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State of Rhode Island

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

20-76

September 11, 2020

SEVENTY-FIRST SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION – STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, I issued Executive Order 20-02 declaring a state of emergency due to the dangers to health and life posed by COVID-19 and that Order is in effect until at least October 3, 2020;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 public health emergency has led to the closure of all school buildings in Rhode Island for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year, with distance learning for all students taking place while school buildings are closed;

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2020, I issued Executive Order 20-44 authorizing a uniform statewide school calendar and that Order is in effect until at least October 10, 2020;

WHEREAS, the first day of school for the 2020-2021 school year under the uniform statewide school calendar as issued by the Rhode Island Department of Education ("RIDE") will occur on September 14, 2020;

WHEREAS, ensuring adequate student transportation is critical to the ability of students to attend schools in person and local school districts as well as other local educational agencies throughout the State to reopen schools for the 2020-2021 school year;

WHEREAS, there is a shortage of available providers with drivers and/or student transportation vehicles[1] that are currently licensed and/or registered by the Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles; and

WHEREAS, RIDE has identified student transportation providers registered in Massachusetts and Connecticut with available service which employ drivers and utilize student transportation vehicles that comply with the applicable licensing, registration, inspection, and insurance provisions in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

NOW THEREFORE, I, GINA M. RAIMONDO, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island, pursuant to Article IX of the Rhode Island Constitution and the Rhode Island General Laws, including, but not limited to, Title 30, Chapter 15, do hereby order as follows:

1. A student transportation provider registered in Massachusetts or Connecticut retained by or via RIDE to provide student transportation services ("Retained Providers", each a "Retained Provider") may utilize student transportation vehicles currently registered in Massachusetts or Connecticut to provide student transportation services in Rhode Island, provided that:

    a. Each student transportation vehicle has current, valid Massachusetts or Connecticut registration and inspection stickers.

    b. Each student transportation vehicle is covered by an insurance policy meeting the requirements of R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-22-10.1.

    c. RIDE has verified paragraphs 1(a) and 1(b) of this Order.

    d. The Retained Provider complies with the registration requirement for each student transportation vehicle pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-7-2 on or before November 10, 2020.

2. The statutory license requirements contained in R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 31-10-5 and 31-22.1-3(10) are hereby suspended for drivers currently licensed in

[1] As used in this Order, school transportation vehicles refer to motor vehicles defined in R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 31-1-3(aa) and 31-22.1-1.

Massachusetts or Connecticut to operate student transportation vehicles and employed by Retained Providers ("Provider Drivers", each a "Provider Driver").

3. A Provider Driver may operate student transportation vehicles appropriate for their licensure, provided that:

   a. As applicable, the Provider Driver possesses a current, valid Massachusetts or Connecticut commercial driver's license with a "P" and "S" endorsement and a current, valid Massachusetts school bus certificate if licensed in Massachusetts.

   b. As applicable, the Provider Driver possesses a current, valid Massachusetts or Connecticut driver's license that is the equivalent of a Rhode Island license with the appropriate endorsement(s) allowing the transportation of school children.

   c. RIDE has verified paragraphs 3(a) and 3(b) of this Order.

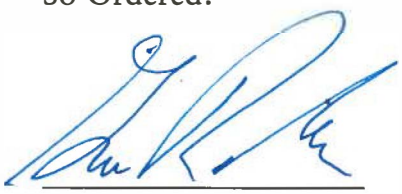
   d. As applicable, the Provider Driver obtains a school bus certificate governed by 280-RICR-30-05-2 on or before November 10, 2020.

   e. As applicable, the Provider Driver obtains a pupil transportation certificate governed by 280-RICR-30-05-5 on or before November 10, 2020.

   f. The Provider Driver complies with license requirements under R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 31-10-5 and 31-22.1-3(10) on or before November 10, 2020.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect until October 10, 2020 unless renewed, modified or terminated by subsequent Executive Order.

So Ordered:



Gina M. Raimondo
Governor