



Transportation and Motor Vehicles

During the 2020 legislative session, the General Assembly considered several measures related to transportation funding, commercial vehicles, motor vehicles, and other transportation issues. For further information, an overview of Colorado's transportation system may be found on the General Assembly website: [Colorado Transportation System](#).

Transportation Funding

In 2018, the General Assembly passed [Senate Bill 18-001](#), which required that a ballot issue seeking approval for the issuance of transportation revenue anticipation notes (TRANs) be submitted to state voters. In 2019, the passage of [Senate Bill 19-263](#) delayed this ballot measure until the 2020 election. [House Bill 20-1376](#) further delays the measure until the 2021 election and decreases the maximum amount of revenue bonds issued if the ballot measure passes from \$1.83 billion to \$1.337 billion.

The bill also changes the amount of transfers to the State Highway Fund from the General Fund. If voters do not approve bonds in the 2021 general election, \$50 million will transfer annually to the State Highway Fund from the General Fund from 2023 to 2040. If voters approve the bonds, an additional \$29.5 million will transfer from the General Fund to the State Highway Fund each year between 2023 and 2040.

Finally, the bill changes the lease purchase agreements for state buildings authorized in [Senate Bill 17-267](#). Some of these funds related to these lease purchase agreements are used for transportation purposes. The estimated annual state-funded payments on the leases may not exceed \$150 million.

Motor Vehicles

Registration. [Senate Bill 20-056](#) creates an exception for certain surplus military vehicles to the definition of "off highway vehicle" in order for these vehicles to be titled, registered, and driven on public roadways. The exception is for a surplus military vehicle used to fight fires or mitigate the risk of wildfires, such as removing debris. To qualify, the vehicle must be leased or owned by a municipality, county, or fire protection district.

Licenses and IDs. [Senate Bill 20-035](#) makes the state's county-based motor vehicle pilot kiosk program permanent and expands the driver license, registration, and titling services that may be available through the kiosks. For instance, ID cards may now be available through the kiosks, and mobile telephone and web-based services, as well as the option to use kiosks in a county where a person is not a resident, could be added. The bill also removes the \$30 limit on kiosk transactions.

Commercial Vehicles. [Senate Bill 20-011](#) creates the commercial vehicle identification number (VIN) inspection program, allowing

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transportation organizations to perform inspections. Organizations must hire qualified inspectors with knowledge of the VIN process and standards and who do not have a conviction involving property crimes in the last 10 years. The inspection may not cost more than \$25. The Colorado State Patrol (CSP) administers the program, including rulemaking and issuing, denying, or revoking permits to perform the VIN inspection.

Effective July 1, 2020, *House Bill 20-1030* allows owners of overweight vehicle fleets with various axle combinations to apply for one permit annually, rather than several permits. The permit costs \$2,000, in addition to a \$35 fee per vehicle in the fleet. The new law includes divisible loads or loads exceeding legal weight limits for vehicle fleets with:

- quad axle groupings,
- combinations with a trailer that has two or three axles; and
- both quad axle groupings and combinations with a trailer that has two or three axles.

In addition, *Senate Bill 20-118* transfers the responsibility to issue permits for the transportation of hazardous and nuclear materials by motor vehicles to the Department of Transportation (CDOT), from the Public Utilities Commission, effective January 1, 2021. The department will issue annual and single use permits upon approval of an application and submission of a fee and documents, such as proof of insurance.

Safety. Under current law, drivers are required to move over or slow down when passing a stopped emergency vehicle, tow truck, or public utility vehicle. *House Bill 20-1145* sets specific speed limits that drivers must follow while passing one of these vehicles. When the speed limit is lower than 45 miles per hour (mph), drivers must slow down to 25 mph or

lower. When the speed limit is 45 mph or more, drivers must slow down to 20 mph lower than the limit. Drivers may need to reduce their speeds further depending on driving conditions, such as weather or traffic. CDOT and the CSP will create an education campaign for the public.

Finally, *House Bill 20-1178* directs CDOT to determine on which rural highways the speed limit may increase without endangering public safety. Current Colorado law, road conditions, shoulders, vulnerable road users, and road aspect (straight versus curved) must also be considered. Preferred highways for increased speed limit include those that:

- connect rural towns to one or more cities;
- provide access to one or more schools; and
- have a relatively high volume of traffic.

The final report must be complete by March 1, 2021.

Other Modes of Transportation

Electric cars. *Senate Bill 20-167* allows electric vehicle manufacturers to sell directly to consumers. The manufacturer may only make electric vehicles and have no other franchise dealers selling the same make or model of car in Colorado. Previously, motor vehicle manufacturers could not control a dealership, with some exceptions.

Bikes. *Senate Bill 20-061* creates a new Class A traffic offense for failing to yield to a bicyclist or other authorized lane user. Effective July 1, 2020, drivers must yield to bicyclists or other authorized users in a bicycle lane. A bicycle lane is part of the road designated with striping, signage, or other pavement markings for the exclusive use of bicyclists and other authorized users. Violating the law is careless driving if there is a crash or injury.