

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NOTE

No. 2016-03

School Business Services

School Transportation Management



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org


Pam Stewart, Commissioner

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Revisions to Rules 6A-3.0141, 6A-3.0151 and 6A-3.171, Florida Administrative Code

TO: School District Transportation Directors
Charter School Transportation Directors/Principals

FROM: Mark Eggers, Assistant Deputy Commissioner
Division of Finance and Operations 

DATE: April 15, 2016

SUBJECT: Revisions to Rules 6A-3.0141, 6A-3.0151 and 6A-3.0171, Florida Administrative Code

On February 18, 2016, the State Board of Education adopted revisions to rules 6A-3.0141, 6A-3.0151 and 6A-3.0171, Florida Administrative Code (FAC). This technical assistance note summarizes these changes.

Rule 6A-3.0141, FAC:

Rule 6A-3.0141, FAC, was amended to replace the Florida School Bus Operators Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver Fitness Determination (form ESE 479) with the Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver Fitness Determination (form MCSA-5875). Specific changes that affect local transportation departments are as follows:

- Medical examiners used by school districts and charter schools to conduct medical examinations of school bus operators must be registered with the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME). A list of registered examiners can be found at www.nrcme.fmcsa.dot.gov.
- A medical examiner's certificate (MEC) can be valid up to 24 months; however, local school board policy may require more frequent medical examinations.
- School districts, charter schools and school bus contractors may not accept a school bus operator performance waiver issued by an examiner registered with the NRCME.

- A new Florida Department of Education (FDOE) medical examination form (ESE 479) may not be issued after April 31, 2016; however, school bus operators currently in possession of a valid FDOE MEC will be allowed to continue to operate a school bus up to the expiration date on the MEC, at which time the operator will be required to obtain a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) medical examination and associated MEC. The school bus operator will be required to register the new DOT MEC with the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV), either in person or online via the link provided below.
 - All school bus operators must self-certify with the DHSMV, either in person or online at <https://www.flhsmv.gov/ddl/cdlmedicalcert.html> in one of the non-excepted categories:
 - Category A – Non-Excepted Interstate (can operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in any state); or
 - Category C – Non-Excepted Intrastate (can only drive a CMV in Florida)
 - School bus operators must self-certify with the DHSMV each time a new medical card is issued.
- The dexterity test requirements were not revised; however, the dexterity test form is assigned a new form number, ESE 480. School districts, charter schools and contractors must continue to maintain copies of the dexterity testing certificates for their school bus operators. Please contact the School Transportation Management office at schtrans@fldoe.org or 850-245-9797 for the new form ESE 480.

Rule 6A-3.0151, FAC:

Rule 6A-3.0151, FAC, which explained the requirements of the Florida School Bus Operators Medical Examination Report for Commercial Driver Fitness Determination (form ESE 479), was repealed, as it is no longer applicable.

Rule 6A-3.0171, FAC:

Rule 6A-3.0171, FAC, was amended as follows:

- The requirement for school districts and charter schools to report school bus crashes to the FDOE was eliminated. Crash data is already collected by the investigating law enforcement agencies and is available to school districts and other entities via Florida's Integrated Report Exchange System portal at www.firesportal.com.
- The requirement for school districts to maintain a list of licensed physicians authorized to administer medical examinations was eliminated. This list is no longer needed because school bus operators are now required to obtain a medical examination by a medical examiner registered with the NRCME. A list of registered medical examiners is available at www.nrcme.dot.gov.

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- The requirement for school districts to report hazardous walking locations to the FDOE via the online database was eliminated. Effective July 1, 2016, the online hazardous walking database will be discontinued. School districts are required to maintain documentation to support the reporting of students with hazardous walking conditions, via the student database, pursuant to section 1006.23, Florida Statutes (F.S.).
- The requirement that school bus operators shall not carry firearms on school property, including school buses, was eliminated. This requirement is superseded by sections 790.115, 790.25 and 790.251, F.S.
- The requirement that school bus operators may not operate a school bus in excess of 55 miles per hour was eliminated. Section 316.183(3), F.S., supersedes this requirement. Speed restrictions for school bus operators may be established by local school board policy.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Robert Manspeaker at Robert.Manspeaker@fldoe.org or 850-245-9795.

ME/jw

cc: School District Superintendents
Adam Emerson