

**Motor Vehicle Division Informational Memo # 23-19**  
**2023 Legislation – Annual All-Systems Overweight Permit Amendments and**  
**Warning Lights on Overweight Vehicles**

**DATE:** May 23, 2023  
**FROM:** Kelli Huser, Compliance Officer, MVD  
**TO:** All Motor Vehicle Division staff and motor carriers

**SUBJECT**

This informational memo explains 2023 legislation that changes parts of the existing annual all-systems overweight permit. SF 527 changes which roads under jurisdiction of a local authority must be included for travel.

SF 527 also removes DOT authority to require warning lights for certain overweight-only vehicles.

**This memo is intended to give a general overview of this legislation to Motor Vehicle Division staff and motor carrier customers. For questions from local permitting authorities on how local authorities should comply with this legislation, please contact the Local Systems Bureau.**

**SUMMARY**

In 2022, the Iowa legislature created a new annual all-systems overweight permit. SF 527 makes some changes to which roads must be included for travel under this permit, and other requirements.

Changes from the prior law include:

<b>Prior law</b>	<b>New law</b>
Movement valid on all highways or streets except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the interstate and</li> <li>- except any highways or streets under local authorities’ jurisdiction if the local authority indicates the permit is not valid</li> </ul>	Movement valid on all <b>paved</b> highways or streets except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the interstate and</li> <li>- except any highways or streets under local authorities’ jurisdiction if the local authority indicates the permit is not valid</li> </ul>
No specifications were included to distinguish paved Farm-to-Market routes or “designated truck routes”	Designated truck routes and paved Farm-to-Market routes <i>must</i> be valid for travel under the permit
Local authorities may decide any highways or streets are not valid for travel under the permit.	Local authorities may determine any highways or streets are not valid for travel under the permit, <u>however counties and cities must provide a written justification report to the DOT for nonparticipating routes in certain circumstances.</u>
No specifications were included regarding which roads the local authorities may identify as valid for travel.	Local authorities <i>must</i> identify as valid for travel the highways/streets that connect with either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a highway or street under the jurisdiction of the state or</li> <li>- with another highway or street that is valid under the permit that ultimately connects</li> </ul>

	with a highway or street under the jurisdiction of the state.
No authority for DOT to disagree with the local authority's decision that a road is not valid for travel	DOT may disagree with certain local authority decisions. Any dispute is resolved under 17A.
Permit holders may only travel on valid roads under permit. Valid roads are included here: <a href="https://iowadot.gov/mvd/motorcarriers/Maps">https://iowadot.gov/mvd/motorcarriers/Maps</a>	Permit holders may travel on valid roads <u>and also operate the permitted vehicle over the most direct route between where the vehicle is loaded/unloaded and the nearest valid highway or street.</u>
Permit holders must display amber lights while operating under permit.	Permit holders that are only traveling overweight under this permit, and any overweight-only permit, do not need to display amber lights.

**The legislation is effective July 1, 2023. But counties still have until July 1, 2025, before they must designate valid and restricted roads.**

**LINK TO LEGISLATION**

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=sf527>

**CURRENT**

Under current law,

- the permit is not limited to paved roads.
- Counties have until July 1, 2025, to decide the highways or streets that are not valid under this permit and have no extra requirements for which roads to designate.
- Counties are not required to designate paved farm-to-market roads or truck routes.
- There is no legislative way to disagree with the local authorities' decisions.
- Permit holders are limited to valid routes.
- Permit holders must display amber lights while operating.

**NEW**

As of July 1,

- the permit is limited to paved roads.
- Counties still have until July 1, 2025, to decide highways or streets that are not valid under this permit but have new requirements to consider. Local authorities must send the DOT a written justification report for any paved farm-to-market road or street designated as a truck route that is excluded from travel under the permit. This justification will go to the DOT Local Systems team.
- Any designated highways streets must connect with either (1) a highway or street under state jurisdiction or (2) another highway or street valid under permit that ultimately connects with a highway or street under state jurisdiction.

- The DOT may disagree with the written justification report and if so, the dispute is settled under chapter 17A.
- Permit holders may travel on designated roads and also operate the permitted vehicle over the most direct route between where the vehicle is loaded/unloaded and the nearest valid highway or street.
- Permit holders traveling under any overweight-only permit do not need to display amber lights.

### **BUSINESS IMPACT**

This is an existing permit, therefore we do not need to create a new permit type or new forms. We will update written materials and educate our partners on the changes to the permit.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The following questions and answers provide additional information to you and to customers.

### **WHAT PARTS OF THIS LAW ARE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023?**

As of July 1, 2023, amber lights are no longer required for overweight only loads. Also as of July 1, 2023, permit holders may operate the permitted vehicle over the most direct route between where the vehicle is unloaded/loaded and the nearest valid highway or street.

Counties still have until July 1, 2025, to decide highways or streets that are participating under the permit. We expect cities and counties will continue to add roads to include for travel under permit. Customers should continue to check this map link for the most up-to-date routes:

<https://iowadot.gov/mvd/motorcarriers/Maps>

### **WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PERMIT?**

Please see Information Memo #22-22 here: <https://iowadot.gov/mvd/ctmanual/memos/IM-22-22-2022.pdf>

That memo gives additional information about axle distances, axle limits, registration weights, and maximum gross weight tables for primary highways, nonprimary highways, and noninterstate highways with commercial motor vehicles.