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TRANSPORTATION CODE

TITLE 7. VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

(17) "Semitrailer" means a vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer:

(A) designed to be drawn by a motor vehicle and to transport persons or property; and

(B) constructed so that part of the vehicle's weight and load rests on or is carried by another vehicle.

(20) "Trailer" means a vehicle, other than a pole trailer, with or without motive power:

(A) designed to be drawn by a motor vehicle and to transport persons or property; and

(B) constructed so that no part of the vehicle's weight and load rests on the motor vehicle.

TRANSPORTATION CODE

TITLE 7. VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

SUBTITLE E. VEHICLE SIZE AND WEIGHT

CHAPTER 621. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO VEHICLE SIZE AND WEIGHT

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 621.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Commercial motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle, designed or used for:

(A) the transportation of property; or

(B) delivery purposes.

(2) "Commission" means the Texas Transportation Commission.

- (3) "Department" means the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.
- (4) "Director" means:
 - (A) the executive director of the department; or
 - (B) an employee of the department who is:
 - (i) a division or special office director or holds a rank higher than division or special office director; and
 - (ii) designated by the executive director.
- (5) "Motor vehicle" means a vehicle that is self-propelled.
- (6) "Semitrailer" means a vehicle without motive power that is designed, or used with a motor vehicle, so that some of its weight and the weight of its load rests on or is carried by the motor vehicle.
- (7) "Trailer" means a vehicle without motive power that is:
 - (A) designed or used to carry property or passengers on its own structure exclusively; and
 - (B) drawn by a motor vehicle.
- (8) "Truck-tractor" means a motor vehicle designed or used primarily for drawing another vehicle:
 - (A) that is not constructed to carry a load other than a part of the weight of the vehicle and load being drawn; or
 - (B) that is engaged with a semitrailer in the transportation of automobiles or boats and that transports the automobiles or boats on part of the truck-tractor.

SUBCHAPTER C. SIZE LIMITATIONS

Sec. 621.201. MAXIMUM WIDTH. (a) The total width of a vehicle operated on a public highway other than a vehicle to which Subsection (b) applies, including a load on the vehicle but excluding any safety device determined by the United States Department of Transportation or the Texas Department of Public Safety to be necessary for the safe and efficient operation of motor vehicles of that type, may not be greater than 102 inches.

(b) The total width of a passenger vehicle and its load may not be greater than eight feet. This subsection does not apply to a motor bus or trolley bus operated exclusively in the territory of a municipality, in suburbs contiguous to the municipality, or in the county in which the municipality is located.

(c) A passenger vehicle may not carry a load extending more than three inches beyond the left side line of its fenders or more than six inches beyond the right side line of its fenders.

Sec. 621.203. **MAXIMUM LENGTH OF MOTOR VEHICLE.** (a) A motor vehicle, other than a truck-tractor, may not be longer than 45 feet.

(b) A motor bus as defined by Section [502.001](#) that is longer than 35 feet but not longer than 45 feet may be operated on a highway if the motor bus is equipped with air brakes and has either three or more axles or a minimum of four tires on the rear axle.

(c) The limitation prescribed by Subsection (a) does not apply to a house trailer or towable recreational vehicle or a combination of a house trailer or towable recreational vehicle and a motor vehicle. A house trailer or towable recreational vehicle and motor vehicle combination may not be longer than 65 feet.

(d) In this section, "house trailer" and "towable recreational vehicle" have the meanings assigned by Section [541.201](#).

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1020, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 621.204. **MAXIMUM LENGTH OF SEMITRAILER OR TRAILER.** (a) A semitrailer that is operated in a truck-tractor and semitrailer combination may not be longer than 59 feet, excluding the length of the towing device.

(b) A semitrailer or trailer that is operated in a truck-tractor, semitrailer, and trailer combination may not be longer than 28-1/2 feet, excluding the length of the towing device.

(c) The limitations prescribed by this section do not include any safety device determined by regulation of the United States Department of Transportation or by rule of the Department of Public Safety to be necessary for the safe and efficient operation of motor vehicles.

(d) The limitations prescribed by this section do not apply to a semitrailer or trailer that has the dimensions of a semitrailer or trailer, as appropriate, that was being operated lawfully in this state on December 1, 1982.

Sec. 621.205. **MAXIMUM LENGTH OF VEHICLE COMBINATIONS.** (a) Except as provided by this section, a combination of not more than three vehicles, including a truck and semitrailer, truck and trailer, truck-tractor and semitrailer and trailer, or a truck-tractor and two trailers, may be coupled together if the combination of vehicles, other than a truck-tractor combination, is not longer than 65 feet.

