

TRANSPORTATION CODE

TITLE 7. VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

SUBTITLE C. RULES OF THE ROAD

CHAPTER 544. TRAFFIC SIGNS, SIGNALS, AND MARKINGS

Sec. 544.001. ADOPTION OF SIGN MANUAL FOR STATE HIGHWAYS. The Texas Transportation Commission shall adopt a manual and specifications for a uniform system of traffic-control devices consistent with this chapter that correlates with and to the extent possible conforms to the system approved by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.002. PLACING AND MAINTAINING TRAFFIC-CONTROL DEVICE. (a) To implement this subtitle, the Texas Department of Transportation may place and maintain a traffic-control device on a state highway as provided by the manual and specifications adopted under Section 544.001. The Texas Department of Transportation may provide for the placement and maintenance of the device under Section 221.002.

(b) To implement this subtitle or a local traffic ordinance, a local authority may place and maintain a traffic-control device on a highway under the authority's jurisdiction. The traffic-control device must conform to the manual and specifications adopted under Section 544.001.

(c) A local authority may not place or maintain a traffic-control device on a highway under the jurisdiction of the Texas Department of Transportation without that department's permission, except as authorized under Section 545.3561. Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 216 (H.B. 109), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 544.003. AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE THROUGH HIGHWAY AND STOP AND YIELD INTERSECTIONS. (a) The Texas Transportation Commission may:

(1) designate a state or county highway as a through highway and place a stop or yield sign at a specified entrance; or

(2) designate an intersection on a state or county highway as a stop intersection or a yield intersection and place a sign at one or more entrances to the intersection.

(b) A local authority may:

(1) designate a highway under its jurisdiction as a through highway and place a stop or yield sign at a specified entrance; or

(2) designate an intersection on a highway under its jurisdiction as a stop intersection or a yield intersection and place a sign at one or more entrances to the intersection.

(c) The stop or yield sign indicating the preferential right-of-way must:

(1) conform to the manual and specifications adopted under Section [544.001](#); and

(2) be located:

(A) as near as practicable to the nearest line of the crosswalk; or

(B) in the absence of a crosswalk, at the nearest line of the roadway.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.004. COMPLIANCE WITH TRAFFIC-CONTROL DEVICE. (a) The operator of a vehicle or streetcar shall comply with an applicable official traffic-control device placed as provided by this subtitle unless the person is:

(1) otherwise directed by a traffic or police officer; or

(2) operating an authorized emergency vehicle and is subject to exceptions under this subtitle.

(b) A provision of this subtitle requiring an official traffic-control device may not be enforced against an alleged violator if at the time and place of the alleged violation the device is not in proper position and sufficiently legible to an ordinarily observant person. A provision of this subtitle that does not require an official traffic-control device is effective

regardless of whether a device is in place.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.005. INTERFERENCE WITH TRAFFIC-CONTROL DEVICE OR RAILROAD SIGN OR SIGNAL. A person may not, without lawful authority, alter, injure, knock down, or remove or attempt to alter, injure, knock down, or remove:

(1) an official traffic-control device or railroad sign or signal;

(2) an inscription, shield, or insignia on an official traffic-control device or railroad sign or signal; or

(3) another part of an official traffic-control device or railroad sign or signal.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.0055. TRAFFIC-CONTROL SIGNAL PREEMPTION DEVICE; OFFENSE. (a) In this section, "traffic-control signal preemption device" means a device designed, intended, or used to interfere with or alter the operation of a traffic-control signal.

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (e), a person commits an offense if the person uses, sells, offers for sale, purchases, or possesses for use or sale a traffic-control signal preemption device.

(c) The possession of a traffic-control signal preemption device creates the presumption that the person possessed the device for use or sale.

(d) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

(e) This section does not apply to:

(1) a person who provides fire-fighting, law enforcement, ambulance, medical, or other emergency services in the course of providing those services;

(2) a manufacturer, wholesaler, or retailer of traffic-control signal preemption devices in the course of manufacturing, selling, providing, or transporting a traffic-control signal preemption device to a person described by Subdivision (1); or

(3) a transit vehicle operated by an authority under

Chapter 451 or 452 or a transit department under Chapter 453.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 244 (H.B. 364), Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 2005.

