

New Hampshire Statutes

TITLE XXI: MOTOR VEHICLES

259:5 Automobile Utility Trailer. – "Automobile utility trailer" shall mean any trailer suitable for towing by a passenger automobile or pick-up truck, and which is being towed by such vehicle for the purpose of hauling personal property intrastate or interstate; excepting such trailers when hauling livestock.

259:37-a Full Trailer. – "Full trailer" shall mean any trailer being towed behind a semi-trailer as part of a combination vehicle also known as twin-trailers or "double bottoms."

259:98 Semi-trailer. – "Semi-trailer" shall mean a vehicle of the trailer type so designed and used in conjunction with a self-propelled vehicle that a considerable part of its own weight or that of its load rests upon and is carried by the towing vehicle, and not including a pair or set of wheels commonly used as an implement for other purposes than transportation, provided, however, that the word "semi-trailer" shall not include any vehicle as described in this section if used exclusively for agricultural purposes unless said vehicle be of the type constructed specifically to be towed by a tractor-type truck.

259:113 Trailer. – "Trailer" shall mean any vehicle without motive power designed for carrying property or passengers wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a self-propelled vehicle, except those running exclusively on snow or on stationary tracks and vehicles used exclusively for agricultural purposes.

266:1-b Inspection of Trailers, Exemptions. –

I. Notwithstanding any law or rule to the contrary, trailers of 10,000 pounds or less gross vehicle weight rating not used in interstate commerce shall be exempt from periodic vehicle inspection requirements, but shall be subject as other vehicles are to periodic roadside inspection by law enforcement officers to determine that they have the proper required and fully functional safety equipment.

II. The director may authorize properly qualified dealers holding utility dealer registrations to inspect trailers of more than 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, to determine whether they are fit to be driven, and to issue inspection stickers, under rules adopted for this purpose pursuant to RSA 541-A. This section shall not apply to full trailers as defined in RSA 259:37-a or semi-trailers as defined in RSA 259:98, and shall not prohibit other official inspection stations from inspecting trailers.

266:10 Height. –

I. No vehicle, except a vehicle transporting manufactured housing or modular buildings, whose total height including load is greater than 13 feet, 6 inches, shall be driven on the ways of this state.

II. No manufactured housing or modular building whose total height is greater than 14 feet, 6 inches, shall be transported on the ways of this state. Transport of a manufactured housing unit or modular building that exceeds a total height of 13 feet, 6 inches shall require a non-police escort,

equipped in accordance with any rules established by the department of transportation under RSA 21-L:12-a.

266:11 Length. – The driving on ways of this state of any vehicle or combination of vehicles whose length including load exceeds the limitations of this section is hereby prohibited:

I. For a single unit vehicle or a bus, 45 feet including front and rear bumpers.

II. For a semi-trailer in a truck-tractor, semi-trailer combination, 53 feet, except that any semi-trailer in excess of 48 feet shall not be operated if:

(a) The distance between the kingpin and the centerline of the rear axle or the midpoint of a tandem axle of the semi-trailer exceeds 41 feet;

(b) The semi-trailer is not equipped with a rear end protection device of substantial construction consisting of a continuous lateral beam extending to within 4 inches of the lateral extremities of the semi-trailer and located not more than 22 inches from the surface as measured with the semi-trailer empty and on a level surface; and

(c) Operated on highways other than any interstate or defense highway, unless such highway is designated by the commissioner. This shall not preclude movements on highways other than interstate, defense and designated highways for a distance of one mile to terminals, points of pickup and delivery, fuel, repairs, food or rest using the most direct, practical route except if the commissioner precludes such travel for specific safety reasons on individual routes. The commissioner may designate other roads or highways in the state where semi-trailers 53 feet in length or less may be operated. The commissioner may adopt rules pursuant to RSA 541-A to impose further requirements or limitations on semi-trailers of this length.

III. For a semi-trailer or full trailer being driven as part of a combination vehicle with 2 trailing units, 28 feet.

IV. For manufactured housing or modular building transport, 110 feet including the transport vehicle.

266:11-a Length Exceptions. – Notwithstanding the provisions of RSA 266:11, it shall be lawful to drive on the ways of this state:

I. A vehicle or a combination of vehicles that exceeds the length limits in RSA 266:11 if such vehicle or combination is transporting poles, logs, timbers or metal in a case in which the load is not readily divisible and such overhang does not interfere with steering the vehicle.

II. A conventional automobile transporter combination not in excess of 65 feet exclusive of a 3-foot front overhang and a 4-foot rear overhang.

III. Saddlemount plus fullmount combinations not in excess of 65 feet.

IV. A stinger-steered automobile transporter combination not in excess of 75 feet exclusive of a 3-foot front and 4-foot rear overhang.

V. An emergency fire fighting vehicle.

266:12 Width. – The driving on ways of this state of any vehicle whose width including load exceeds the limitations of this section is hereby prohibited:

I. A vehicle in excess of 102 inches in width.

II. A passenger type vehicle that is carrying a load which extends over the sides of the vehicle beyond the line of the fenders on the left side or extends more than 6 inches beyond the line of the fenders on the right side of the vehicle.

266:63 Trailer Breakaway Safety Chains. – Every trailer or semi-trailer including farm and agricultural vehicles shall have, in addition to the tow-bar or coupling device, a safety chain or cable to prevent breakaway from the towing vehicle. Each chain or cable shall have an ultimate strength at least equal to the gross weight of the trailer and load being towed. Chains or cables shall be connected to the towed and towing vehicle to prevent the tow-bar from dropping to the ground in the event the tow-bar fails. This provision shall not apply to:

I. Truck-tractor and semi-trailer units equipped with fifth wheel mechanisms;

II. Full trailers being driven as part of a truck-tractor, semi-trailer, or full trailer unit when the full trailer is attached to the semi-trailer by means of a converter dolly or fifth wheel mechanism;

III. Trailers being towed by motorcycles; or

IV. Farm implements towed behind farm tractors, if the hitch pin used to connect such implement to the tractor has an ultimate strength at least equal to the gross weight of the implement and is fitted with a safety clip or lock mechanism to prevent dislodging of the pin by vibration or shock in conformance to standards of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers.