

# State Fines and Other Penalties for Passing a Stopped School Bus

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## Issue

Provide the penalties for passing a school bus in all 50 states. This report updates OLR Report [2019-R-0198](#).

## Summary

Every state has a “stop-arm law” that (1) prohibits drivers from passing a school bus that is stopped to load or unload students with its red lights flashing and stop-arm extended and (2) imposes penalties on violators. Connecticut imposes a fine of \$450 for a first violation of its stop-arm law and a fine of \$500 to \$1,000, up to 30 days in jail, or both for subsequent violations. (For a more detailed summary of Connecticut’s law, see OLR Report [2024-R-205](#).) Penalties in other states vary greatly. A number of states permit a license suspension or prison sentence for first violations and most permit them for subsequent violations, but the suspension or sentence length varies.

Additionally, administrative penalties, often in the form of points, may be assessed against the licenses of those who violate the law. The federal Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted a [2024 review](#) of state stop-arm laws, which, along with identifying associated penalties, indicates the number of points states assess for illegally passing a school bus. This review found that (1) 19 states assess five or more points per offense; (2) at least seven states, including Connecticut, assess four points; and (3) at least eight states assess three or fewer points. Additionally, some states assess differing point values based on certain factors, such as whether the offense took place in a passenger or commercial vehicle,

whether any serious injuries or deaths occurred, and whether the offense was captured on a video monitoring system.

Finally, many states, including Connecticut, have laws allowing the use of video monitoring systems installed on the outside of a school bus to capture images of vehicles illegally passing. For more information on these systems, see OLR Report [2018-R-0289](#).

## State Penalties

Penalties for illegally passing a school bus vary greatly between states. For a first conviction, 15 states permit a fine of up to \$1,000 or more, 17 states permit a prison sentence, and 12 states permit a license suspension for up to 30 days or more. See Tables 1, 2, and 3 for the specific states permitting each penalty, listed in descending order by length or maximum amount of the penalty. Table 4 provides more detailed information on state stop-arm law fines and other penalties.

The state penalties included in this report are not inclusive. In addition to the penalties listed in this report, states may impose (1) higher penalties under certain circumstances, such as if the violation occurs when children are outside the bus or if the driver passes on the right side of the school bus; (2) criminal penalties for violations causing an injury to or death of a person; (3) administrative penalties (see Summary); or (4) different penalties for violations captured through video monitoring systems. We generally do not include these penalties below.

**Table 1: States Permitting a Fine of \$1,000 or More for a First Conviction, by Maximum Fine**

State	Fine
Indiana	Up to \$10,000
Arkansas	\$500 to \$2,500
Alaska	Up to \$2,000
Missouri	Up to \$2,000
Oregon	Up to \$2,000
Texas	\$500 to \$1,250
Wisconsin	\$500 to \$1,000
Georgia	At least \$1,000
Utah	At least \$1,000
Montana	\$500 to \$1,000
West Virginia	\$500 to \$1,000
Tennessee	\$250 to \$1,000
Hawaii	Up to \$1,000
Maryland	Up to \$1,000
Vermont	Up to \$1,000

**Table 2: States Permitting a Prison Sentence for a First Conviction, by Sentence Length**

State	Incarceration Period
Georgia	Up to one year
Mississippi	Up to one year
Missouri	Up to one year
Louisiana	Up to six months
West Virginia	Up to six months
Colorado	10 to 90 days
Alaska	Up to 90 days
Arkansas	Up to 90 days
Minnesota	Up to 90 days
New Mexico	Up to 90 days
Delaware	30 to 60 days
Kentucky	30 to 60 days
Iowa	Up to 30 days
New York	Up to 30 days
South Carolina	Up to 30 days
South Dakota	Up to 30 days
New Jersey	Up to 15 days

**Table 3: States Permitting a License Suspension for a First Conviction, by Suspension Length**

State	Suspension Period
Delaware	One month to one year
Arkansas	21 days to one year
Ohio	Up to one year
Oklahoma	Up to one year
Illinois	3 months
Missouri	90 days
Indiana	Up to 90 days
Pennsylvania	60 days
West Virginia	60 days
Iowa	30 days
Louisiana	30 days
Rhode Island	Up to 30 days

