

## TITLE 15

### MOTOR VEHICLES, TRAFFIC AND PARKING<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAPTER

1. MISCELLANEOUS.
2. EMERGENCY VEHICLES.
3. SPEED LIMITS.
4. TURNING MOVEMENTS.
5. STOPPING AND YIELDING.
6. PARKING.
7. ENFORCEMENT.
8. IMPOUNDMENT OF VEHICLES.

#### CHAPTER 1

#### MISCELLANEOUS<sup>2</sup>

#### SECTION

- 15-101. Motor vehicle requirements.
- 15-102. Driving on streets closed for repairs, etc.
- 15-103. Careless driving.
- 15-104. One-way streets.
- 15-105. Unlaned streets.
- 15-106. Laned streets.
- 15-107. Yellow lines.
- 15-108. Miscellaneous traffic-control signs, etc.
- 15-109. General requirements for traffic-control signs, etc.
- 15-110. Unauthorized traffic-control signs, etc.
- 15-111. Presumption with respect to traffic-control signs, etc.
- 15-112. School safety patrols.

---

<sup>1</sup>Municipal code reference

Excavations and obstructions in streets, etc.: title 16.

<sup>2</sup>State law references

Under Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-10-307, the following offenses are exclusively state offenses and must be tried in a state court or a court having state jurisdiction: driving while intoxicated or drugged, as prohibited by Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-10-401; failing to stop after a traffic accident, as prohibited by Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-10-101, et seq.; driving while license is suspended or revoked, as prohibited by Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-7-116; and drag racing, as prohibited by Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-10-501.

- 15-113. Driving through funerals or other processions.
- 15-114. Clinging to vehicles in motion.
- 15-115. Riding on outside of vehicles.
- 15-116. Backing vehicles.
- 15-117. Projections from the rear of vehicles.
- 15-118. Causing unnecessary noise.
- 15-119. Vehicles and operators to be licensed.
- 15-120. Passing.
- 15-121. Damaging pavements.
- 15-122. Bicycle riders, etc.
- 15-123. Compliance with financial responsibility law required.
- 15-124. Adoption of state traffic statutes.
- 15-125. Use of engine compression braking devices.
- 15-126. Heavy truck traffic.

**15-101. Motor vehicle requirements.** It shall be unlawful for any person to operate any motor vehicle within the corporate limits unless such vehicle is equipped with properly operating muffler, lights, brakes, horn, and such other equipment as is prescribed and required by Tennessee Code Annotated, title 55, chapter 9. (1980 Code, § 9-101)

**15-102. Driving on streets closed for repairs, etc.** Except for necessary access to property abutting thereon, no motor vehicle shall be driven upon any street that is barricaded or closed for repairs or other lawful purpose. (1980 Code, § 9-106)

**15-103. Careless driving.** Every person operating a vehicle upon the streets within the City of Portland shall drive the same in a careful and prudent manner, having regard for the width, grade, curves, corners, traffic and use of these streets and all other attendant circumstances, so as not to endanger the life, limb or property of any person. Failure to drive in such manner shall constitute careless driving and a violation of this chapter.

Work zones in or near city streets/roads are to be marked for the safety of drivers and workers in accordance with state law. Failure to heed "Caution," "Slow," "Workers Ahead," speed limit restriction and/or other cautionary signage shall be considered careless driving and in violation of this chapter, and drivers will be subject to citation for the same. (1980 Code, § 9-107, as replaced by Ord. #17-79, Feb. 2018, and amended by Ord. #19-37, May 2019 *Ch12\_12-06-21*)

**15-104. One-way streets.** On any street for one-way traffic with posted signs indicating the authorized direction of travel at all intersections offering access thereto, no person shall operate any vehicle except in the indicated direction. (1980 Code, § 9-109)

**15-105. Unlaned streets.** 1. Upon all unlaned streets of sufficient width, a vehicle shall be driven upon the right half of the street except:

(a) When lawfully overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction.

(b) When the right half of a roadway is closed to traffic while under construction or repair.

(c) Upon a roadway designated and signposted by the municipality for one-way traffic.

(2) All vehicles proceeding at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall be driven as close as practicable to the right hand curb or edge of the roadway, except when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction or when preparing for a left turn. (1980 Code, § 9-110)

**15-106. Laned streets.** On streets marked with traffic lanes, it shall be unlawful for the operator of any vehicle to fail or refuse to keep his vehicle within the boundaries of the proper lane for his direction of travel except when lawfully passing another vehicle or preparatory to making a lawful turning movement.

On two (2) lane and three (3) lane streets, the proper lane for travel shall be the right hand lane unless otherwise clearly marked. On streets with four (4) or more lanes, either of the right hand lanes shall be available for use except that traffic moving at less than the normal rate of speed shall use the extreme right hand lane. On one-way streets either lane may be lawfully used in the absence of markings to the contrary. (1980 Code, § 9-111)

**15-107. Yellow lines.** On streets with a yellow line placed to the right of any lane line or center line, such yellow line shall designate a no-passing zone, and no operator shall drive his vehicle or any part thereof across or to the left of such yellow line except when necessary to make a lawful left turn from such street. (1980 Code, § 9-112)

**15-108. Miscellaneous traffic-control signs, etc.**<sup>1</sup> It shall be unlawful for any pedestrian or the operator of any vehicle to violate or fail to comply with any traffic-control sign, signal, marking, or device placed or erected by the state or the city unless otherwise directed by a police officer.

It shall be unlawful for any pedestrian or the operator of any vehicle to willfully violate or fail to comply with the reasonable directions of any police officer. (1980 Code, § 9-113)

---

<sup>1</sup>Municipal code references

Stop signs, yield signs, flashing signals, pedestrian control signs, traffic control signals generally: §§ 15-505--15-509.

