

K-12 Fleet Technology Compliance

**What Transportation Directors Need to Know About GPS,
Cameras, and Enforcement**



The Compliance Landscape

Key Takeaway

There is no federal mandate requiring GPS tracking or cameras on school buses. Requirements vary significantly by state and are changing rapidly.

Most technology adoption remains voluntary at the district level. States are more likely to authorize enforcement tools (like stop-arm cameras) than mandate specific technology.

Three Areas to Understand:

Stop-Arm Camera Enforcement

Can your state issue citations based on camera footage?

GPS Tracking Requirements

Does your state or city require real-time bus tracking?

Federal ELD Exemptions

Do logging requirements apply to your operation?

Stop-Arm Camera Enforcement

Current Status (As of July 2025)

26 states now authorize school districts or local governments to use stop-arm cameras to capture and issue citations for violations.

This number has grown significantly in recent years as more states pass enabling legislation.

States That Recently Authorized Stop-Arm Cameras:

- Nevada (July 2025)
- Massachusetts (January 2025)
- Oregon (2024)
- Michigan (April 2025)
- Georgia strengthened existing law (July 2024)

What "Authorized" Means

Authorization does not mean mandatory. It means:

- Districts CAN install stop-arm cameras
- Camera footage CAN be used to issue citations
- Local law enforcement or vendors CAN process violations

Each state's law differs on fine amounts, who receives revenue, data retention requirements, and burden of proof.

States with Active Stop-Arm Programs

Large-scale deployments exist in:

- New York (statewide authorization, major programs in NYC, Suffolk, Rockland counties)
- Florida (Hillsborough, Miami-Dade, Broward counties)
- Maryland (statewide program with AI integration)
- Georgia (statewide, mandatory on new buses under Addy's Law)
- Virginia (Northern Virginia very active)
- Texas (Houston, Dallas, San Antonio areas)

If Your State Is Not Listed

Legislation is introduced regularly. Check with:

- Your state DOT
- State school transportation association
- National Conference of State Legislatures ([ncsl.org](https://www.ncsl.org))

GPS Tracking Requirements

Current Status

Statewide GPS mandates for school buses are rare. Most GPS adoption is voluntary at the district level, driven by operational benefits rather than legal requirements.

Verified GPS Mandates:

New York City

- **Mandate:** Yes (since 2019)
- **Law:** STOP (Student Transportation Oversight Package)
- **Requirement:** All school buses under DOE contract must have GPS tracking operational whenever students are present
- **Parent access:** Real-time location must be available to authorized parents

Other Jurisdictions

No other statewide GPS mandates were verified as of this writing. Some states may have:

- Requirements tied to specific funding programs
- Mandates for special education transportation only
- Local/county-level requirements

Why Most Districts Adopt GPS Voluntarily

Districts implement GPS tracking because of operational benefits:



Real-time visibility reduces parent calls



Route optimization saves fuel and time



Incident response improves with location data



Parent apps increase satisfaction

The lack of mandates does not mean GPS is unnecessary. It means the decision is yours to make based on your district's needs.

Camera Requirements (Interior/Exterior)

Stop-Arm Cameras vs. Interior Cameras

These are different systems with different purposes:

Stop-arm cameras face outward to capture vehicles that illegally pass

Interior cameras monitor student behavior and driver safety

Some states mandate one, both, or neither

Camera Requirements:



Georgia (Addy's Law - July 2024)

- Requires stop-arm cameras on all school buses
- Strengthened penalties for passing violations (\$1,000 minimum fine)
- Camera footage can be used for enforcement



West Virginia

- Requires forward-facing and rear-facing cameras on buses purchased after July 1, 2019
- Used for stop-arm enforcement



New York

- Stop-arm camera program authorized statewide
- Law extended through 2029
- 2025 budget strengthened evidentiary standards

Other States

Many states fund or encourage cameras without mandating them. Check your state's:

- School transportation regulations
- State funding requirements
- Recent legislative sessions

Federal ELD Requirements

Do ELD Rules Apply to School Buses?

Generally, no. Most school bus operations are exempt from the federal Electronic Logging Device (ELD) mandate.

Why School Buses Are Usually Exempt:

The ELD mandate applies to commercial motor vehicle drivers who must keep Records of Duty Status (RODS). School bus drivers are typically exempt because:

- 1** They operate within 150 air-miles of their base location
- 2** They don't meet Hours of Service (HOS) thresholds
- 3** School transportation is not considered "for-hire" commercial transport in most cases

When ELD Rules Might Apply:

- Charter trips or field trips exceeding 150 air-miles
- Drivers who also perform other commercial driving work
- Contracted operations that cross state lines regularly

Best Practice

Consult your state DOT and legal counsel to confirm your specific situation. Document your exemption rationale in writing.

Data Privacy Considerations

Student Data Protection

Any technology that tracks students creates data privacy obligations. Consider:

FERPA (Federal)

- Student transportation records may be considered education records
- Limits who can access student location data
- Requires appropriate data security

State Privacy Laws

- California, Illinois, and other states have additional student data protections
- Some states restrict how long footage can be retained
- Parent notification may be required

Camera Footage Retention

- States with stop-arm programs often specify retention periods
- Nevada's 2025 law requires deletion after 90 days
- Check your state's requirements before implementing

Best Practices:

- Develop clear data retention policies
- Limit access to authorized personnel
- Notify parents about tracking and camera systems
- Document compliance procedures

Compliance Trends

What's Changing

01

More stop-arm camera authorizations

Momentum is growing. Expect more states to pass enabling legislation.

02

Stricter penalties

States are increasing fines and adding points for passing violations. Georgia now has \$1,000 minimum fines.

03

AI integration

Maryland and others are adding AI to automatically detect violations, reducing manual review.

04

Data requirements

New laws increasingly specify retention periods, privacy protections, and reporting requirements.

05

Funding tied to technology

Some states are beginning to tie transportation funding to technology adoption.

What This Means For You

Even if your state doesn't mandate technology today, that may change. Districts that adopt GPS and camera systems now will be ahead of compliance requirements and better positioned for funding opportunities.

Action Steps

Before You Buy:



Check current state law

Check current state law for any technology mandates



Verify data retention

Verify data retention requirements if cameras are involved



Confirm privacy notification

Confirm privacy notification requirements for parents



Review funding programs

Review any funding programs that might offset costs



Document compliance

Document your compliance rationale

Resources to Consult:

- Your state Department of Education transportation office
- State school transportation association
- National Conference of State Legislatures ([ncsl.org/transportation](https://www.ncsl.org/transportation))
- National Association for Pupil Transportation ([napt.org](https://www.napt.org))
- Your district's legal counsel

Questions to Ask Vendors:

- Does your system meet [state] data retention requirements?
- How is student data protected?
- Can you provide compliance documentation?
- What happens to our data if we cancel service?



Stay Informed

Compliance requirements change frequently. This guide provides a starting point, but you should verify current regulations before making decisions.

Need Help Understanding Your State's Requirements?

We track compliance changes and can help you understand what applies to your district.

[Schedule a Discovery Call](#)

Disclaimer: This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Requirements change frequently. Always verify current regulations with appropriate state and federal authorities before making compliance decisions.