

Railroad Crossings

Information compiled January 20, 2005

The Question: Do you make ANY EXCEPTIONS to the rule of stopping at railroad crossings.

Ben Franklin Transit says ... Ben Franklin Transit buses, including para-transit vans only stop at railroad crossings that DO NOT have electronic signals and/or gates. Years ago, our buses use to stop at all R/R tracks and the cities (Richland, Pasco, & Kennewick) complained of our buses impeding traffic flow and requested we refrain from this practice. In our community, there are only a few locations where the R/R tracks don't have signals/gates where we do require a full stop and safety check.

Clallam Transit says ... We make absolutely no exceptions here, primarily because we have not had rail service in Clallam County since 1985.

Grant Transit says ... We do not make any exceptions to the rules for stopping at railroad crossings. I would need more information about why there would be exceptions.

Grays Harbor Transit says ... We stop at all uncontrolled RR-Crossings. If they are controlled with cross-bars we do not stop.

Jefferson Transit says ... Currently there are no RR crossings in Jefferson County or in any adjoining county in which Jefferson Transit operates. Therefore we have not developed any exceptions to stopping.

Mason Transit says ... MTA vehicles are not required to stop at regulated railroad crossings. If the railroad crossing is not equipped with gates that lower or flashing lights to warn of train activity, drivers are instructed to approach with caution and stop as appropriate to look both ways before crossing.

Pullman Transit says ... Our paratransit vehicles do not stop at railroad crossings. Fixed route buses stop at all crossings, no exceptions.

Skagit Transit says ... Both our fixed route and Dial-A-Ride coaches are required to stop at all non-designated railroad crossings. No exceptions. Roger should be able to give details on how he trains the drivers for compliance.

Twin Transit says ... We do not make any exceptions for stopping at railroad crossings: all fixed route and Paratransit buses stop. The reason for no exceptions is the highly safety sensitive nature of the issue.

Valley Transit says ... We follow the Washington State laws regarding railroad crossings. We only stop at uncontrolled railroad crossings. If the crossing is controlled with a red flashing light or with a gate that comes down, we do not stop.

RCW 46.61.350 says ... Certain vehicles must stop at all railroad grade crossings -- Exceptions.

(1) The driver of any motor vehicle carrying passengers for hire, other than a passenger car, or of any school bus or private carrier bus carrying any school child or other passenger, or of any vehicle carrying explosive substances or flammable liquids as a cargo or part of a cargo, before crossing at grade any track or tracks of a railroad, shall stop such vehicle within fifty feet but not less than fifteen feet from the nearest rail of such railroad and while so stopped shall listen and look in both directions along such track for any approaching train, and for signals indicating the approach of a train, except as hereinafter provided, and shall not proceed until he can do so safely. After stopping as required herein and upon proceeding when it is safe to do so the driver of any said vehicle shall cross only in such gear of the vehicle that there will be no necessity for changing gears while traversing such crossing, and the driver shall not shift gears while crossing the track or tracks.

(2) This section shall not apply at:

(a) Any railroad grade crossing at which traffic is controlled by a police officer or a duly authorized flagman;

(b) Any railroad grade crossing at which traffic is regulated by a traffic control signal;

(c) Any railroad grade crossing protected by crossing gates or an alternately flashing light signal intended to give warning of the approach of a railroad train;

(d) Any railroad grade crossing at which an official traffic control device as designated by the utilities and transportation commission pursuant to RCW 81.53.060 gives notice that the stopping requirement imposed by this section does not apply.

[1977 c 78 § 1; 1975 c 62 § 31; 1970 ex.s. c 100 § 7; 1965 ex.s. c 155 § 48.]

NOTES:

Severability -- 1975 c 62: See note following RCW 36.75.010.

WAC 204-32-090 says **Stops at railroad crossings.**

(1) The driver of any private carrier bus, carrying any passenger, before crossing **at** grade any track or tracks of a **railroad**, shall stop such vehicle within fifty feet but no less than fifteen feet from the nearest rail of such **railroad** and while so stopped shall listen and look in both directions along such track for any approaching train, and for signals indicating the approach of a train and shall not proceed until he can do so safely.

(2) After **stopping** as required and upon proceeding when it is safe to do so the driver of any private carrier bus shall cross only in such gear of the vehicle that there will be no necessity for changing gears while traversing such crossing and the driver shall not shift gears while crossing the track or tracks.

(3) No stop need be made **at** any such crossing where a police officer or a traffic-control signal directs traffic to proceed.

[Order 7001, § 204-32-090, filed 6/10/70, effective 7/15/70.]