**15-109. General requirements for traffic-control signs, etc.** All traffic-control signs, signals, markings, and devices shall conform to the latest revision of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways,<sup>1</sup> published by the U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and shall, so far as practicable, be uniform as to type and location throughout the city. This section shall not be construed as being mandatory but is merely directive. (1980 Code, § 9-114)

**15-110. Unauthorized traffic-control signs, etc.** No person shall place, maintain, or display upon or in view of any street, any unauthorized sign, signal, marking, or device which purports to be or is an imitation of or resembles an official traffic-control sign, signal, marking, or device or railroad sign or signal, or which attempts to control the movement of traffic or parking of vehicles, or which hides from view or interferes with the effectiveness of any official traffic-control sign, signal, marking, or device or any railroad sign or signal. (1980 Code, § 9-115)

**15-111. Presumption with respect to traffic-control signs, etc.** When a traffic-control sign, signal, marking, or device has been placed, the presumption shall be that it is official and that it has been lawfully placed by the proper municipal authority. All presently installed traffic-control signs, signals, markings and devices are hereby expressly authorized, ratified, approved and made official. (1980 Code, § 9-116)

**15-112. School safety patrols.** All motorists and pedestrians shall obey the directions or signals of school safety patrols when such patrols are assigned under the authority of the chief of police and are acting in accordance with instructions; provided, that such persons giving any order, signal, or direction shall at the time be wearing some insignia and/or using authorized flags for giving signals. (1980 Code, § 9-117)

**15-113. Driving through funerals or other processions.** Except when otherwise directed by a police officer, no driver of a vehicle shall drive between the vehicles comprising a funeral or other authorized procession while they are in motion and when such vehicles are conspicuously designated. (1980 Code, § 9-118)

**15-114. Clinging to vehicles in motion.** It shall be unlawful for any person traveling upon any bicycle, motorcycle, coaster, sled, roller skates, or any

---

<sup>1</sup>This manual may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

other vehicle to cling to, or attach himself or his vehicle to any other moving vehicle upon any street, alley, or other public way or place. (1980 Code, § 9-120)

**15-115. Riding on outside of vehicles.** It shall be unlawful for any person to ride, or for the owner or operator of any motor vehicle being operated on a street, alley, or other public way or place, to permit any person to ride on any portion of such vehicle not designed or intended for the use of passengers. This section shall not apply to persons engaged in the necessary discharge of lawful duties nor to persons riding in the load-carrying space of trucks. (1980 Code, § 9-121)

**15-116. Backing vehicles.** The driver of a vehicle shall not back the same unless such movement can be made with reasonable safety and without interfering with other traffic. (1980 Code, § 9-122)

**15-117. Projections from the rear of vehicles.** Whenever the load or any projecting portion of any vehicle shall extend beyond the rear of the bed or body thereof, the operator shall display at the end of such load or projection, in such position as to be clearly visible from the rear of such vehicle, a red flag being not less than twelve (12) inches square. Between one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) hour after sunset and one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) hour before sunrise, there shall be displayed in place of the flag a red light plainly visible under normal atmospheric conditions at least two hundred (200) feet from the rear of such vehicle. (1980 Code, § 9-123)

**15-118. Causing unnecessary noise.** It shall be unlawful for any person to cause unnecessary noise by unnecessarily sounding the horn, "racing" the motor, or causing the "screeching" or "squealing" of the tires on any motor vehicle. (1980 Code, § 9-124)

**15-119. Vehicles and operators to be licensed.** It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motor vehicle in violation of the "Tennessee Motor Vehicle Title and Registration Law" or the "Uniform Motor Vehicle Operators' and Chauffeurs' License Law." (1980 Code, § 9-125)

**15-120. Passing.** Except when overtaking and passing on the right is permitted, the driver of a vehicle passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction shall pass to the left thereof at a safe distance and shall not again drive to the right side of the street until safely clear of the overtaken vehicle. The driver of the overtaken vehicle shall give way to the right in favor of the overtaking vehicle on audible signal and shall not increase the speed of his vehicle until completely passed by the overtaking vehicle.

When the street is wide enough, the driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass upon the right of another vehicle which is making or about to make a left turn.

The driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass another vehicle proceeding in the same direction either upon the left or upon the right on a street of sufficient width for four (4) or more lanes of moving traffic when such movement can be made in safety.

No person shall drive off the pavement or upon the shoulder of the street in overtaking or passing on the right.

When any vehicle has stopped at a marked crosswalk or at an intersection to permit a pedestrian to cross the street, no operator of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall overtake and pass such stopped vehicle.

No vehicle operator shall attempt to pass another vehicle proceeding in the same direction unless he can see that the way ahead is sufficiently clear and unobstructed to enable him to make the movement in safety. (1980 Code, § 9-126)

**15-121. Damaging pavements.** No person shall operate or cause to be operated upon any street of the city any vehicle, motor propelled or otherwise, which by reason of its weight or the character of its wheels, tires, or track is likely to damage the surface or foundation of the street. (1980 Code, § 9-119)

**15-122. Bicycle riders, etc.** Every person riding or operating a bicycle, motorcycle, or motor driven cycle shall be subject to the provisions of all traffic ordinances, rules, and regulations of the city applicable to the driver or operator of other vehicles except as to those provisions which by their nature can have no application to bicycles, motorcycles, or motor driven cycles.

No person operating or riding a bicycle, motorcycle, or motor driven cycle shall ride other than upon or astride the permanent and regular seat attached thereto, nor shall the operator carry any other person upon such vehicle other than upon a firmly attached and regular seat thereon.

No bicycle, motorcycle, or motor driven cycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped.

No person operating a bicycle, motorcycle, or motor driven cycle shall carry any package, bundle, or article which prevents the rider from keeping both hands upon the handlebar.

No person under the age of sixteen (16) years shall operate any motorcycle or motor driven cycle while any other person is a passenger upon said motor vehicle.

