

CHAPTER 15
INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE
CHP 555E, SCHOOL BUS CRASH SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

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2. BACKGROUND.

- a. School bus crashes are defined in Chapter 2, Definitions and Classifications of Crashes; California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 12517.1; and Title 13, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Sections 1219 and 1237. Highway Patrol Manual (HPM) 82.4, School Pupil and Farm Labor Transportation Safety, Chapter 3, School Bus Collisions, may be referenced for further assistance.
- b. Prior to 2009, individual California Highway Patrol (CHP) commands relied upon Area-specific forms to obtain the required reporting information for a school bus crash. In 2009, the CHP 555E was published to allow for the uniform collection of mandated information from school bus drivers, school buses, and students at crash scenes.

3. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS. To simplify these instructions, the numbers on the sample form on the preceding page correspond to the numbers of the following paragraphs.

- a. If more than one qualifying school bus is involved in a crash, a CHP 555E shall be completed for each school bus.
- b. The CHP 555E(s) will be inserted before the CHP 555D, Truck/Bus Crash Supplemental Report(s). If the report does not require a CHP 555D, the CHP 555E(s) will be the last page(s) of the report.
- c. The CHP shall investigate all school bus crashes as defined in Chapter 2 (additional references are CVC Section 12517.1, Definition of a Schoolbus Accident, and Title 13, CCR, Sections 1219 and 1237). If another agency investigates a school bus crash as a courtesy report, the agency will forward the traffic crash report to the local CHP Area office for processing and forwarding to CHP Headquarters, Mail Process File Unit (MPFU). Prior to forwarding the traffic crash report to MPFU, the School Bus Officer/Coordinator (SBO/C) shall review the report as outlined in HPM 82.4, Chapter 3, paragraph 6.
- d. Refer to HPM 82.4, Chapter 3, for policy regarding the review of school bus crashes by the local CHP Area SBO/C.
- e. School bus, as used in this chapter, unless specified otherwise, refers to a "Schoolbus" as defined by CVC Section 545(a), "Youth Bus" as defined by CVC Section 680, "School Pupil Activity Bus" (SPAB) as defined by CVC Section 546, and "General Public Paratransit Vehicle" (GPPV) as defined by CVC Section 336.

4. PARTY NUMBER. The party number shall correspond to the party number assigned to the qualifying school bus on the CHP 555, Page 1, Traffic Crash Report.

5. DATE OF CRASH/TIME/NCIC NUMBER/OFFICER ID NUMBER. Enter the numeric month, day, four-digit year, time, National Crime Information Center (NCIC) number, and the investigating officer's ID or badge number as completed on the CHP 555, Page 1. These four categories are used to identify each crash reported to the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System database. (Refer to Chapter 3, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555, Page 1, Traffic Crash Report.)

6. REPORT NUMBER. Enter the original report or case number assigned to the crash by the CHP Area as completed on the CHP 555, Page 1. (Refer to Chapter 3.)

7. DRIVER INFORMATION.

a. Upon being certified, each driver obtains specific certificates from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the driver may have restrictions placed on their driver license or certificate.

(1) California Special Drivers Certificate (DL-45). Indicate "Yes" or "No" as to whether or not the driver has a DL-45 by marking the appropriate box.

(2) Expiration Date. Enter the numeric month, day, and four-digit year expiration date of the DL-45 in this field.

NOTE: The expiration date should correspond with the driver license expiration date issued by the DMV.

(3) CHP Area Number. Enter the three-digit number of the certifying CHP Area.

(4) Vehicle Type. Indicate the type(s) of vehicle(s) the driver is authorized to operate by marking the appropriate box(es). The vehicle(s) the driver is not certified to operate should be crossed out on the driver's DL-45.

(5) Restrictions. Mark the box(es) indicating all the restrictions shown, by code, on the front of the DL-45. The code definitions are on the reverse side of the DL-45.

(6) Medical Certificate (Valid for 2 Years from Date of Exam). Indicate "Yes" or "No" as to whether or not the driver has a current medical examiner's certificate by marking the appropriate box.

NOTE: As of January 31, 2014, commercial drivers are no longer required to carry a paper medical certificate per 12502(b) CVC as long as the medical examiner's certificate has been submitted to the licensing state. The date and status of the medical certificate will be reflected on the driver license record.

(7) If Yes, Exam Date. If the driver possesses a medical certificate, enter the numeric month, day, and year of the driver's medical exam.

(8) Expiration Date. Enter the numeric month, day, and year the driver's medical certificate expires.

NOTE: Ensure the driver is in compliance with any restrictions listed on their medical certificate.