Sec. 544.006. DISPLAY OF UNAUTHORIZED SIGNS, SIGNALS, OR MARKINGS. (a) A person may not place, maintain, or display on or in view of a highway an unauthorized sign, signal, marking, or device that:

(1) imitates or resembles an official traffic-control device or railroad sign or signal;

(2) attempts to direct the movement of traffic; or

(3) hides from view or hinders the effectiveness of an official traffic-control device or railroad sign or signal.

(b) A person may not place or maintain on a highway, and a public authority may not permit on a highway, a traffic sign or signal bearing commercial advertising.

(c) A person may not place or maintain a flashing light or flashing electric sign within 1,000 feet of an intersection except under a permit issued by the Texas Transportation Commission.

(d) This section does not prohibit a person from placing on private property adjacent to a highway a sign that gives useful directional information and that cannot be mistaken for an official sign.

(e) A sign, signal, light, or marking prohibited under this section is a public nuisance. The authority with jurisdiction over the highway may remove that sign, signal, light, or marking without notice.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.007. TRAFFIC-CONTROL SIGNALS IN GENERAL. (a) A traffic-control signal displaying different colored lights or colored lighted arrows successively or in combination may display only green, yellow, or red and applies to operators of vehicles as provided by this section.

(b) An operator of a vehicle facing a circular green signal may proceed straight or turn right or left unless a sign prohibits the turn. The operator shall yield the right-of-way to other

vehicles and to pedestrians lawfully in the intersection or an adjacent crosswalk when the signal is exhibited.

(c) An operator of a vehicle facing a green arrow signal, displayed alone or with another signal, may cautiously enter the intersection to move in the direction permitted by the arrow or other indication shown simultaneously. The operator shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian lawfully in an adjacent crosswalk and other traffic lawfully using the intersection.

(d) An operator of a vehicle facing only a steady red signal shall stop at a clearly marked stop line. In the absence of a stop line, the operator shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. A vehicle that is not turning shall remain standing until an indication to proceed is shown. After stopping, standing until the intersection may be entered safely, and yielding right-of-way to pedestrians lawfully in an adjacent crosswalk and other traffic lawfully using the intersection, the operator may:

(1) turn right; or

(2) turn left, if the intersecting streets are both one-way streets and a left turn is permissible.

(e) An operator of a vehicle facing a steady yellow signal is warned by that signal that:

(1) movement authorized by a green signal is being terminated; or

(2) a red signal is to be given.

(f) The Texas Transportation Commission, a municipal authority, or the commissioners court of a county may prohibit within the entity's jurisdiction a turn by an operator of a vehicle facing a steady red signal by posting notice at the intersection that the turn is prohibited.

(g) This section applies to an official traffic-control signal placed and maintained at a place other than an intersection, except for a provision that by its nature cannot apply. A required stop shall be made at a sign or marking on the pavement indicating where the stop shall be made. In the absence of such a sign or marking, the stop shall be made at the signal.

(h) The obligations imposed by this section apply to an

operator of a streetcar in the same manner they apply to the operator of a vehicle.

(i) An operator of a vehicle facing a traffic-control signal, other than a freeway entrance ramp control signal or a pedestrian hybrid beacon, that does not display an indication in any of the signal heads shall stop as provided by Section 544.010 as if the intersection had a stop sign.

(j) In this section:

(1) "Freeway entrance ramp control signal" means a traffic-control signal that controls the flow of traffic entering a freeway.

(2) "Pedestrian hybrid beacon" means a pedestrian-controlled traffic-control signal that displays different colored lights successively only when activated by a pedestrian.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995. Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1325, Sec. 19.04, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 485 (H.B. 885), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 544.0075. CERTAIN TRAFFIC-ACTUATED ELECTRIC TRAFFIC-CONTROL SIGNALS. (a) This section applies only to a traffic-actuated electric traffic-control signal that consists of a traffic-control signal for which the intervals vary according to the demands of vehicular traffic as registered by a detector and that is installed and operating at an intersection.