All motorcycles and motor driven cycles operated on public ways within the corporate limits shall be equipped with crash bars approved by the state's commissioner of safety.

Each driver of a motorcycle or motor driven cycle and any passenger thereon shall be required to wear on his head a crash helmet of a type approved by the state's commissioner of safety.

Every motorcycle or motor driven cycle operated upon any public way within the corporate limits shall be equipped with a windshield of a type

approved by the state's commissioner of safety, or, in the alternative, the operator and any passenger on any such motorcycle or motor driven cycle shall be required to wear safety goggles of a type approved by the state's commissioner of safety for the purpose of preventing any flying object from striking the operator or any passenger in the eyes.

It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or ride on any vehicle in violation of this section and it shall also be unlawful for any parent or guardian to knowingly permit any minor to operate a motorcycle or motor driven cycle in violation of this section. (1980 Code, § 9-127)

**15-123. Compliance with financial responsibility law required.**

(1) Every vehicle operated within the corporate limits must be in compliance with the financial responsibility law.

(2) At the time the driver of a motor vehicle is charged with any moving violation under title 55, chapters 8 and 10, parts 1-5, chapter 50; any provision in this title of this municipal code; or at the time of an accident for which notice is required under Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-10-106, the officer shall request evidence of financial responsibility as required by this section. In case of an accident for which notice is required under Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-10-106, the officer shall request such evidence from all drivers involved in the accident, without regard to apparent or actual fault.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "financial responsibility" means:

(a) Documentation, such as the declaration page of an insurance policy, an insurance binder, or an insurance card from an insurance company authorized to do business in Tennessee, stating that a policy of insurance meeting the requirements of the Tennessee Financial Responsibility Law of 1977, compiled in Tennessee Code Annotated, chapter 12, title 55, has been issued;

(b) A certificate, valid for one (1) year, issued by the commissioner of safety, stating that a cash deposit or bond in the amount required by the Tennessee Financial Responsibility Law of 1977, compiled in Tennessee Code Annotated, chapter 12, title 55, has been paid or filed with the commissioner, or has qualified as a self insurer under Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-12-111; or

(c) The motor vehicle being operated at the time of the violation was owned by a carrier subject to the jurisdiction of the Department of Safety or the Interstate Commerce Commission, or was owned by the United States, the state of Tennessee or any political subdivision thereof, and that such motor vehicle was being operated with the owner's consent.

(4) Civil offense. It is a civil offense to fail to provide evidence of financial responsibility pursuant to this ordinance. Any violation of this ordinance is punishable by a civil penalty of up to fifty dollars (\$50.00). The civil penalty prescribed by this ordinance shall be in addition to any other penalty prescribed by the laws of this state or by the city's municipal code of ordinances.

(5) Evidence of compliance after violation. On or before the court date, the person charged with a violation of this section may submit evidence of compliance with this section in effect at the time of the violation. If the court is satisfied that compliance was in effect at the time of the violation, the charge of failure to provide evidence of financial responsibility may be dismissed. (as added by Ord. #02-10, March 2002, amended by Ord. #02-37, Nov. 2002, and replaced by Ord. #09-59, Dec. 2009)

**15-124. Adoption of state traffic statutes.** By the authority granted under Tennessee Code Annotated, § 16-18-302, the City of Portland adopts by reference as if fully set forth in this section, the "Rules of the Road," as codified in Tennessee Code Annotated, §§ 55-8-101 through 55-8-131, and §§ 55-8-133 through 55-8-180. Additionally, the City of Portland adopts Tennessee Code Annotated, §§ 55-4-101 through 55-4-133, §§ 55-4-135 through 55-4-137, §§ 55-8-181 through 55-8-191, §§ 55-8-193, §§ 55-8-199, §§ 55-9-601 through 55-9-606, § 55-12-139, § 55-21-108, and § 55-50-351, by reference as if fully set forth in this section. (as added by Ord. #02-14, May 2002, and replaced by Ord. #19-46, May 2019 *Ch12\_12-06-21*)

**15-125. Use of engine compression braking devices.** (1) All truck tractor and semi-trailers operating within the City of Portland shall conform to the visual exhaust system inspection requirements, 40 CFR 202.22, of the Interstate Motor Carriers Noise Emission Standards.

(2) A motor vehicle does not conform to the visual exhaust system inspection requirements referenced in (1) of this section if inspection of the exhaust system of the motor carrier vehicle discloses that the system:

(a) Has a defect that adversely affects sound reduction, such as exhaust gas leaks or alteration or deterioration of muffler elements. (Small traces of soot on flexible exhaust pipe sections shall not constitute a violation.);

(b) Is not equipped with either a muffler or other noise dissipative device, such as a turbocharger (supercharger driven by exhaust by gases); or

(c) Is equipped with a cut out, bypass, or similar device, unless such device is designed as an exhaust gas driven cargo unloading system.

(3) Violations of this section shall subject the offender to a fine of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per offense. (as added by Ord. #06-84, Jan. 2007)

**15-126. Heavy truck traffic.** (1) As used in this section, the term "truck" shall mean any vehicle equipped with three (3) or more axles.

(2) Unless otherwise posted, it shall be unlawful for any truck fitting this description to operate in the left-hand lane, on roads, streets or highways with two (2) lanes allowing for movement in the same direction, except when the truck is actually preparing for a left turn or avoiding a hazardous condition.



(3) The city may designate specific roads and lanes that either prohibit or allow trucks. Where truck usage has been so designated and indicated as such by proper signage, it shall be unlawful for any truck to operate in any lanes or on any roads or streets other than as designated.

(4) Any person driving, or in charge, or in control of a "truck," as defined in the preceding section when upon roads, streets or lanes other than those designated as truck routes or allowed in this code, shall be prepared to present for inspection by police officers the log book, weight slips, delivery slips, or other written evidence of the destination and point of origin to justify the presence of the restricted vehicle on a street other than a designated truck route or lane.

