

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1426 (Delegates O'Donnell and Frush)
Environmental Matters

Vehicle Laws - Turning Signals - Rotary Traffic Islands

This bill establishes that the prohibition against turning a vehicle until an appropriate signal is given does not apply to a person operating a vehicle that is entering or exiting a roadway circling a rotary traffic island.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal general fund revenue decrease to the extent fewer people are subject to traffic citations for improper turns. Enforcement can be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: Enforcement can be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A person is prohibited from turning a vehicle at an intersection unless the vehicle is in the appropriate position as required by the Maryland Vehicle Law. Generally, a person intending to turn right at any intersection must approach the intersection and make the right turn as close as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway. A person who intends to turn left must approach the intersection or crossover in the most extreme left lane lawfully available to traffic moving in the same direction.

A person may not turn a vehicle to enter a private road or driveway or otherwise turn a vehicle from a direct course to move to the right or left on a roadway or to move from a shoulder or bikeway onto a roadway unless the move can be made with reasonable safety.

A signal of intention to turn right or left must be given continuously during at least the last 100 feet traveled by the vehicle before turning (except that a bicyclist may interrupt the signal to maintain control).

If there is an opportunity to signal, a person is prohibited from stopping or suddenly decreasing the vehicle speed until he or she gives an appropriate signal to the driver of any other vehicle immediately to the rear. The turning signal equipment specified by the Maryland Vehicle Law may be used to indicate an intention to turn, change lanes, or start from a stopped, standing, or parked position. The equipment may not be used, however, to flash a "courtesy" or "do pass" signal to the driver of any other vehicle approaching from the rear.

A person violating any of the above provisions is guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to a maximum fine of \$500. Except for the prohibition against flashing a "courtesy" signal, the District Court has established a prepayment penalty of \$90 for the above-mentioned offenses and the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) is required to assess one point against the driver's license. If any of these offenses contributes to an accident, the prepayment penalty increases to \$130 and MVA is required to assess three points against the driver's license.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of State Police, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 18, 2009
mam/ljm

Analysis by: Karen D. Morgan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510