

STATE OF NEW YORK

9312

IN SENATE

February 27, 2026

Introduced by Sen. BORRELLO -- 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 and the public authorities law, in relation to establishing temporary reduced speeds on the New York state thruway in certain weather conditions and requiring instruction in winter weather conditions safety as part of the drivers pre-licensing course

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

1 Section 1. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new
2 section 1183 to read as follows:

3 § 1183. Temporary reduced speed limit in winter weather conditions. 1.
4 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the New York state thruway
5 authority shall establish a temporary reduced maximum speed limit of
6 forty-five miles per hour on The Governor Thomas E. Dewey Thruway (here-
7 inafter the "thruway"), as defined by section three hundred fifty-six of
8 the public authorities law, in the event that:

9 (a) snow and ice accumulation on the thruway reaches or exceeds three
10 inches and such accumulation has not been fully cleared by snow and ice
11 removal operations; or

12 (b) the New York state thruway authority, in consultation with the
13 department of transportation, determines that weather or thruway condi-
14 tions are unsafe at the prescribed speed limit of sixty-five miles per
15 hour, but such weather or thruway conditions do not warrant a full
16 closure of the thruway.

17 2. Such temporary reduced maximum speed limit shall remain in effect
18 until:

19 (a) snow and ice removal operations have cleared the thruway to safe
20 conditions; and

21 (b) the New York state thruway authority and the department of trans-
22 portation jointly certify that safe conditions have been restored and
23 the maximum speed limit of sixty-five miles per hour can be reinstated.

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

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1 3. A violation of this section shall be punishable by a fine of two
2 hundred fifty dollars and a penalty in the form of four points against
3 such violator's driving record.

4 4. The penalties provided by subdivision three of this section shall
5 apply in addition to any penalties imposed for reckless driving or the
6 failure to comply with traffic-control indications in accordance with
7 title seven of this chapter.

8 § 2. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section
9 361-e to read as follows:

10 § 361-e. Temporary reduced speed notifications. The authority shall
11 transmit temporary reduced speed limit notifications to operators of
12 motor vehicles on the thruway in accordance with the provisions of
13 section eleven hundred eighty-three of the vehicle and traffic law. Such
14 notifications shall be provided through:

15 1. variable message signs;
16 2. the authority's website and mobile application;
17 3. department traveler advisory systems; and
18 4. local government alert systems for residents affected by the tempo-
19 rary reduced speed limit.

20 § 3. Subparagraph (i) of paragraph (a) and paragraphs (b) and (d) of
21 subdivision 4 of section 502 of the vehicle and traffic law, subpara-
22 graph (i) of paragraph (a) and paragraph (b) as amended by chapter 379
23 of the laws of 2022 and paragraph (d) as amended by chapter 477 of the
24 laws of 2024, are amended and a new paragraph (c-6) is added to read as
25 follows:

26 (i) Upon submission of an application for a driver's license, the
27 applicant shall be required to take and pass a test, or submit evidence
28 of passage of a test, with respect to the laws relating to traffic, the
29 laws relating to driving while ability is impaired and while intoxicat-
30 ed, under the overpowering influence of "Road Rage", "Work Zone Safety"
31 awareness, "Motorcycle Safety" awareness and "Pedestrian and Bicyclist
32 Safety" awareness as defined by the commissioner, "School Bus Safety"
33 awareness, "Winter Weather Safety" awareness, the law relating to exer-
34 cising due care to avoid colliding with a parked, stopped or standing
35 authorized emergency vehicle or hazard vehicle pursuant to section elev-
36 en hundred forty-four-a of this chapter, the ability to read and compre-
37 hend traffic signs and symbols and such other matters as the commission-
38 er may prescribe, and to satisfactorily complete a course prescribed by
39 the commissioner of not less than four hours and not more than five
40 hours, consisting of classroom driver training and highway safety
41 instruction or the equivalent thereof. Such test shall include at least
42 seven written questions concerning the effects of consumption of alcohol
43 or drugs on the ability of a person to operate a motor vehicle and the
44 legal and financial consequences resulting from violations of section
45 eleven hundred ninety-two of this chapter, prohibiting the operation of
46 a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Such test
47 shall include one or more written questions concerning the devastating
48 effects of "Road Rage" on the ability of a person to operate a motor
49 vehicle and the legal and financial consequences resulting from assault-
50 ing, threatening or interfering with the lawful conduct of another
51 person legally using the roadway. Such test shall include one or more
52 questions concerning the potential dangers to persons and equipment
53 resulting from the unsafe operation of a motor vehicle in a work zone.
54 Such test may include one or more questions concerning motorcycle safe-
55 ty. Such test may include one or more questions concerning the law for
56 exercising due care to avoid colliding with a parked, stopped or stand-

