or rear, shall stop immediately before reaching the bus and may not proceed until the flashing red light signals cease operation.

3. The operator of a vehicle need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus traveling in the opposite direction when:
 - (a) traveling upon a divided highway;
 - (b) the bus is stopped at an intersection or other place controlled by an official traffic control device or peace officer; or
 - (c) upon a highway of five or more lanes, which may include a left-turn lane or a two-way left-turn lane.

4.
 - (a) The operator of a school bus shall operate alternating flashing red light signals at all times when:
 - (i) children are unloading from a school bus to cross a highway;
 - (ii) a school bus is stopped for the purpose of loading children who must cross a highway to board the bus; or
 - (iii) it would be hazardous for vehicles to proceed past the stopped school bus.
 - (b) The alternating flashing red light signals may not be operated except:
 - (i) when the school bus is stopped for loading or unloading school children; or
 - (ii) for any emergency purpose.

5. The operator of a school bus being operated on a highway shall have the headlights of the school bus lighted.