

**Sec. 14-275c-31. Special devices**

If any motor vehicle, including a school bus, used to transport special education children, is equipped with any of the special devices described below, such device or devices shall meet or exceed the requirements established herein:

(a) **Lifts.** If a power or manually operated lift is provided, it shall be capable of reliably and safely raising and lowering a wheelchair and added ballast having a combined weight of no less than six hundred (600) pounds. The lift platform shall have a minimum usable width of not less than thirty (30) inches and a minimum usable length of not less than forty-two (42) inches except that the commissioner may approve a lift having a minimum usable width of not less than twenty-six (26) inches and a minimum usable length of not less than thirty-six (36) inches if he/she determines that such lift is adequate for the service which will be performed by the vehicle on which it is installed. The lift platform shall be constructed or covered in a manner to provide protection against slipping and skidding of personnel and wheelchairs. The lift platform shall be equipped with protective curbing on each side in the passage direction no less than one (1.0) inch in height above the platform surface. The platform surface between the curbing shall be unencumbered with wiring, tubing, switches or other material. The ramp slope in the passage direction shall not exceed ten degrees (10.0°) (17.6%) in any lift position when loaded with wheelchair and occupant. A self-adjusting steel or equivalent ramp transition plate shall be provided to allow smooth wheelchair passage from ground level onto the lowered lift platform; the transition plate shall raise to a position perpendicular to the platform plus or minus twenty degrees ( $\pm 20^\circ$ ) and latch to provide a roll off barrier for the wheelchair. A power-operated lift shall be capable of being opened and lowered at least one time in the event of power loss to the lift. All electrical controls and wiring shall be weather proof. The electrical system of the vehicle shall be capable of supporting the electrical requirements of the lift without reducing the electrical demands of the vehicle.

(b) **Ramps.** If a ramp is provided it shall be capable of supporting a minimum total weight of six hundred pounds (600 lbs). It shall be equipped with protective flanges on each longitudinal side sufficient in height to prevent a wheelchair from accidentally falling off the side of the ramp. The ramp surface shall be composed of or covered with a non-skid material. The ramp shall be of a weight that would permit the driver to set it in place and return it to its storage compartment. When the ramp is in use, it shall be securely fastened to the side of the vehicle to prevent accidental detachment. The ramp shall be connected to the vehicle floor level in such a manner to permit easy access for wheelchairs. The ramp shall be of sufficient length so that the slope shall not exceed thirty degrees (30°). If the ramp is to be stored under the vehicle chassis, the ramp shall be provided with a dust-proof, waterproof compartment. When the ramp is in the storage position, it shall be secured to prevent it from becoming accidentally dislodged while the vehicle is in motion.

(c) **Special seating.** Special seating arrangements may be provided for vehicles transporting handicapped children, and shall be appropriate to the needs of those being transported. Such seating arrangements must be approved by the commissioner of motor vehicles. Each handicapped child shall be provided a minimum of fifteen inches (15") of seating width and a minimum of twelve inches (12") fore and aft. Each seat shall be fully padded on the seating surface. Where a seat back is so situated that it is in front of another

seat, padding shall be affixed to the uppermost part and the top rear edge of the seat back. Each handicapped child shall be provided with a seat restraint system that will adequately restrain the individual without causing physical injury.

(d) **Wheelchair anchorages.** For those special education children confined to a wheelchair, a restraint system shall be provided for the occupant of the wheelchair which will effectively maintain his or her position in the wheelchair, and a restraint system shall be provided which will effectively maintain the position of the wheelchair within its designated position in the vehicle.

(e) **Special service doors.** These doors may be of the hinged swing type or sliding-type single door with a minimum clear opening of forty-five inches (45") in width and forty-six inches (46") in height.

(Effective February 26, 1982; Amended June 28, 2010)