(9) First Aid Certificate (Valid for 3 Years from Issue Date – Only Required for Drivers with a 6 Restriction on their Special Drivers Certificate). Indicate "Yes" or "No" as to whether or not the driver has a valid first aid certificate by marking the appropriate box.

(10) If Yes, Issue Date. If the driver possesses a first aid certificate, enter the numeric month, day, and year the first aid certificate was issued.

(11) Expiration Date. Enter the numeric month, day, and year the driver's first aid certificate expires.

8. VEHICLE INFORMATION. School buses, SPABs, youth buses, and GPPVs are inspected annually by the CHP.

a. Each bus is required by CVC Section 2807 to display a CHP 292, Inspection Approval Certificate, in a visible and easy-to-reach area of the bus. Highway Patrol Manual 84.1, Motor Carrier Safety Operations, Chapter 5, School Bus Inspection; and Chapter 6, School Pupil Activity Bus, Youth Bus, and General Public Paratransit Vehicle Inspection, may be referenced for further assistance and instructions regarding the CHP 292.

NOTE: Some buses may have a CHP 292A, Vehicle Inspection Certificate (Variable Seating). The CHP 292A also contains the information found on the CHP 292.

(1) Inspection Approval Certificate (CHP 292) Inspected by (Name and ID Number). Enter the name and ID number of the CHP employee who most recently inspected the bus. This information is found on the CHP 292 in the "Signature" and "ID Number" boxes.

(2) Last Inspection Date. Enter the most recent inspection date of the school bus. This information is found on the CHP 292 in the “Date Certified” box.

(3) CHP Area Number. Enter the CHP Area number listed with the most recent inspection date. This information is found on the CHP 292 in the “Loc. Code” box.

(4) Rated Passenger Capacity. Enter the number of passengers the school bus is rated to carry. The information may be found on the CHP 292 in the lower left box on the form.

NOTE: A school bus crash may also require a CHP 555D. Information not recorded on the CHP 292 is required by the CHP 555D (e.g., gross vehicle weight rating, carrier name, phone number).

9. PASSENGER INFORMATION. School bus passenger information shall be obtained in all school bus crashes.

a. Number of Passengers on Board. Enter the total number of students on board the school bus at the time of the crash. A physical count should be conducted to verify a passenger list provided by the school bus driver.

(1) Passenger lists may be obtained from the school bus driver, a representative of the carrier who operates the school bus, a representative of the school district responsible for the students, or from the students aboard the bus.

(2) If a passenger list is obtained and there are no injuries to students, the list may be used in lieu of listing the passengers on the CHP 555, Page 3, Injured/Witness/Passengers. The list shall contain the same information found on the CHP 555, Page 3. If the list is not numbered, a number shall be assigned to each student to correspond with the seating chart on the CHP 555E. Information required on the CHP 555, Page 3, not found on the passenger/student list provided, shall be added to the list prior to it being attached to the Investigation in lieu of completing a CHP 555, Page 3 (e.g., date of birth, telephone number).

(3) Safety equipment usage by students shall be documented. In a property damage only crash, equipment and usage may be documented in the “Other Factual Information” section of the narrative (e.g., Vehicle #2 was equipped with lap belts, Party #2 stated all passengers were wearing their lap belts at the time of the crash) or by code on the passenger/student list provided.

(4) If the crash involved an injury, the safety restraint systems must be visually inspected and documented in the "Vehicle" section of the narrative. The usage for uninjured students may be noted by code on the passenger/student list provided by the school bus driver or district. The injured student(s) must be documented on the CHP 555, Page 3. The "Seat Pos." box will indicate the same location, by row/seat, as shown on the CHP 555E.

(a) For example, the injured student is listed as number 1 on the passenger list and seated in the far right seat of the second row on the bus. The number "1" will be entered in the "2F" box on the CHP 555E and 2F will be entered in the Seat Pos. box on the CHP 555, Page 3, for that student.

b. Each passenger/student aboard a school bus shall be assigned a number as previously noted. The location of each student upon the school bus shall be noted on the CHP 555E seating chart.

(1) If the involved school bus does not have a 3 x 3 seating configuration or is shorter than 15 rows, place an "X" in the seating positions that do not apply to the involved school bus. School buses with 2 x 2 seating configurations should have columns "C" and "D" marked with Xs. If a school bus has more than 15 rows, use an additional CHP 555E and renumber the rows to begin with 16, 17, etc.

10. PREPARED BY. Enter the name and ID number of the preparer of the document. This may be different than the investigating officer.

11. REVIEWED BY/DATE. Enter the report reviewer's name and the date reviewed in the appropriate boxes. These boxes are usually completed by the crash investigation review officer.

12. REVIEWED BY SBO/C/ID NUMBER/DATE. Enter the SBO/C reviewer's name, ID number, and the date reviewed in the appropriate boxes.