

FACT SHEET



BUS REGISTRATION

PURPOSE:

This fact sheet outlines the usage for the 5 different bus registration plates and the school vehicle registration plate issued by the Department. The plates are in the new-style colors, blue, fading into white, fading into yellow, and are identified by words and a two-letter designator.

PLATE TYPES:

The Apportioned Plate

This plate is issued to buses or school buses which have Federal Motor Carrier authority and travel on scheduled routes into or through member jurisdictions of the International Registration Plan (IRP). NOTE: Buses used exclusively for charter are exempt from the IRP. The fees paid to the "base state" are divided proportionally among all of the states through which the fleet travels. This plate may be identified by the letters "BN" plus five digits and has the word "Apportioned" at the bottom.



The Mass Transit Plate

This plate is issued to buses (not school buses) that are owned or operated by a qualifying urban mass transportation system, regardless of the individual use of each bus. These tags are issued for municipal and authority buses as well as those owned by private companies. Private companies must hold a certificate with the Public Utility Commission or municipal, port, or transportation authority. Plates that are issued to the municipalities or other government agencies receive a permanent registration, and plates that are issued to private companies receive an annual registration which expires May 31 each year. The mass transit plate is identified by the letters "MT" plus five digits and has the words "Mass Transit" at the bottom.



The Standard Bus Plate

This plate is issued to those buses or school buses which do not travel into apportioned states on scheduled routes, but operate under Public Utility Commission (PUC) Authority, Federal Motor Carrier Authority or Authority under The Allegheny County Port Authority. Although its registrants operate under PUC Authority, they may, on occasion, be leased for operations which do not require PUC Authority. At those times, the authority numbers must be concealed on the side of the bus. Buses with these tags may also be used as school buses. This plate is identified by the letters "BA" plus five digits and has the word "Bus" at the bottom. This plate may not be used on 11-15 passenger vehicles used to transport school children unless the vehicle was titled and registered as a bus prior to March 1, 1993.



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The School Bus Plate

This plate is issued only to school buses which are used exclusively for school activities. The registrant may not use the bus for general transportation activities that are not directly related to school functions, or as a for-hire bus. If the bus is owned by a school district, the registration is permanent. All others must be renewed annually. The plate is identified by the letters "SC" plus five digits and the words "School Bus" at the bottom.



The School Vehicle Plate

This plate is issued to vehicles designed to carry no more than ten passengers, including the driver, and used only for the transportation of school students while registered by or under contract with a school district, private or parochial school.

This also includes vehicles having chartered, group and party rights under the PUC and used for the transportation of school children to or from public, private or parochial school activities. This vehicle must be renewed annually. The plate is identified by the letters "SV" plus five digits and the words "School Vehicle" at the bottom. This plate may not be used on 11-15 passenger vehicles used to transport school children unless the vehicle was titled and registered as a bus prior to March 1, 1993.



The Omnibus Plate

This plate is issued to vehicles that do not have PUC Authority and, therefore, are generally not used as a for-hire bus. These vehicles are primarily owned by individuals, churches, or other charitable organizations. These would not be long-term leases, but rather trip leases. A copy of the trip lease should be carried in the vehicle. The plate is identified by the letters "OB" plus five digits and has the word "Omnibus" at the bottom. This plate may not be used on 11-15 passenger vehicles used to transport school children unless the vehicle was titled and registered as a bus prior to March 1, 1993.



School Buses - School Vehicles

Vehicles as Designed by Manufacturer *1	Plate Type	Restricted Use	Compensation
School Bus 11-72 Passengers	School Bus (SC) Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	Yes No No No No	Yes Yes Yes N/A Yes *2
Bus 16-72 Passengers	Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	No No No No	Yes Yes N/A Yes *2
Bus 11-15 Passengers *3	Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	No *3 No No No	Yes Yes N/A Yes *2
Passenger 1-10 Passengers *2	Passenger School Vehicle Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	No Yes No No No No	No Yes Yes Yes N/A Yes *2
Passenger 11-15 Passengers *2, *4	Bus (BA), (BN) Municipal (MG) Official Use - State (PA) Omnibus (OB)	No No No No	Yes Yes Yes Yes

*1 - Removal or blocking of seats does not reduce design capacity

*2 - With lease or contract for compensation

*3 - Only if registered as a bus prior to 3-1-93

*4 - Cannot be used to transport school children

School Buses - School Vehicles - Buses

Type of Plate Issued	Vehicle Use		
	School Bus (I) 11 or more passengers including the driver	School Vehicles 10 or less passengers including the driver	Bus for Hire (2)
School Bus (SC) (Titled as a School Bus)	Yes (3), (6)	No	No
Bus (BA)	Yes (7)	Yes (2)	Yes (3)
Mass Transit (MT)	No	No	Yes (3)
Apportioned (BN)	Yes (7)	No	Yes (3)
Omnibus (OB)	Yes (7)	Yes	Yes (4)
Official Use - State (PA) State Agencies or State Universities	Yes (3), (7)	Yes	No
Municipal (MG) Municipalities or School Districts	No	Yes (3) <i>School Districts Only</i>	No

1. Vehicle operated as school buses must comply with Chapter 171 of the PA Code. Vehicles operated as school buses must be designed and built as school buses. (PA. C.S. Title 75 Section 4553)
2. For Hire: as determined by the PUC.
3. Principal use determines plate use. (PA. C.S. Title 75 Section 1304)
4. With lease, paratransit authority, or school contract.
5. Cannot be used for compensation.
6. Restricted use. (PA. C.S. Title 75 Section 1343)
7. Must comply with all Federal and State school bus equipment requirements. If it does not it is not a school bus. (Chapter 171) (PA. C.S. Title 75 Section 1343) (49 C.F.R., Part 571)