(5) All trucks must obey the height, width, length and weight restrictions for all areas within the city.

(6) If any designated truck route, or portion thereof, shall be under repair or otherwise temporarily out of use, restricted vehicles shall use other temporary truck routes as may be designated by the city. (as added by Ord. #19-37, May 2019 *Ch12\_12-06-21*)

## CHAPTER 2

### EMERGENCY VEHICLES

#### SECTION

15-201. Authorized emergency vehicles defined.

15-202. Operation of authorized emergency vehicles.

15-203. Following emergency vehicles.

15-204. Running over fire hoses, etc.

**15-201. Authorized emergency vehicles defined.** Authorized emergency vehicles shall be fire department vehicles, police vehicles, and such ambulances and other emergency vehicles as are designated by the chief of police. (1980 Code, § 9-102)

**15-202. Operation of authorized emergency vehicles.** (1) The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call, or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, or when responding to but not upon returning from a fire alarm, may exercise the privileges set forth in this section, subject to the conditions herein stated.

(2) The driver of an authorized emergency vehicle may park or stand, irrespective of the provisions of this title; proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down to ascertain that the intersection is clear; exceed the maximum speed limit and disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions so long as he does not endanger life or property.

(3) The exemptions herein granted for an authorized emergency vehicle shall apply only when the driver of any such vehicle while in motion sounds an audible signal by bell, siren, or exhaust whistle and when the vehicle is equipped with at least one (1) lighted lamp displaying a red light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of such vehicle, except that an authorized emergency vehicle operated as a police vehicle need not be equipped with or display a red light visible from in front of the vehicle.

(4) The foregoing provisions shall not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others. (1980 Code, § 9-103)

**15-203. Following emergency vehicles.** No driver of any vehicle shall follow any authorized emergency vehicle apparently travelling in response to an emergency call closer than five hundred (500) feet or drive or park such vehicle

within the block where fire apparatus has stopped in answer to a fire alarm.  
(1980 Code, § 9-104)

**15-204. Running over fire hoses, etc.** It shall be unlawful for any person to drive over any hose lines or other equipment of the fire department except in obedience to the direction of a fireman or policeman. (1980 Code, § 9-105)

**CHAPTER 3****SPEED LIMITS****SECTION**

15-301. In general.

15-302. At intersections.

15-303. In school zones.

15-304. In congested areas.

**15-301. In general.** It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or drive a motor vehicle upon any highway or street at a rate of speed in excess of thirty (30) miles per hour except where official signs have been posted indicating other speed limits, in which cases the posted speed limit shall apply. (1980 Code, § 9-201)

**15-302. At intersections.** It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or drive a motor vehicle through any intersection at a rate of speed in excess of fifteen (15) miles per hour unless such person is driving on a street regulated by traffic-control signals or signs which require traffic to stop or yield on the intersecting streets. (1980 Code, § 9-202)

**15-303. In school zones.** It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or drive a motor vehicle at a rate of speed in excess of fifteen (15) miles per hour when passing a school during recess or while children are going to or leaving school during its opening or closing hours. (1980 Code, § 9-203)

**15-304. In congested areas.** It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or drive a motor vehicle through any congested area at a rate of speed in excess of any posted speed limit when such speed limit has been posted by authority of the city. (1980 Code, § 9-204)

## CHAPTER 4

### TURNING MOVEMENTS

#### SECTION

15-401. Generally.

15-402. Right turns.

15-403. Left turns on two-way roadways.

15-404. Left turns on other than two-way roadways.

15-405. U-turns.

**15-401. Generally.** No person operating a motor vehicle shall make any turning movement which might affect any pedestrian or the operation of any other vehicle without first ascertaining that such movement can be made in safety and signaling his intention in accordance with the requirements of the state law.<sup>1</sup> (1980 Code, § 9-301)

**15-402. Right turns.** Both the approach for a right turn and a right turn shall be made as close as practicable to the right hand curb or edge of the roadway. (1980 Code, § 9-302)

**15-403. Left turns on two-way roadways.** At any intersection where traffic is permitted to move in both directions on each roadway entering the intersection, an approach for a left turn shall be made in that portion of the right half of the roadway nearest the center lines thereof and by passing to the right of the intersection of the center lines of the two roadways. (1980 Code, § 9-303)

**15-404. Left turns on other than two-way roadways.** At any intersection where traffic is restricted to one direction on one or more of the roadways, the driver of a vehicle intending to turn left at any such intersection shall approach the intersection in the extreme left hand lane lawfully available to traffic moving in the direction of travel of such vehicle and after entering the intersection the left turn shall be made so as to leave the intersection, as nearly as practicable, in the left hand lane lawfully available to traffic moving in such direction upon the roadway being entered. (1980 Code, § 9-304)

**15-405. U-turns.** U-turns are prohibited. (1980 Code, § 9-305)

---

<sup>1</sup>State law reference

Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-8-143.

## CHAPTER 5

### STOPPING AND YIELDING

#### SECTION

- 15-501. Upon approach of authorized emergency vehicles.
- 15-502. When emerging from alleys, etc.
- 15-503. To prevent obstructing an intersection.
- 15-504. At railroad crossings.
- 15-505. At "stop" signs.
- 15-506. At "yield" signs.
- 15-507. At traffic-control signals generally.
- 15-508. At flashing traffic-control signals.
- 15-509. At pedestrian control signals.
- 15-510. Stops to be signaled.