**Table 4: State Laws and Penalties for Illegally Passing a School Bus**

State	Statute	Penalties	
		Fines	Other Applicable Penalties
Alabama	Ala. Code § 32-5A-154	1st conviction: \$150 to \$300 2nd conviction: \$300 to \$500 3rd conviction: \$500 to \$1,000 4th and subsequent convictions: \$1,000 to \$3,000	2nd conviction: 100 hours of community service and 30-day license suspension 3rd conviction: 200 hours of community service and 90-day license suspension 4th and subsequent convictions: Class C felony conviction and one-year license suspension
Alaska	Alaska Stat. §§ 28.35.145, 12.55.035 & 12.55.135	Up to \$2,000	Up to 90 days in prison
Arizona	Ariz. Rev. Stat. §§ 28-857 & 28-857.01	1st conviction: At least \$250 2nd conviction within three years: At least \$750 3rd conviction and subsequent convictions within three years: At least \$1,000	2nd conviction within three years: Up to a six-month license suspension 3rd and subsequent convictions within three years: Six months to one year license suspension
Arkansas	Ark. Code. Ann. §§ 27-51-1001	\$500 to \$2,500	Up to 90 days in prison; up to 400 hours of community service; 21-day to 1-year license suspension
California	Cal. Veh. Code §§ 22454 & 22454.5	1st conviction: \$150 to \$250 2nd conviction: \$500 to \$1,000	3rd conviction within three years: One-year license suspension
Colorado	Colo. Rev. Stat. §§ 42-4-1903 & 42-4-1701(3)(a)(II)(A)	1st conviction: \$150 to \$300 2nd conviction within five years: \$300 to \$1,000	1st conviction: Possible sentence of 10 to 90 days in prison 2nd conviction within five years: Possible sentence of 10 days to 1 year in prison
Connecticut	CGS § 14-279	1st conviction: \$450 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$500 to \$1,000	2nd and subsequent convictions: Up to 30 days in prison
Delaware	Del. Code Ann. Tit. 21, § 4166	1st conviction: \$115 to \$230 2nd and subsequent convictions within three years: \$115 to \$575	1st conviction: Possible sentence of 30 to 60 days in prison; one month to one year license suspension 2nd and subsequent convictions within three years: 60 days to 6 months in prison; one month to one year license suspension

Table 4 (continued)

State	Statute	Penalties	
		Fines	Other Applicable Penalties
Florida	Fla. Stat. Ann. §§ 316.172 & 318.18(5)	At least \$200 (plus a \$65 penalty)	2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: 180 days to 1 year license suspension
Georgia	Ga. Code Ann. § 40-6-163	At least \$1,000	Up to one year in prison
Hawaii	Haw. Rev. Stat. § 291C-95	Up to \$500 (or up to \$1,000 for violations on a state highway)	Possible community service
Idaho	Idaho Code Ann. § 49-1422	1st conviction: \$300 2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: At least \$600 and up to \$1,000	2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: Up to six months in prison
Illinois	625 Ill. Comp. Stat. 5/11-1414	1st conviction: \$300 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$1,000	1st conviction: three-month license suspension 2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: one-year license suspension (and community service in an amount the court sets)
Indiana	Ind. Code §§ 9-21-12-1 & 34-28-5-4	Up to \$10,000	1st conviction: Up to 90-day license suspension 2nd and subsequent convictions: Up to one-year license suspension
Iowa	Iowa Code §§ 321.372 & 903.1; Iowa Admin. Code r. 761-615.17(321)	1st conviction: \$345 to \$930 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$430 to \$2,560	1st conviction: Up to 30 days in prison and possible 30-day license suspension or required attendance at a driver improvement program 2nd and subsequent convictions: Up to one-year in prison and possible 90-day license suspension (or 180-day suspension for 3rd and subsequent convictions)
Kansas	Kan. Stat. Ann. §§ 8-1556 & 8-2118	1st conviction: \$315 2nd conviction within five years: \$750 3rd and subsequent convictions within five years: \$1,000	

Table 4 (continued)

State	Statute	Penalties	
		Fines	Other Applicable Penalties
Kentucky	Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 189.370 & 189.990(5)	1st conviction: \$100 to \$200 2nd and subsequent convictions within three years: \$300 to \$500	1st conviction: Possible 30 to 60 days in prison 2nd and subsequent convictions within three years: Possible 60 days to 6 months in prison
Louisiana	LA. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 32:80	\$100 to \$500	Up to six months in prison and: 1st conviction: 30-day license suspension 2nd conviction: 60-day license suspension 3rd conviction: One-year license suspension
Maine	Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. 29-A, § 2308	At least \$250	2nd conviction within three years: 30-day license suspension
Maryland	Md. Code Ann., Transp. § 21-706	Up to \$1,000	
Massachusetts	Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 90, § 14	1st conviction: At least \$250 2nd conviction: \$500 to \$1,000 3rd and subsequent convictions: \$1,000 to \$2,000	2nd conviction: Six-month license suspension 3rd and subsequent convictions: One-year license suspension
Michigan	Mich. Comp. Laws § 257.682	\$100 to \$500	
Minnesota	Minn. Stat. §§ 169.444 & 609.02	At least \$500	Up to 90 days in prison
Mississippi	Miss. Code Ann. § 63-3-615	1st conviction: \$350 to \$750 2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: \$750 to \$1,500	1st conviction: Up to one-year in prison 2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: Up to one year in prison and 90-day license suspension
Missouri	Mo Rev. Stat. §§ 304.050, 304.070 & 558.011	Up to \$2,000	1st conviction: Up to one year in prison; possible 90-day license suspension 2nd and subsequent convictions: Up to one year in prison; possible 120-day license suspension

Table 4 (continued)

