

CHAPTER 35**(SB 174)**

AN ACT relating to slow-moving vehicles.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. KRS 189.940 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) Except as provided in KRS 189.920, the speed limitations set forth in the Kentucky Revised Statutes do not apply to emergency vehicles:
 - (a) When responding to emergency calls; or
 - (b) To police vehicles when in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law; or
 - (c) To ambulances when transporting a patient to medical care facilities; and
 - (d) The driver thereof is giving the warning required by subsection (5)(a) and (b) of this section.

No portion of this subsection shall be construed to relieve the driver of the duty to operate the vehicle with due regard for the safety of all persons using the street or highway.

- (2) The driver of an emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call, or of a police vehicle in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, or of an ambulance transporting a patient to a medical care facility and giving the warning required by subsection (5) of this section, upon approaching any red light or stop signal or any stop sign shall slow down as necessary for safety to traffic, but may proceed past such red or stop light or stop sign with due regard for the safety of persons using the street or highway.
- (3) The driver of an emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call, or of a police vehicle in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, or of an ambulance transporting a patient to a medical care facility and giving warning required by subsection (5) of this section, may drive on the left side of any highway or in the opposite direction of a one-way street provided the normal lanes of traffic are blocked and he *or she* does so with due regard for the safety of all persons using the street or highway.
- (4) The driver of an emergency or public safety vehicle may stop or park his vehicle upon any street or highway without regard to the provisions of KRS 189.390 and 189.450, provided that, during the time the vehicle is parked at the scene of an emergency, at least one (1) warning light is in operation at all times.
- (5) The driver of an emergency vehicle desiring the use of any option granted by subsections (1) through (3) of this section shall give warning in the following manner:
 - (a) By illuminating the vehicle's warning lights continuously during the period of the emergency; and
 - (b) By continuous sounding of the vehicle's siren, bell, or exhaust whistle; unless
 - (c) The vehicle is an ambulance and the driver is of the opinion that sounding of the siren, bell, or exhaust whistle would be detrimental to the victim's health. In the event the driver of an ambulance elects not to use the siren, bell, or exhaust whistle he *or she* shall not proceed past red lights or drive in the opposite direction on a one-way street or in oncoming lanes of traffic unless no other vehicles are within five hundred (500) feet of the front of the ambulance. The driver shall not extinguish the warning lights during the period of the emergency.
- (6) No driver or operator of any emergency or public safety or other vehicle shall use the warning lights or siren, bell, or exhaust whistle of his *or her* vehicle for any purposes or under any circumstances other than those permitted by KRS 189.910 to 189.950.
- (7) KRS 189.910 to 189.950 does not relieve the driver of any emergency or public safety vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and property upon the highway.
- (8) *The driver of a public safety vehicle which also meets the definition of a slow-moving vehicle under KRS 189.810 and any vehicle acting as an escort for the slow-moving vehicle, may travel at a speed that may impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, if:*
 - (a) *The vehicle is being operated in an official capacity;*

(b) Operation of the vehicle is in compliance with all state and local government policies; and

(c) It is necessary for the safe operation of the vehicle.

➔Section 2. KRS 189.390 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) As used in this section, unless the context requires otherwise:
 - (a) "Business district" means the territory contiguous to and including a highway if, within six hundred (600) feet along the highway, there are buildings in use for business or industrial purposes that occupy three hundred (300) feet of frontage on one (1) side or three hundred (300) feet collectively on both sides of the highway;
 - (b) "Residential district" means the territory contiguous to and including a highway not comprising a business district if the property on the highway for a distance of three hundred (300) feet or more is improved with residences or residences and buildings in use for business; and
 - (c) "State highway" means a highway or street maintained by the Kentucky Department of Highways.
- (2) An operator of a vehicle upon a highway shall not drive at a greater speed than is reasonable and prudent, having regard for the traffic and for the condition and use of the highway.
- (3) The speed limit for motor vehicles on state highways shall be as follows, unless conditions exist that require lower speed for compliance with subsection (2) of this section, or the secretary of the Transportation Cabinet establishes a different speed limit in accordance with subsection (4) of this section:
 - (a) Sixty-five (65) miles per hour on interstate highways and parkways;
 - (b) Fifty-five (55) miles per hour on all other state highways; and
 - (c) Thirty-five (35) miles per hour in a business or residential district.
- (4) (a) If the secretary of transportation determines, upon the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation, that any speed limit is greater or less than is reasonable or safe under the conditions found to exist at any intersection, or upon any part of a state highway, the secretary of transportation may establish by official order a reasonable and safe speed limit at the location. The secretary shall not increase any speed limit established by subsection (3) of this section in excess of sixty-five (65) miles per hour, except that, notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3)(a) of this section, the secretary may increase the speed limit on any of the following segments of highway to seventy (70) miles per hour:
 1. Interstate 24 (entire length);
 2. Interstate 64 from Interstate 264 to the West Virginia state line;
 3. Interstate 65 from Interstate 264 to the Tennessee state line;
 4. Interstate 69 (entire length);
 5. Interstate 71 from Interstate 264 to Interstate 275;
 6. Interstate 75 from the Tennessee state line to Interstate 275;
 7. Interstate 165 (entire length);
 8. The Audubon Parkway (entire length);
 9. The Julian M. Carroll Purchase Parkway (entire length);
 10. The Bert T. Combs Mountain Parkway (entire length);
 11. The Bert T. Combs Mountain Parkway Extension (entire length);
 12. The Edward T. Breathitt Pennyrile Parkway (entire length);
 13. The Wendell H. Ford Western Kentucky Parkway (entire length);
 14. The Louie B. Nunn Cumberland Expressway (entire length);
 15. The Martha Layne Collins Bluegrass Parkway (entire length); and
 16. The William H. Natcher Parkway (entire length).

- (b) In a highway work zone, the Transportation Cabinet may temporarily reduce established speed limits without an engineering or traffic investigation. A speed limit established under this paragraph shall become effective when and where posted. The Transportation Cabinet shall post signs notifying the traveling public of the temporary highway work zone maximum speed limit. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to prevent the Transportation Cabinet from using moveable or portable speed limit signs in highway work zones.
- (5) (a) A city or a county may by ordinance establish speed limits within its own jurisdiction, except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection.
- (b) The alteration of speed limits on state highways within a city or a county shall not be effective until the alteration has been approved by the secretary of transportation. The secretary shall not approve any alteration that could increase any speed limit established by subsection (3)(b) or (c) of this section in excess of fifty-five (55) miles per hour.
- (c) If a county determines, upon the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation and study, that it is unsafe to park motor vehicles on or along any highway, other than a state highway, within the unincorporated areas of the county, or that in any business district the congestion of traffic justifies a reasonable limitation on the length of time any one (1) motor vehicle is permitted to park in such district so as to reduce the congestion, the fiscal court may by ordinance establish "no parking" areas on the highway, or limit the length of time any motor vehicle may be parked in any business district.
- (6) The speed limit for motor vehicles in an off-street parking facility offered for public use, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be fifteen (15) miles per hour.
- (7) *Except as outlined in Section 1 of this Act*, a person shall not drive a motor vehicle at a speed that will impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, except when reduced speed is necessary for safe operation or in compliance with law.
- (8) In every charge for a violation of any speed limit specified in this section, the warrant or citation shall specify the speed at which the defendant is alleged to have driven, and the lawful speed limit applicable at the location where the violation is charged to have occurred.

Signed by Governor March 25, 2022.