

WHAT IS THE LAW IN REGARD TO SCHOOL SPEED ZONES AND SCHOOL BUSES?

Florida Statutes, Chapter 316.1895 is entitled "**Establishment of school speed zones, enforcement; designation.**" Section 316.1895(5) states that "A school zone speed limit may not be less than 15 miles per hour except by local regulation. No school zone speed limit shall be more than 20 miles per hour in an urbanized area, as defined in Section 334.03. Such speed limits may be in force only during those times 30 minutes before, during, and 30 minutes after the periods of time when pupils are arriving at a regularly scheduled breakfast program or a regularly scheduled school session and leaving a regularly scheduled school session."

Statute 316.1895(6) states that "Permanent signs designating school zones and school zone speed limits shall be uniform in size and color, and shall have the times during which the restrictive speed limit is enforced clearly designated thereon. The Department of Transportation shall establish adequate standards for the signs."

Different types of speed limit signs are used for school zones in Florida. Some have flashers which serve the purpose of advising motorists when the school zones are in effect. When these flashers are set and used properly, they are very effective. They alert the motorist to the need for caution and slower driving when the appropriate conditions exist. A school speed limit sign without flashers, while not as helpful to the motorist, is just as legally binding as the flasher sign. Drivers are reminded to be especially alert during those hours when children are on the streets.

Florida Statutes, Chapter 316.172 is entitled "**Traffic to stop for school bus.**" This law states:

(1)(a) "Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle on or over the roads or highways of this state shall, upon approaching any school bus which displays a stop signal, bring such vehicle to a full stop while the bus is stopped, and the vehicle shall not pass the school bus until the signal has been withdrawn."

(1)(b) "Any person using, operating, or driving a vehicle that passes a school bus on the side that children enter and exit when the school bus displays a stop signal commits a moving violation, punishable as in Chapter 318 ..."

(2) "The driver of a vehicle upon a divided highway with an unpaved space of at least 5 feet, a raised median, or a physical barrier is not required to stop when traveling in the opposite direction of a school bus which is stopped in accordance with the provisions of this section."

Florida Statutes, Chapter 316 can be viewed at the web site:
<http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes/>