STATE OF NEW YORK

9431

IN SENATE

March 11, 2026

Introduced by Sen. COONEY -- 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 requiring instruction on work zone safety awareness as part of the pre-licensing course

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

Section 1. Paragraph (c-2) of subdivision 4 of section 502 of the vehicle and traffic law, as added by chapter 585 of the laws of 2002, is amended to read as follows:

(c-2) "Work Zone Safety" awareness component. (i) The commissioner shall provide in the pre-licensing course, set forth in paragraph (b) of this subdivision, a mandatory component in "Work Zone Safety" awareness education**, totaling no less than thirty minutes,** as a prerequisite for obtaining a license to operate a motor vehicle.

(ii) The purpose of the component is to educate prospective licensees on**:**

(A) the potential dangers to construction workers, construction equipment operators and operators of motor vehicles in a highway work zone[~~.~~]**;**

(B) the legal obligation to yield the right of way and exercise reasonable care in the approach of an authorized emergency vehicle, as set forth in section eleven hundred forty-four of this chapter;

(C) the legal obligation to exercise due care to avoid colliding with a parked, stopped or standing authorized emergency vehicle, hazard vehicle, vehicle displaying a blue or green light or certain other motor vehicles, as set forth in section eleven hundred forty-four-a of this chapter; and

(D) the consequences of violations, including those captured by automated work zone speed enforcement systems.

(iii) For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "work zone" shall include "work area" as defined by section one hundred [~~sixty~~] **sixty-one** of this chapter, and "restricted highway" as authorized in section sixteen hundred twenty-five of this chapter.

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

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[~~(ii)~~] (iv) The commissioner shall establish a curriculum for the "Work Zone Safety" component which shall include but not be limited to:

(A) instruction [~~describing the potential hazards of driving through a work zone, whether or not work, maintenance or other related construction is being undertaken therein, and information on the provisions of law relating to driving within a work zone and sanctions for violations of such provisions, including speeding in a work zone~~] on the identification and navigation of highway construction and maintenance zones;

(B) education topics, including, but not limited to, signage, flagging operations, barriers, lane shifts, and variable speed limits;

(C) education on the legal obligation to yield the right of way and exercise reasonable care in the approach of an authorized emergency vehicle, as set forth in section eleven hundred forty-four of this chapter, and penalties for noncompliance;

(D) education on the legal obligation to exercise due care to avoid colliding with a parked, stopped or standing authorized emergency vehicle, hazard vehicle, vehicle displaying a blue or green light or certain other motor vehicles, as set forth in section eleven hundred forty-four-a of this chapter, and penalties for noncompliance;

(E) statistics and real-life consequences of unsafe driving behavior in work zones;

(F) strategies for safe driving behavior in the presence of work zone equipment and personnel; and

(G) information on the photo speed violation monitoring systems in highway construction or maintenance work areas and associated penalties, as set forth by section eleven hundred eighty-e of this chapter.

[~~(iii)~~] (v) In developing such curriculum, the commissioner shall consult with the commissioner of transportation, the superintendent of the state police, representatives of the highway construction industry, representatives of highway construction workers, highway safety officials, road safety experts, and any other group that the commissioner [~~believes can contribute to~~] deems necessary to ensure a comprehensive and current presentation of the issue.

(vi) Such curriculum shall be adaptable to both in-person and online formats and include a certification of completion and tracking of student performance.

(vii) The commissioner shall ensure a portion of the examination on traffic laws contains at least one question relating to the driver's ability to understand how to drive safely in a work zone.

(viii) The commissioner shall ensure that completion of the "Work Zone Safety" component is documented and retained as part of the applicant's licensing record.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.