

SCHOOL SPEED ZONES

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Roadway safety is critical, especially for vulnerable roadway users such as students walking to or from school. One solution to make it safer for students to get to and from school is the creation of school speed zones. Established in locations where students walk along or across roadways during school hours, a school speed zone provides lower posted speed limits to reduce the chances of traffic crashes with students.

State Laws Related to School Speed Zones

PennDOT is responsible for approving and establishing all school zones, as per Title 75, Section 6122 and Title 67, Section 212.5. Title 75 (PA Vehicle Code) Section 3365 states that when passing through a school zone no person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than 15 miles per hour (mph). An official traffic-control device shall indicate the beginning and end of each school zone to traffic approaching in each direction. Establishment of a school zone, including its location and hours of operation, shall be approved by PennDOT on all roads.

Regulations Related to School Speed Zones

Title 67, Chapter 212 (<https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/067/chapter212/chap212toc.html>), Section 212.1, Page A-5 states that a school zone is:

a portion of a highway that at least partially abuts a school property or extends beyond the school property line that is used by student(s) to walk to or from school or to or from a school bus pick-up or drop-off location at a school.

Title 67, Chapter 212, Section 212.501, Page F-2 states the limits of a school zone may extend beyond the school property lines to improve the sight distance or to encompass a school crosswalk, except that the length of the zone may not be greater than 1,600 feet.

School Speed Zone Request Procedure

Title 67, Chapter 212, Section 212.1 outlines how to establish a school zone. To establish a school zone, local authorities shall:

1. Prepare a drawing showing the locations where students walk along or across roadways that are adjacent to school property. Type 5 maps (<https://www.pennidot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Maps/Town%20Boro%20City%20Maps/Pages/default.aspx>) are useful to document the crossings and routes.
2. Identify the hours that students are going to or from school, verified by school officials.
3. Document the data in PennDOT form TE 112. [TE-112.pdf](#) (state.pa.us) (<https://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Forms/TE-112.pdf>).
4. Submit the form to your PennDOT District Office (<https://www.pennidot.pa.gov/pennidotway/pages/article.aspx?post=40>).



Speed limits can be lowered for a school zone for the times of the day when students would be traveling to and from school. This is a school speed limit sign assembly. Photo: PennDOT LTAP

School Speed Zones Traffic Control Devices

When PennDOT issues the school speed zone permit, the required traffic control devices (signs, markings, flashers, and other devices) will be shown on the permit. In accordance with Chapter 212, local authorities are responsible to purchase, install, and maintain any approved signs and other devices listed on the permit. The devices installed in the field must match the permit. If you wish to change or add devices, you must update the permit working with PennDOT.

The standard for school area signs and plaques is defined in the current edition of PennDOT Publication 236, Handbook of Approved Signs. The school speed limit sign assembly may include the School (S4-3P) panel, the Speed Limit (R2-1) sign, the When Flashing (S4-4P) sign, and the Speed Limit Sign Beacon. These signs shall be used in accordance with department regulations to indicate the speed limit where a 15 mph reduced school speed limit begins.

If a 15 mph school speed limit zone has been established, a School (S1-1) sign shall be installed in advance of the first school speed limit sign assembly that is encountered in each direction as traffic approaches the reduced school speed limit zone.

The downstream end of a posted school speed limit zone shall be identified with an End School Speed Limit (S5-3) sign posted on the right side of the roadway.

Safety is critical for vulnerable road users, especially school students. School speed zones are one of many safety countermeasures your municipality can implement for students that walk or bike to school. For more information on school speed zones register for an LTAP class on the website at <https://gis.pennndot.pa.gov/ltap/> and you can always call LTAP at 1-800-FOR-LTAP for free assistance.