(b) A passenger car or another motor vehicle that has an unloaded weight of less than 2,500 pounds may not be coupled with more than one other vehicle or towing device at one time. This subsection does not apply to the towing of a disabled vehicle to the nearest intake place for repair.

(c) A motor vehicle, including a passenger car, that has an unloaded weight of 2,500 pounds or more may be coupled with a towing device and one other vehicle.

(d) In this section:

(1) "Passenger car" means a motor vehicle designed to transport 10 or fewer persons simultaneously.

(2) "Towing device" means a device used to tow a vehicle behind a motor vehicle by supporting one end of the towed vehicle above the surface of the road and permitting the wheels at the other end of the towed vehicle to remain in contact with the road.

Sec. 621.207. **MAXIMUM HEIGHT.** (a) A vehicle and its load may not be higher than 14 feet.

(b) The operator of a vehicle that is higher than 13 feet 6 inches shall ensure that the vehicle will pass through each vertical clearance of a structure in its path without touching the structure.

(c) Any damage to a bridge, underpass, or similar structure that is caused by the height of a vehicle is the responsibility of the owner of the vehicle.

Sec. 547.405. **Emergency Brakes Required.**

- (a) A vehicle used to tow another vehicle equipped with air-controlled **brakes** shall be equipped with the following means, together or separate, for applying the **trailer brakes** in an emergency:
 - (1) an automatic device that applies the **brakes** to a fixed pressure from 20 to 45 pounds per square inch if the towing vehicle's air supply is reduced; and
 - (2) a manual device to apply and release the **brakes** that is readily operable by a person seated in the operator's seat and arranged so that:
 - (A) its emergency position or method of operation is clearly indicated; and

- **(B)** its use does not prevent operation of the automatic **brakes**.
- **(b)** In addition to the single control device required by Section 547.403, a vehicle used to tow another vehicle equipped with vacuum **brakes** shall be equipped with a second control device that:
 - **(1)** is used to operate the **brakes** on a towed vehicle in an emergency;
 - **(2)** is independent of **brake** air, hydraulic, or other pressure and independent of other controls, unless the **braking** system is arranged to automatically apply the towed vehicle's **brakes** if the pressure for the second control device on the towing vehicle fails; and
 - **(3)** is not required to provide modulated **braking**.
- **(c)** Subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to a vehicle that tows another vehicle as a commodity when at least one set of wheels of the towed vehicle is on the roadway.
- **(d)** A **trailer**, semitrailer, or pole **trailer** that is equipped with air or vacuum **brakes** or that has a gross weight heavier than 3,000 pounds shall be equipped with **brakes** that:
 - **(1)** operate on all wheels; and
 - **(2)** are promptly applied automatically and remain applied for at least 15 minutes in case of a breakaway from the towing vehicle.
- **(e)** A motor vehicle used to tow a **trailer**, semitrailer, or pole **trailer** equipped with **brakes** shall be equipped with service **brakes** arranged so that, in case of a breakaway of the towed vehicle, the towing vehicle is capable of stopping by use of its service **brakes**.
- (1) Section 106(a), V.A.C.S. Article 6701d, provides that a vehicle may draw only one other vehicle and provides an exception for certain agricultural trailers. Section 3(c)(1), V.A.C.S. Article 6701d-11, last amended in 1989, allows combinations of three vehicles subject to certain total length limitations. As the later enactment, Section 3(c)(1) of V.A.C.S. Article 6701d-11 impliedly repealed Section 106(a), V.A.C.S. Article 6701d. The revised law omits the repealed section, which reads:
- Sec. 106. (a) No driver of a motor vehicle shall drive upon any highway outside of the limits of an incorporated city or town drawing or having attached thereto more than one (1) vehicle except as herein provided; such vehicle may be a trailer, semi-trailer, pole trailer, or another vehicle; provided, however, that there may be attached to motor vehicles used exclusively in the actual harvesting of perishable fresh fruits and vegetables not to exceed two (2) trailers, under the following conditions:
 - 1. The origin of fruits and vegetables must be an orchard or a field where the same are grown and the destination must be a packing or processing plant or shed not more than fifty (50) miles distant from such field or orchard.