**15-501. Upon approach of authorized emergency vehicles.**<sup>1</sup> Upon the immediate approach of an authorized emergency vehicle making use of audible and/or visual signals meeting the requirements of the laws of this state, the driver of every other vehicle shall immediately drive to a position parallel to, and as close as possible to, the right hand edge or curb of the roadway clear of any intersection and shall stop and remain in such position until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, except when otherwise directed by a police officer. (1980 Code, § 9-401)

**15-502. When emerging from alleys, etc.** The drivers of all vehicles emerging from alleys, parking lots, driveways, or buildings shall stop such vehicles immediately prior to driving onto any sidewalk or street. They shall not proceed to drive onto the sidewalk or street until they can safely do so without colliding or interfering with approaching pedestrians or vehicles. (1980 Code, § 9-402)

**15-503. To prevent obstructing an intersection.** No driver shall enter any intersection or marked crosswalk unless there is sufficient space on the other side of such intersection or crosswalk to accommodate the vehicle he is operating without obstructing the passage of traffic in or on the intersecting street or crosswalk. This provision shall be effective notwithstanding any traffic-control signal indication to proceed. (1980 Code, § 9-403)

---

<sup>1</sup>Municipal code reference

Special privileges of emergency vehicles: title 15, chapter 2.

**15-504. At railroad crossings.** Any driver of a vehicle approaching a railroad grade crossing shall stop within not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail of such railroad and shall not proceed further while any of the following conditions exist:

(1) A clearly visible electrical or mechanical signal device gives warning of the approach of a railroad train.

(2) A crossing gate is lowered or a human flagman signals the approach of a railroad train.

(3) A railroad train is approaching within approximately fifteen hundred (1500) feet of the highway crossing and is emitting an audible signal indicating its approach.

(4) An approaching railroad train is plainly visible and is in hazardous proximity to the crossing. (1980 Code, § 9-404)

**15-505. At "stop" signs.** The driver of a vehicle facing a "stop" sign shall bring his vehicle to a complete stop immediately before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection or, if there is no crosswalk, then immediately before entering the intersection, and shall remain standing until he can proceed through the intersection in safety. (1980 Code, § 9-405)

**15-506. At "yield" signs.** The drivers of all vehicles shall yield the right of way to approaching vehicles before proceeding at all places where "yield" signs have been posted. (1980 Code, § 9-406)

**15-507. At traffic-control signals generally.** Traffic-control signals exhibiting the words "Go," "Caution," or "Stop," or exhibiting different colored lights successively one at a time, or with arrows, shall show the following colors only and shall apply to drivers of vehicles and pedestrians as follows:

(1) Green alone, or "Go":

(a) Vehicular traffic facing the signal may proceed straight through or turn right or left unless a sign at such place prohibits such turn. But vehicular traffic, including vehicles turning right or left, shall yield the right-of-way to other vehicles and to pedestrians lawfully within the intersection or an adjacent crosswalk at the time such signal is exhibited.

(b) Pedestrians facing the signal may proceed across the roadway within any marked or unmarked crosswalk.

(2) Steady yellow alone, or "Caution":

(a) Vehicular traffic facing the signal is thereby warned that the red or "Stop" signal will be exhibited immediately thereafter, and such vehicular traffic shall not enter or be crossing the intersection when the red or "Stop" signal is exhibited.

(b) Pedestrians facing such signal shall not enter the roadway unless authorized so to do by a pedestrian "Walk" signal.

(3) Steady red alone, or "Stop":

(a) Vehicular traffic facing the signal shall stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection or, if none, then before entering the intersection and shall remain standing until green or "Go" is shown alone.

(b) Pedestrians facing such signal shall not enter the roadway unless authorized so to do by a pedestrian "Walk" signal.

(4) Steady red with green arrow:

(a) Vehicular traffic facing such signal may cautiously enter the intersection only to make the movement indicated by such arrow but shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians lawfully within a crosswalk and to other traffic lawfully using the intersection.

(b) Pedestrians facing such signal shall not enter the roadway unless authorized so to do by a pedestrian "Walk" signal.

(5) In the event an official traffic-control signal is erected and maintained at a place other than an intersection, the provisions of this section shall be applicable except as to those provisions which by their nature can have no application. Any stop required shall be made at a sign or marking on the pavement indicating where the stop shall be made, but in the absence of any such sign or marking the stop shall be made a vehicle length short of the signal. (1980 Code, § 9-407)

**15-508. At flashing traffic-control signals.** (1) Whenever an illuminated flashing red or yellow signal is used in a traffic sign or signal placed or erected in the city it shall require obedience by vehicular traffic as follows:

(a) Flashing red (stop signal). When a red lens is illuminated with intermittent flashes, drivers of vehicles shall stop before entering the nearest crosswalk at an intersection or at a limit line when marked, or if none, then before entering the intersection, and the right to proceed shall be subject to the rules applicable after making a stop at a stop sign.

(b) Flashing yellow (caution signal). When a yellow lens is illuminated with intermittent flashes, drivers of vehicles may proceed through the intersection or past such signal only with caution.

(2) This section shall not apply at railroad grade crossings. Conduct of drivers of vehicles approaching railroad grade crossings shall be governed by the rules set forth in § 15-504 of this title. (1980 Code, § 9-408)

**15-509. At pedestrian control signals.** Wherever special pedestrian control signals exhibiting the words "Walk" or "Wait" or "Don't Walk" have been placed or erected by the city, such signals shall apply as follows:

(1) "Walk." Pedestrians facing such signal may proceed across the roadway in the direction of the signal and shall be given the right-of-way by the drivers of all vehicles.



(2) "Wait or Don't Walk." No pedestrian shall start to cross the roadway in the direction of such signal, but any pedestrian who has partially completed his crossing on the walk signal shall proceed to the nearest sidewalk or safety zone while the wait signal is showing. (1980 Code, § 9-409)

**15-510. Stops to be signaled.** No person operating a motor vehicle shall stop such vehicle, whether in obedience to a traffic sign or signal or otherwise, without first signaling his intention in accordance with the requirements of the state law,<sup>1</sup> except in an emergency. (1980 Code, § 9-410)

---

<sup>1</sup>State law reference  
Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-8-143.