State	Statute	Penalties	
		Fines	Other Applicable Penalties
Montana	Mont. Code Ann. § 61-8-351	1st conviction: \$500 to \$1,000 2nd conviction: \$1,000 to \$2,000 3rd and subsequent convictions: \$3,000 to \$5,000	1st conviction: Possible community service of 50 to 100 hours 2nd conviction: Possible community service of 100 to 200 hours 3rd and subsequent convictions: Up to 30 days in prison
Nebraska	Neb. Rev. St. §§ 60-6,175 & 28-106	\$500	
Nevada	Nev. Rev. Stat. § 484B.353	1st conviction or 2nd conviction within one year: \$250 to \$500 3rd and subsequent convictions within two years of most recent conviction: Up to \$1,000	2nd conviction within one year: Six-month license suspension 3rd and subsequent convictions within two years of most recent conviction: Up to one-year license suspension
New Hampshire	N.H. Rev. Stat. § 265:54	1st conviction: \$150 plus penalty assessment 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$250 to \$1,000	2nd and subsequent convictions: Possible 30-day license suspension
New Jersey	N.J. Stat. § 39:4-128.1	1st conviction: At least \$100 2nd and subsequent convictions: At least \$250	1st conviction: Up to 15 days in prison or community service for 15 days 2nd and subsequent convictions: Up to 15 days in prison Any conviction: Possible license suspension
New Mexico	N.M. Stat. §§ 66-7-347, 66-8-7 & 66-8-116	Up to \$300 (penalty assessment is \$100)	Up to 90 days in prison
New York	N.Y. VAT Law § 1174	1st conviction: \$250 to \$400 2nd conviction within three years: \$600 to \$750 3rd and subsequent convictions, all within three years: \$750 to \$1,500	1st conviction: Up to 30 days in prison 2nd and subsequent convictions within three years: Up to 180 days in prison

Table 4 (continued)

State	Statute	Penalties	
		Fines	Other Applicable Penalties
North Carolina	N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-217	At least \$500	2nd conviction within three years: One-year license suspension 3rd conviction: Permanent license suspension
North Dakota	N.D. Cent. Code §§ 39-10-46 & 39-06.1-06	\$250	
Ohio	Ohio Rev. Code §§ 4511.75 & 4510.02	Up to \$500	Up to one-year license suspension
Oklahoma	Okla. Stat. Ann. §§ 47-11-705. 47-6-205	At least \$100 (with additional \$100 special assessment)	1st conviction: Up to one-year license suspension 2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: three-year license suspension
Oregon	Or. Rev. Stat. §§ 811.155 & 153.018	Up to \$2,000	
Pennsylvania	75 Pa. Stat. and Cons. Stat. §§ 1535 & 3345	\$250 (and a \$35 surcharge)	60-day license suspension
Rhode Island	R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-20-12	1st conviction: Up to \$300 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$300 to \$500	1st conviction: Possible up to 30-day license suspension 2nd and subsequent convictions: Possible one-year license suspension
South Carolina	S.C. Code Ann. §§ 56-5-2770 & 56-5-2780	1st conviction: At least \$500 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$2,000 to \$5,000	1st conviction: Possible 30 days in prison or community service for a minimum of 10 days 2nd and subsequent convictions: Possible 30 to 60 days in prison
South Dakota	S.D. Codified Laws §§ 32-32-6, 32-32-9 & 22-6-2	Up to \$500	Up to 30 days in prison
Tennessee	Tenn. Code. Ann. § 55-8-151	1st conviction: \$250 to \$1,000 2nd and subsequent convictions: \$500 to \$1,000	
Texas	Tex. Transp. Code § 545.066	1st conviction: \$500 to \$1,250 2nd and subsequent convictions within five years: \$1,000 to \$2,000	2nd and subsequent convictions: Up to six-month license suspension



Table 4 (continued)

State	Statute	Penalties	
		Fines	Other Applicable Penalties
Utah	Utah Code Ann. 1953 § 41-6a-1302	1st conviction: At least \$1,000 2nd conviction within five years: At least \$2,000 3rd and subsequent convictions within five years: At least \$3,000	1st conviction: 10 hours of compensatory service 2nd conviction within five years: 20 hours of compensatory service 3rd and subsequent convictions within five years: 40 hours of compensatory service  (court may order compensatory service instead of fine or portion of fine)
Vermont	Vt. Stat. Ann. Tit. 23 §§ 1075 & 2302	Up to \$1,000	
Virginia	Va. Code Ann. § 46.2-844	\$250	
Washington	Wash. Rev. Code §§ 46.61.370 & 46.63.110	Up to \$500	
West Virginia	W. Va. Code § 17C-12-7	1st conviction: Possible fine of \$500 to \$1,000 2nd conviction: \$1,000 to \$1,500 3rd and subsequent convictions: \$2,000	1st conviction: Up to six months in jail and required 60-day license suspension 2nd conviction: Up to six months in jail and required 180-day license suspension 3rd and subsequent convictions: 48 hours to 6 months in jail and one-year license suspension
Wisconsin	Wis. Stat. Ann. §§ 346.48 & 346.49	\$500 to \$1,000	
Wyoming	Wyo. Stat. §§ 31-5-507 & 31-5-1201	1st conviction: \$195 to \$745 2nd and subsequent convictions within one year: \$395 to \$995	

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