



DAVID J. SWARTS
Commissioner

STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

6 EMPIRE STATE PLAZA, ALBANY, NY 12228

"P" 22 (2010)

Albany, New York

October 13, 2010

TO: All Enforcement Agencies

SUBJECT: Chapter 465 of the Laws of 2010 - Blue Lights on Fire Vehicles

Effective **August 30, 2010**, Vehicle and Traffic Law section 375 subdivision 41 paragraph 4 has been amended to authorize the affixing and use of blue lights on fire vehicles.

In addition to red and white lights, one or more blue lights or combination blue and red lights, or combination blue, red, and white lights may be affixed to a fire vehicle, provided that the blue lights are used for rear projection only. Such lights may be displayed on a fire vehicle only when it is engaged in emergency operation. This amendment authorizes the use of blue lights on only those fire vehicles already displaying one or more red or combination red and white lights.

If the visibility of the vehicle's other emergency lighting is obscured or diminished by the trunk or rear gate of the vehicle, a blue light may be affixed to the trunk, rear gate, or interior of the vehicle.

Please note that as a result of this amendment, these provisions apply to both police and fire vehicles. (As of June 7, 2006, the Vehicle and Traffic Law was amended to authorize the use of blue lights on police vehicles.)

Also effective **August 30, 2010**, Vehicle and Traffic Law section 1180 subdivision (e) is amended to clarify that a driver must reduce vehicle speed when approaching and passing a police or fire vehicle which is parked, stopped, or standing, and that is displaying the appropriate red, white, and blue lights.

A copy of Chapter 465 is attached for your reference. Please share this information with appropriate staff. Thank you.

David J. Swarts
Commissioner

Attachment

LAWS OF NEW YORK, 2010

CHAPTER 465

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to allowing fire vehicles to display a combination of red, white and/or blue lights for rear projection only

Became a law August 30, 2010, with the approval of the Governor.
Passed by a majority vote, three-fifths being present.

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Subdivision (e) of section 1180 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by chapter 211 of the laws of 2004, is amended to read as follows:

(e) The driver of every vehicle shall, consistent with the requirements of subdivision (a) of this section, drive at an appropriate reduced speed when approaching and crossing an intersection or railway grade crossing, when approaching and going around a curve, when approaching a hill crest, when approaching and passing by an emergency situation involving any authorized emergency vehicle which is parked, stopped or standing on a highway and which is displaying one or more red or combination red ~~[and]~~, white, and/or blue lights pursuant to the provisions of paragraph two and subparagraph b of paragraph four of subdivision forty-one of section three hundred seventy-five of this chapter, when traveling upon any narrow or winding roadway, and when any special hazard exists with respect to pedestrians, or other traffic by reason of weather or highway conditions, including, but not limited to a highway construction or maintenance work area.

§ 2. Paragraph 4 of subdivision 41 of section 375 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by chapter 45 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as follows:

4. Blue light. a. One blue light may be affixed to any motor vehicle owned by a volunteer member of a fire department or on a motor vehicle owned by a member of such person's family residing in the same household or by a business enterprise in which such person has a proprietary interest or by which he or she is employed, provided such volunteer firefighter has been authorized in writing to so affix a blue light by the chief of the fire department or company of which he or she is a member, which authorization shall be subject to revocation at any time by the chief who issued the same or his or her successor in office. Such blue light may be displayed exclusively by such volunteer firefighter on such a vehicle only when engaged in an emergency operation. The ~~[use of blue and red light combinations shall be prohibited on all fire vehicles. The use of blue lights on fire vehicles shall be prohibited and the]~~ use of blue lights on vehicles shall be restricted for use only by a volunteer firefighter except as otherwise provided for in subparagraph b of this paragraph.

b. In addition to the red and white lights authorized to be displayed pursuant to paragraph two of this subdivision, one or more blue lights or combination blue and red lights or combination blue, red and white

EXPLANATION--Matter in **italics** is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

lights may be affixed to a police vehicle and fire vehicle, provided that such blue light or lights shall be displayed on a police vehicle and fire vehicle for rear projection only. In the event that the trunk or rear gate of a police vehicle and fire vehicle obstructs or diminishes the visibility of other emergency lighting on such [~~vehicle~~] vehicles, a blue light may be affixed to and displayed from the trunk, rear gate or interior of such [~~vehicle~~] vehicles. Such lights may be displayed on a police vehicle and fire vehicle when such [~~vehicle is~~] vehicles are engaged in an emergency operation. Nothing contained in this subparagraph shall be deemed to authorize the use of blue lights on police vehicles and fire vehicles unless such vehicles also display one or more red or combination red and white lights as otherwise authorized in this subdivision.

c. The commissioner is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations relating to the use, placement, power and display of blue lights on a police vehicle and fire vehicle.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

The Legislature of the STATE OF NEW YORK ss:

Pursuant to the authority vested in us by section 70-b of the Public Officers Law, we hereby jointly certify that this slip copy of this session law was printed under our direction and, in accordance with such section, is entitled to be read into evidence.

MALCOLM A. SMITH
Temporary President of the Senate

SHELDON SILVER
Speaker of the Assembly