## CHAPTER 6

### PARKING

#### SECTION

- 15-601. Illegal parking.
- 15-602. Disposition of fines.
- 15-603. Notice to appear in court.
- 15-604. Presumption of guilt in violations of parking regulations.
- 15-605. Validity of citations and warrants.
- 15-606. Applicability of chapter.
- 15-607. Generally; within commercially zoned areas; repairing parked vehicles.
- 15-608. Stopping, standing or parking prohibited in specific places; exceptions for disabled veterans and handicapped persons.
- 15-609. Obstructing traffic.
- 15-610. Parking for certain purposes prohibited.
- 15-611. Parking adjacent to schools.
- 15-612. Parking on narrow streets.
- 15-613. Stopping, standing or parking at hazardous or congested places.
- 15-614. Manner of parking generally.
- 15-615. Occupancy of more than one space.
- 15-616. Parking prohibited at all times on certain streets.
- 15-617. Reserved parking for handicapped drivers.
- 15-618. Parking on city property.

**15-601. Illegal parking.** Whenever any motor vehicle with or without a driver is found parked or stopped in violation of any of the restrictions imposed by this code, the officer finding such vehicle shall take its license number and may take any other information displayed on the vehicle which may identify its user, and shall conspicuously affix to such vehicle a citation for the driver and/or owner to answer for the violation during the hours and at a place specified in the citation. The offender may waive his right to a judicial hearing and have the charges disposed of out of court, provided that the penalty for the violation is paid within ten (10) days of the date of the citation. Penalties for violating the provisions of this section shall not exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) per citation. (1980 Code, § 9-501, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013, and amended by Ord. #19-26, March 2019 *Ch12\_12-06-21*)

**15-602. Disposition of fines.** All fines and forfeitures collected upon conviction or upon forfeiture of bail of any person charged with a violation of any of the provisions of this chapter shall be paid into the city treasury and deposited in the general fund and be expendable as provided by the city charter. (1980 Code, § 9-502, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-603. Notice to appear in court.** (1) Whenever a person is charged by a police officer or another properly designated security officer with a violation of any provision of this chapter and such person is not immediately taken before the city judge the police officer shall prepare in duplicate written notice to appear in court containing the name and address of such person, the license number of his vehicle, if any, the offense charged, and the time and place when and where such person shall appear in court.

(2) The time specified in the notice to appear must be fixed by the police officer unless the person charged obtains an alternative approved hearing date.

(3) The person charged to appear in court must sign at least one (1) copy of the written notice prepared by the police officer. The officer shall deliver a copy of the notice to the person promising to appear. Thereupon, the officer shall forthwith release the person charged from custody.

(4) It shall be unlawful for any person to violate his written promise to appear given to an officer upon the issuance of a traffic citation, regardless of the disposition of the charge for which such citation was originally issued. A written promise to appear in court may be complied with by an appearance by counsel.

(5) If any person fails to comply with a traffic citation given to such person or attached to a vehicle, or fails to make appearance pursuant to a summons directing an appearance in the municipal court, the clerk of the municipal court shall issue such process as directed by the city judge as may be authorized by the laws of the State of Tennessee. (1980 Code, § 9-503, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-604. Presumption of guilt in violations of parking regulations.** In all prosecutions for alleged violations of the provisions of this chapter relating to parking regulations, the owner of the vehicle involved shall be prima facie presumed to have been the operator or in control thereof at the time the alleged offense was committed. (1980 Code, § 9-504, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-605. Validity of citations and warrants.** No traffic citation or warrant shall be declared void by reason of the fact that the incorrect ordinance or section number was cited, so long as the complaint or warrant states a cause of action sufficient to place the defendant on notice of the charge he is called upon to defend against. (1980 Code, § 9-505, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-606. Applicability of chapter.** (1) The provisions of this chapter prohibiting the stopping, standing or parking of a vehicle shall apply at all times or at those times specified in this chapter or as indicated on official signs, except

when it is necessary to stop a vehicle to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the directions of a police officer or official traffic control device.

(2) The provisions of this chapter imposing a time limit on parking shall not relieve any person from the duty to observe other and more restrictive provisions prohibiting or limiting the stopping, standing or parking of vehicles in specified places or at specified times. (1980 Code, § 9-506, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-607. Generally; within commercially zoned areas; repairing parked vehicles.** (1) No person shall leave any motor vehicle unattended on any street without first setting the brakes thereon, stopping the motor, removing the ignition key, and turning the front wheels of such vehicle toward the nearest curb or gutter of the street.

(2) Except as hereinafter provided, every vehicle parked upon a street within the city shall be so parked that its right wheels are approximately parallel to and within eighteen inches (18") of the right edge or curb of the street.

(3) Notwithstanding anything else in this code to the contrary, no person shall park or leave a vehicle parked on any public street or alley within a commercially zoned area, or on any other public street or alley for more than forty-eight (48) consecutive hours without the prior approval of the chief of police.

(4) No person shall wash, grease or work on any vehicle, except to make repairs necessitated by an emergency, while such vehicle is parked on a public street. (1980 Code, § 9-507, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-608. Stopping, standing or parking prohibited in specific places; exceptions for disabled veterans and handicapped persons.**

(1) No person shall stop, stand or park a vehicle, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with law or the directions of a police officer or traffic control device, in any of the following places:

- (a) On a sidewalk;
- (b) In front of a public or private driveway;
- (c) Fire lanes or spaces on private or public property;
- (d) Within an intersection;
- (e) Within fifteen feet (15') of a fire hydrant;
- (f) On a crosswalk;
- (g) Within twenty feet (20') of a crosswalk at an intersection;
- (h) Within thirty feet (30') upon the approach to any flashing beacon, stop sign or traffic control signal located at the side of a roadway;
- (i) Within fifty feet (50') of the nearest rail of a railroad crossing;

(j) Within twenty feet (20') of the driveway entrance to any fire station and on the side of a street opposite the entrance to any fire station within seventy-five feet (75') of such entrance when properly signposted.