ing vehicle pursuant to section eleven hundred forty-four-a of this chapter. Such test may include one or more questions concerning school bus safety. Such test may include one or more questions concerning the operation of a motor vehicle in winter weather conditions. Such test may include one or more questions concerning pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Such test shall be administered by the commissioner. The commissioner shall cause the applicant to take a vision test and a test for color blindness. Upon passage of the vision test, the application may be accepted and the application fee shall be payable.

(b) Upon successful completion of the requirements set forth in paragraph (a) of this subdivision which shall include an alcohol and drug education component as described in paragraph (c) of this subdivision, a "Road Rage" awareness component as described in paragraph (c-1) of this subdivision, a "Work Zone Safety" awareness component as described in paragraph (c-2) of this subdivision, a "Motorcycle Safety" awareness component as described in paragraph (c-3) of this subdivision, a "School Bus Safety" awareness component as described in paragraph (c-4) of this subdivision, ~~and~~ a "Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety" awareness component as described in paragraph (c-5) of this subdivision, and a "Winter Weather Safety" awareness component as described in paragraph (c-6) of this subdivision, the commissioner shall cause the applicant to take a road test in a representative vehicle of a type prescribed by the commissioner which shall be appropriate to the type of license for which application is made, except that the commissioner may waive the road test requirements for certain classes of applicants. Provided, however, that the term "representative vehicle" shall not include a three-wheeled motor vehicle that has two wheels situated in the front and one wheel in the rear, has a steering mechanism and seating which does not require the operator to straddle or sit astride, is equipped with safety belts for all occupants and is manufactured to comply with federal motor vehicle safety standards for motorcycles including, but not limited to, 49 C.F.R. part 571. The commissioner shall have the power to establish a program to allow persons other than employees of the department to conduct road tests in representative vehicles when such tests are required for applicants to obtain a class A, B or C license. If ~~she~~ the commissioner chooses to do so, ~~she~~ they shall set forth ~~her~~ their reasons in writing and conduct a public hearing on the matter. ~~She~~ The commissioner shall only establish such a program after holding the public hearing.

(c-6) "Winter Weather 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 "Winter Weather Safety" awareness education as a prerequisite for obtaining a license to operate a motor vehicle. The purpose of such component shall be to educate prospective licensees on the operation of motor vehicles during winter weather conditions.

(ii) The commissioner shall establish a curriculum for the "Winter Weather Safety" awareness component which shall include, but shall not be limited to: safe braking and stopping distances in snow and ice; the proper usage of headlights and hazard lights; procedures for maintaining control of a vehicle in a skid; the dangers of black ice and reduced visibility; winter tire and equipment awareness; and the comprehension of and compliance with temporary reduced speed limits in accordance with section eleven hundred eighty-three of this chapter.

1 (iii) In developing such curriculum, the commissioner shall consult
2 with transportation safety experts, law enforcement agencies, driving
3 instructors, and the New York state thruway authority.

4 (d) (i) The commissioner shall make available for distribution upon
5 registration at each location where the pre-licensing course will be
6 given (1) instructional handbooks outlining the content of the entire
7 curriculum of the pre-licensing course including the information
8 required to be included in the course pursuant to paragraphs (c), (c-1),
9 (c-2), (c-3), (c-4) ~~[and]~~, (c-5) and (c-6) of this subdivision, and (2)
10 information as to how a person may register in the New York state organ
11 and tissue donor registry under section forty-three hundred ten of the
12 public health law.

13 (ii) The commissioner shall also provide for the additional training
14 of the instructors necessary for the competent instruction of the alco-
15 hol and drug education, "Road Rage" awareness, "Work Zone Safety" aware-
16 ness, "Motorcycle Safety" awareness, "School Bus Safety" awareness,
17 "Winter Weather Safety" awareness, and "Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety"
18 awareness subject matters of the pre-licensing course.

19 § 4. This act shall take effect one year after it shall have become a
20 law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any
21 rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its
22 effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such
23 effective date.