

STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

In the Matter of the Proposed Adoption
of Rules of the State Department of
Public Safety Governing Method of
Identification and Signals for School
Safety Patrol.

STATEMENT OF NEED AND REASONABLENESS

The above captioned rules are amendments to existing rules of the Department of Public Safety. The existing rules, entitled METHOD OF IDENTIFICATION AND SIGNALS FOR SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL IN MINNESOTA were originally adopted and approved March 4, 1976 and since then have not been amended.

The purpose of these rules is to comply with Minnesota Statutes, section 126.15, which requires the Commissioner of Public Safety to prescribe a uniform method of identification and signals to be used by school safety patrols throughout the state. These rules establish uniformity which readily identifies members of the school safety patrol and provides uniformity in procedures to be followed and equipment which is used. The proposed amendments to these rules predominantly update and clarify language and change certain requirements to provide greater safety for both the patrol member and children. The substantive provisions of the amendments to each rule are discussed below.

11 MCAR SS 1.0065 thru 1.0071 removes all sexist language from the rules because school patrol members include both girls and boys (1.0068A, B, C, D, E, F; 1.0069A; 1.0070A 2, 3; 1.0070B 1, 2, 3).

11 MCAR S 1.0066 L makes it clearer and encourages patrol members to use longer poles at intersections on wide streets. Previously only the minimum length of poles was addressed. With more crossings being protected on multi-lane roadways, the need for extended or longer poles is necessary for visibility by drivers who are traveling in lanes other than the right hand lanes closest to the shoulder or curb. Traffic lane widths have increased from 10 to 12 feet in recent years making the crossing distance on multi four-lane roadway with parking lanes a minimum of 64 feet. Although there has never been a traffic death in Minnesota at an intersection protected by a school safety patrol member, the hazards are increased on wider roadways unless all drivers can readily see the patrol flags.

11 MCAR 1.0067A mandates the wearing of the specified uniform. Previously this was discretionary. The purpose is to prescribe a uniform method of identification. Since the Sam Browne belt, vest or sash are part of the identification they should be worn and visible to the drivers of vehicles at all times patrol members are on duty.

11 MCAR S 1.0068 D, F & I allows the school patrol member to step off the curb with one foot. Most patrol members have a tendency to do this in order to be more visible to motorists. The change would allow such action without being in violation of the rule. There have been no reports that this adds danger to the patrol members on duty. It does in fact increase their sense of adding protection. However, stepping beyond the parked vehicle endangers patrol members because they are then in the traffic lane and this is prohibited. Adequate visibility and better protection is possible by not going beyond the parked vehicles.

11 MCAR S 1.0068 H requires at least two patrol members to be present at all guarded intersections. There is too much responsibility to expect one child to guard an intersection safely with wider streets and increased traffic volume. Furthermore, drivers of vehicles regularly look to their right to observe devices that control or regulate traffic. Children crossing at intersections protected by school safety patrols are confident of their safety when directed to cross by a patrol member, however, it is impossible for one patrol member to adequately observe traffic approaching from four directions, control the children, and assure a safe crossing. With two safety patrol members at every intersection it is no longer necessary to have old section (I).

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