(k) Alongside or opposite any street excavation or obstruction when stopping, standing or parking would obstruct traffic;

(l) On the roadway side of any vehicle stopped or parked at the edge or curb of a street;

(m) Upon any bridge or other elevated structure upon a highway or within a highway tunnel;

(n) At any place where official signs prohibit stopping;

(o) In a parking space clearly identified by an official sign as being reserved for the physically handicapped, unless, however, the person driving the vehicle is physically handicapped or parking such vehicle for the benefit of a physically handicapped person. A vehicle parking in such a space shall display a certificate or placard as set forth in Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-21-101, et seq., or a disabled veteran's license plate issued under Tennessee Code Annotated, § 55-4-237.

(2) No person shall move a vehicle not lawfully under such person's control into any such prohibited area or away from a curb such distance as is unlawful.

(3) The provisions of this section shall not apply to:

(a) The driver of any vehicle which is disabled while on the paved or improved or main traveled portion of a road, street or highway in such manner and to such extent that it is impossible to avoid stopping and temporarily leaving such vehicle in such position.

(b) The driver of any vehicle operating as a carrier of passengers for hire and holding a certificate of convenience and necessity or interstate permit issued by the public service commission authorizing the operation of such vehicle upon the roads, streets or highways in this state, while taking passengers on such vehicle, or discharging passengers therefrom, provided, the vehicle is stopped so that a clear view of such vehicle shall be obtained from a distance of two hundred feet (200') in each direction, upon such roads, streets or highways.

(c) A solid waste vehicle while on the paved or improved main traveled portion of a road, street or highway in such manner and to such extent as is necessary for the sole purpose of collecting municipal solid waste, as defined by Tennessee Code Annotated, § 68-211-802(a)(10); provided, that such vehicle shall maintain flashing hazard lights at all times while it is stopping or standing; provided further, that the vehicle is stopped so that a clear view of such stopped vehicle shall be available from a distance of two hundred feet (200') in either direction upon the highway. The provisions of this subsection do not preclude any claimant from pursuing such claimant's common law claim for recovery pursuant

to common law negligence. (1980 Code, § 9-508, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-609. Obstructing traffic.** No person shall park any vehicle upon a street in such a manner or under such conditions as to leave available less than fifteen feet (15') of the width of the roadway for free movement of vehicular traffic. (1980 Code, § 9-509, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-610. Parking for certain purposes prohibited.** No person shall park a vehicle upon any roadway for the principal purpose of:

- (1) Displaying such vehicle for sale;
- (2) Washing, greasing, or repairing such vehicle, except for repairs necessitated by an emergency;
- (3) Displaying advertising or commercial messages;
- (4) Storing such vehicle for a continuous period of time longer than twenty-four (24) hours. (1980 Code, § 9-510, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-611. Parking adjacent to schools.** (1) The chief of police or his designee is hereby authorized to erect signs indicating no parking upon either or both sides of any street adjacent to any school property when such parking would, in its opinion, interfere with traffic or create a hazardous situation.

(2) When official signs are posted indicating no parking upon either side of a street adjacent to any school property as authorized in this section, no person shall park a vehicle in any such designated place. (1980 Code, § 9-511, as replaced by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-612. Parking on narrow streets.** (1) The chief of police or his designee is hereby authorized to erect signs indicating no parking upon any street when the width of the roadway does not exceed twenty feet (20'), or upon one (1) side of a street when the width of the roadway does not exceed thirty feet (30').

(2) When official signs prohibiting parking are erected upon narrow streets as authorized in this section, no person shall park a vehicle upon any such street in violation of any such sign. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-613. Stopping, standing or parking at hazardous or congested places.** (1) The mayor or his designee is hereby authorized to determine and designate by proper signs places not exceeding one hundred fifty feet (150') in length in which the stopping, standing or parking of vehicles would create an especially hazardous condition or would cause unusual delay to traffic.

(2) When official signs are erected at hazardous or congested places as authorized in this section, no person shall stop, stand or park a vehicle in any such designated place. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-614. Manner of parking generally.** Every vehicle stopped or parked upon a two-way roadway shall be so stopped or parked with the righthand wheels parallel to and within twelve inches (12") of the righthand curb or as close as practicable to the right edge of the righthand shoulder. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-615. Occupancy of more than one space.** No person shall park a vehicle in any designated parking space so that any part of such vehicle occupies more than one (1) such space or protrudes beyond the official markings on the street or curb designating such space unless the vehicle is too large to be parked within a single designated space. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-616. Parking prohibited at all times on certain streets.** (1) The mayor or his designee is hereby authorized to erect signs prohibiting parking at all times on streets as may become necessary based on an engineering and traffic investigation.

(2) When signs are erected giving notice thereof, no person shall park a vehicle at any time upon any street or portion thereof so signed. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-617. Reserved parking for handicapped drivers.** (1) The mayor or his designee is hereby authorized to designate, by the installation of appropriate signs, parking spaces for the exclusive use of handicapped drivers in those areas where a significant demand for parking by such persons may exist.

(2) Any merchant or owner of a privately owned parking lot for use by the general public is hereby authorized to designate, by the installation of appropriate signs, parking spaces for the exclusive use of handicapped drivers.

(3) Where signs bearing an official symbol are erected designating reserved parking spaces for handicapped drivers, no person except handicapped drivers or qualified operators in the presence of and acting under the express direction of a handicapped driver shall stand or park a vehicle in any such space.

(4) Violators of this section may be issued a parking ticket attached to the vehicle or a citation to court.

(5) Anyone who violates the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)

**15-618. Parking on city property.** The mayor or his designee is hereby authorized to establish and enforce policies, rules and regulations for parking at city parks and buildings and all other municipally owned property and to erect signs prohibiting parking at such locations except in accordance with such policies, rules and regulations.

(1) The policies, rules and regulations established in accordance with this section by the mayor or his designee may include requirements for parking permits in designated areas during certain times.