(b) In addition to any other type of vehicle the presence of which the detector for the traffic-actuated electric traffic-control signal may register, the detector for a traffic-actuated electric traffic-control device to which this section applies must be capable of registering the presence of a motorcycle.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 219 (H.B. 1279), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 544.008. FLASHING SIGNALS. (a) The operator of a

vehicle facing a flashing red signal shall stop at a clearly marked stop line. In the absence of a stop line, the operator shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. In the absence of a crosswalk, the operator shall stop at the place nearest the intersecting roadway where the operator has a view of approaching traffic on the intersecting roadway. The right to proceed is subject to the rules applicable after stopping at a stop sign.

(b) The operator of a vehicle facing a flashing yellow signal may proceed through an intersection or past the signal only with caution.

(c) This section does not apply at a railroad crossing.
Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.009. LANE-DIRECTION-CONTROL SIGNALS. If a lane-direction-control signal is placed over an individual lane of a highway, a vehicle may travel in a lane over which a green signal is shown but may not enter or travel in a lane over which a red signal is shown.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.010. STOP SIGNS AND YIELD SIGNS. (a) Unless directed to proceed by a police officer or traffic-control signal, the operator of a vehicle or streetcar approaching an intersection with a stop sign shall stop as provided by Subsection (c).

(b) If safety requires, the operator of a vehicle approaching a yield sign shall stop as provided by Subsection (c).

(c) An operator required to stop by this section shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. In the absence of a crosswalk, the operator shall stop at a clearly marked stop line. In the absence of a stop line, the operator shall stop at the place nearest the intersecting roadway where the operator has a view of approaching traffic on the intersecting roadway.

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 544.011. LANE USE SIGNS. If, on a highway having more

than one lane with vehicles traveling in the same direction, the Texas Department of Transportation or a local authority places a sign that directs slower traffic to travel in a lane other than the farthest left lane, the sign must read "left lane for passing only." Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 628, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997. Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 62, Sec. 17.08, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 544.012. NOTIFICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC TRAFFIC MONITORING SYSTEM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Photographic traffic monitoring system" means a system that:

(A) consists of a camera and vehicle sensor installed to work in conjunction with an electrically operated traffic-control signal; and

(B) is capable of producing one or more recorded images that depict the license plate attached to a motor vehicle that is not operated in compliance with the instructions of the traffic-control signal.

(2) "Recorded image" means an image that:

(A) depicts a motor vehicle; and

(B) is automatically recorded on a photograph or digital image.

(b) This section applies only to a municipality that pursuant to an ordinance of the municipality employs a photographic traffic monitoring system to enforce compliance with the instructions of traffic-control signals in the municipality.

(c) The municipality shall install signs along each roadway that leads to an intersection at which a photographic traffic monitoring system is in active use. The signs must be at least 100 feet from the intersection or located according to standards established in the manual adopted by the Texas Transportation Commission under Section 544.001, be easily readable to any operator approaching the intersection, and clearly indicate the presence of a photographic monitoring system that records violations that may result in the issuance of a notice of violation and the imposition of a monetary penalty.

(d) A municipality that fails to comply with Subsection (c) may not impose or attempt to impose a civil or administrative penalty against a person, including the owner of a motor vehicle or an operator, for a failure to comply with the instructions of a traffic-control signal located at the applicable intersection.

(e) Subsection (d) does not prohibit a peace officer from arresting or issuing a citation and notice to appear to a person whom the officer observes to have failed to comply with the instructions of a traffic-control signal located at the intersection.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 653 (H.B. 1052), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 544.013. CHANGEABLE MESSAGE SIGN SYSTEM. (a) In this section, "changeable message sign" means a sign that conforms to the manual and specifications adopted under Section 544.001. The term includes a dynamic message sign.

(b) The Texas Department of Transportation in cooperation with local governments shall actively manage a system of changeable message signs located on highways under the jurisdiction of the department to mitigate traffic congestion by providing current information to the traveling public, including information about traffic incidents, weather conditions, road construction, and alternative routes when applicable.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1345 (S.B. 1420), Sec. 53, eff. September 1, 2011.