- 2. The combination of vehicles must be operated only during the period from sunrise to sunset, and at a rate of speed not to exceed twenty-five (25) miles per hour.
- 3. The fruits and vegetables transported in such trailers must be in bulk or field crates.
- 4. The width, height, and gross weight of each trailer and/or combination of trailers shall conform to the requirements set forth in Article 827a, Revised Penal Code of the State of Texas, and all other laws of this State governing same.
- 5. No one harvesting trailer shall exceed seventeen (17) feet, nine (9) inches in length, nor shall any combination of two (2) trailers and motor vehicle as provided herein, exceed fifty-five (55) feet overall length.
- 6. No laborers or “harvesting hands” shall be carried in or on the trailers while so used.
- (2) V.A.C.S. Article 6701d impliedly repealed provisions of V.A.C.S. Article 6701d-11 that were enacted before Article 6701d and not amended after the enactment of Article 6701d. Section 7(b) of Article 6701d-11, relating to the length of a drawbar between connected vehicles, was impliedly repealed by Section 106(b) of Article 6701d, revised in this code as Section 545.409(a). Section 10 of Article 6701d-11, relating to parking or standing vehicles, was impliedly repealed by Sections 93 and 94(a) of Article 6701d, revised in this code as Sections 545.301 and 545.305, respectively. The omitted law reads:
 - [Sec. 7]
 - (b) The drawbar or other connection between any two vehicles, one of which is towing or drawing the other on a highway, shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in length from one vehicle to the other.
 - Sec. 10. No person shall park or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon the paved or improved or main traveled portion of any highway, outside of any incorporated town or city, when it is possible to park or leave such vehicle standing off of the paved or improved or main traveled portion of such highway; provided, in no event shall any person park or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon any highway unless a clear and unobstructed width of not less than fifteen feet upon the main traveled portion of said highway opposite such standing vehicle shall be left for free passage of other vehicles thereon, nor unless a clear view of such vehicle may be obtained from a distance of 200 feet in each direction upon such highway.

Sec. 547.302. Duty to Display **Lights**.

- (a) A **vehicle** shall display each **lighted** lamp and illuminating device required by this chapter to be on the **vehicle**:
 - (1) at nighttime; and

- (2) when **light** is insufficient or atmospheric conditions are unfavorable so that a person or **vehicle** on the highway is not clearly discernible at a distance of 1,000 feet ahead.
- (b) A signaling device, including a stoplamp or a turn signal lamp, shall be **lighted** as prescribed by this chapter.
- (c) At least one **lighted** lamp shall be displayed on each side of the front of a motor **vehicle**.
- (d) Not more than four of the following may be **lighted** at one time on the front of a motor **vehicle**:
 - (1) a headlamp required by this chapter; or
 - (2) a lamp, including an auxiliary lamp or spotlamp, that projects a beam with an intensity brighter than 300 candlepower.

Sec. 547.352. Additional Lighting Equipment Requirements.

In addition to other equipment required by this chapter:

(1) a bus, truck, trailer, or semitrailer that is at least 80 inches wide shall be equipped with:

(A) two clearance lamps on the front, one at each side;

(B) two clearance lamps on the rear, one at each side;

(C) four side marker lamps, one on each side at or near the front and one on each side at or near the rear;

(D) four reflectors, one on each side at or near the front and one on each side at or near the rear; and

(E) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331;

(2) a bus or truck that is at least 30 feet long shall be equipped with hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331;

(3) a trailer or semitrailer that is at least 30 feet long shall be equipped with:

(A) two side marker lamps, one centrally mounted on each side with respect to the length of the vehicle;

(B) two reflectors, one centrally mounted on each side with respect to the length of the vehicle; and

(C) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331;

(4) a pole trailer shall be equipped with:

- (A) two side marker lamps, one at each side at or near the front of the load;
- (B) one reflector at or near the front of the load;
- (C) one combination marker lamp that:
 - (i) emits an amber light to the front and a red light to the rear and side; and
 - (ii) is mounted on the rearmost support for the load to indicate the maximum width of the trailer; and
- (D) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331, if the pole trailer is at least 30 feet long or at least 80 inches wide;
- (5) a truck-tractor shall be equipped with:
 - (A) two clearance lamps, one at each side on the front of the cab; and
 - (B) hazard lamps that meet the requirements of Section 547.331, if the truck-tractor is at least 30 feet long or at least 80 inches wide; and
- (6) a vehicle at least 80 inches wide may be equipped with:
 - (A) not more than three front identification lamps without glare; and
 - (B) not more than three rear identification lamps without glare.

Sec. 547.602. Mirrors Required.

- A motor **vehicle**, including a motor **vehicle** used to tow another **vehicle**, shall be equipped with a **mirror** located to reflect to the operator a view of the highway for a distance of at least 200 feet from the rear of the **vehicle**.