(2) Any vehicle parking in violation of such policies, rules or regulations shall be towed away upon the request of the mayor or his designee or any law enforcement officer. The owner of any such vehicle shall be responsible for all towing charges and resulting storage charges. The towing of any such vehicle shall be in addition to the issuance of a citation or other penalty imposed on the owner or driver of the vehicle. (as added by Ord. #13-30, Sept. 2013)



## CHAPTER 7

### ENFORCEMENT

#### SECTION

- 15-701. Issuance of traffic citations.
- 15-702. Failure to obey citation.
- 15-703. Illegal parking.
- 15-704. Impoundment of vehicles.
- 15-705. Disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.
- 15-706. Violation and penalty.

**15-701. Issuance of traffic citations.**<sup>1</sup> When a police officer halts a traffic violator other than for the purpose of giving a warning, and does not take such person into custody under arrest, he shall take the name, address, and operator's license number of said person, the license number of the motor vehicle involved, and such other pertinent information as may be necessary, and shall issue to him a written traffic citation containing a notice to answer to the charge against him in the city court at a specified time. The officer, upon receiving the written promise of the alleged violator to answer as specified in the citation, shall release such person from custody. It shall be unlawful for any alleged violator to give false or misleading information as to his name or address. (1980 Code, § 9-601)

**15-702. Failure to obey citation.** It shall be unlawful for any person to violate his written promise to appear in court after giving said promise to an officer upon the issuance of a traffic citation, regardless of the disposition of the charge for which the citation was originally issued. (1980 Code, § 9-602)

**15-703. Illegal parking.** Whenever any motor vehicle without a driver is found parked or stopped in violation of any of the restrictions imposed by this code, the officer finding such vehicle shall take its license number and may take any other information displayed on the vehicle which may identify its user, and shall conspicuously affix to such vehicle a citation for the driver and/or owner to answer for the violation within a time specified in the citation. (1980 Code, § 9-603, modified)

**15-704. Impoundment of vehicles.** Members of the police department are hereby authorized, when reasonably necessary, to prevent obstruction of traffic, to remove from the streets and impound any vehicle whose operator is

---

<sup>1</sup>State law reference

Tennessee Code Annotated, § 7-63-101, et seq.

arrested or any vehicle which is illegally parked, abandoned, or otherwise parked so as to constitute an obstruction or hazard to normal traffic. Any impounded vehicle left parked on any street or alley for more than seventy-two (72) consecutive hours without permission from the chief of police shall be presumed to have been abandoned if the owner cannot be located after a reasonable investigation. Such an impounded vehicle shall be stored until the owner claims it, gives satisfactory evidence of ownership and pays all applicable fines and costs. (1980 Code, § 9-604)

**15-705. Disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.** "Abandoned motor vehicles," as defined in Tennessee Code Annotated, §§ 55-16-101 to 55-16-111, shall be impounded and disposed of by the police department in accordance with the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, §§ 55-16-101 through 55-16-111. (Ord. #552, Nov. 1997)

**15-706. Violation and penalty.** Any violation of this title shall be a civil offense punishable as follows:

(1) **Traffic and parking citations.** Traffic and parking citations shall be punishable by a civil penalty up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each separate offense.

(2) **Parking citations.** (a) **Parking meter.** If the offense is a parking meter violation, the offender may, within the designated time, have the charge against him disposed of by paying to the city recorder a fine, provided he waives his right to a judicial hearing.

(b) **Other parking violations.** For other parking violations, the offender may, within ten (10) days, have the charge against him disposed of by paying to the city recorder a fine of three dollars (\$3.00), provided he waives his right to a judicial hearing. If he appears and waives his right to a judicial hearing after ten (10) days but before a warrant is issued for his arrest, his civil penalty shall be five dollars (\$5.00). (1980 Code, § 9-603, modified, as amended by Ord. #19-45, May 2019 *Ch12\_12-06-21*)

## CHAPTER 8

### IMPOUNDMENT OF VEHICLES

#### SECTION

15-801. Impoundment of vehicles by police department.

15-802. Impoundment of vehicles by the codes department.

**15-801. Impoundment of vehicles by police department.** Members of the police department are hereby authorized, when reasonably necessary for the security of the vehicle or to prevent obstruction of traffic, to remove from the streets and impound any vehicle whose operator is arrested or any unattended vehicle which is parked, so as to constitute an obstruction or hazard to normal traffic. Any impounded vehicle shall be stored until the owner or other person entitled thereto claims it, gives satisfactory evidence of ownership or right to possession, and pays all applicable fees and costs or until it is otherwise lawfully disposed of. The fee for impounding a vehicle shall be equal to the fee charged by the wrecker service who tows the vehicle. The storage cost of the impounded vehicle shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) dollars per day for each motor vehicle stored in the impoundment lot. Any part of a day shall count as a whole day.

The owner or authorized agent shall pay the City of Portland all outstanding fees for towing and storage in order to claim the vehicle. The City of Portland will reimburse cost for towing associated with having the vehicle moved to the impound lot for storage. (as added by Ord. #16-44, Oct. 2016)

**15-802. Impoundment of vehicles by the codes department.** Code enforcement officers are hereby authorized to impound inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicles in accordance with the International Property Maintenance Code. Any impounded vehicle shall be stored until the owner or other entitled person claims it, gives satisfactory evidence of ownership or right to possession, and pays all applicable fees and associated cost until it is otherwise lawfully disposed of. A storage fee for the impounded vehicle of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per day for each motor vehicle stored in the impoundment lot. Any part of a day shall count as a whole day.

The owner or authorized agent shall pay the City of Portland all outstanding fees for towing and storage in order to claim the vehicle. The City of Portland will reimburse cost for towing associated with having the vehicle moved to the impound lot for storage. (as added by Ord. #16-44, Oct. 2016)