

STATE OF NEW YORK

5661

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 26, 2025

Introduced by Sen. OBERACKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to operation of vehicles on approach of authorized emergency vehicles

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

1 Section 1. Section 1144 of the vehicle and traffic law, as amended by
2 chapter 300 of the laws of 1960, subdivision (a) as amended by chapter
3 606 of the laws of 1994, is amended to read as follows:

4 § 1144. Operation of vehicles on approach of authorized emergency
5 vehicles. (a) Upon the immediate approach of an authorized emergency
6 vehicle equipped with at least one lighted lamp exhibiting red light
7 visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of five
8 hundred feet to the front of such vehicle other than a police vehicle or
9 bicycle when operated as an authorized emergency vehicle, and when audi-
10 ble signals are sounded from any said vehicle by siren, exhaust whistle,
11 bell, air-horn or electronic equivalent; the driver of every other vehi-
12 cle shall yield the right of way and shall immediately drive to a posi-
13 tion parallel to, and as close as possible to [~~the right-hand~~] either
14 edge or curb of the roadway to create a rescue lane in the center, or to
15 [~~either edge of a one-way roadway three or more lanes in width~~] the
16 right-hand edge of a roadway one lane in width, clear of any inter-
17 section, and shall stop and remain in such position until the authorized
18 emergency vehicle has passed, unless otherwise directed by a police
19 officer.

20 (b) In instances when traffic is moving slowly, stopped, or in grid-
21 lock drivers shall create a rescue lane to allow authorized emergency
22 vehicles to pass. On roadways with multiple lanes of traffic drivers in
23 the leftmost lane shall move to the left edge of the roadway, drivers in
24 the rightmost lane shall move to the right edge of the roadway, and
25 drivers in the center lanes shall move toward the left or right to

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

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1 create a clear lane in the center of the roadway until the authorized
2 emergency vehicle is passed. On a one lane roadway drivers shall move as
3 far to the right as possible until the authorized emergency vehicle is
4 passed.

5 (c) This section shall not operate to relieve the driver of an author-
6 ized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with reasonable care for
7 all persons using the highway.

8 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.