

# ***RUNNING A BUS SERVICE IN THE STATE OF MAINE***

Our mailing address is:

BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES  
MOTOR CARRIER SERVICES  
OPERATING AUTHORITY UNIT  
29 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA ME 04333-0029

Our physical location is:

BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES  
101 HOSPITAL STREET  
AUGUSTA ME

Information on State of Maine  
Requirements



**Matthew Dunlap**  
Secretary of State

## START WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

If you are considering operating a bus<sup>1</sup> service, the first step is to visit your town office. Some Maine communities have licensing requirements and other rules and regulations that must be observed.

The next step is to check with your local and regional airport officials. Airports may also have separate licensing requirements and/or regulations.

## CALL YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY

Insurance premiums are one of the most expensive things about operating for hire. Minimum liability insurance coverage amounts for an intrastate for-hire vehicle are based on the vehicle's passenger carrying capacity behind the driver's seat as designed by the manufacturer. The following minimum liability insurance amounts apply to buses, but not school buses<sup>2</sup>, used to transport passengers for hire exclusively between points within the state (intrastate operation):

- A bus designed to carry 15 passengers behind the driver's seat requires a minimum of \$750,000 CSL liability coverage.
- A bus designed to carry 16 to 30 passengers behind the driver's seat requires a minimum of \$1,500,000 CSL liability coverage.
- A bus designed to carry 31 or more passengers behind the driver's seat requires a minimum of \$2,000,000 CSL liability coverage.

A bus, but not a school bus, used to transport passengers for hire between points within the State

<sup>1</sup> "Bus" means a motor vehicle designed for carrying more than 15 persons, including the operator.

<sup>2</sup> See 29-A M.R.S.A. § 2301 for definition of school bus.

and points outside the State (interstate operation) and designed to carry 16 or more passengers (including the driver) requires a minimum of \$5,000,000 CSL liability coverage.

The Secretary of State requires a JB filing (State of Maine Insurance Certificate For-Hire Passenger Vehicle) for intrastate carriers or a BMC-91 or 91X filing for interstate carriers. The appropriate filing with your liability insurance information must be on file with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) Operating Authority Unit before you can register your for-hire vehicle(s). The name on the JB and/or BMC 91 or 91X filing(s) must be the legal name under which the bus will operate. Example: JOHN DOE D/B/A JOHN'S BUS SERVICE. An incorporated business will operate under the legal business name. Example: JOHN DOE BUS SERVICE INC. The legal name and physical address appearing on the vehicle registration must exactly match the legal name and physical address on the JB and/or BMC 91 or 91X filing(s). The JB filing requires a State of Maine form. The Operating Authority Unit can provide this form to your insurance company if necessary.

Since the JB and BMC 91 or 91X filings are completed by the underwriting insurance companies and not your agent, they may take a while to arrive at the BMV, Operating Authority. The form(s) may be faxed, E- mailed or mailed to the Operating Authority Unit. To save you time, it is suggested that you call the Operating Authority Unit to make sure that the appropriate insurance filings have been received before you attempt to register your vehicle.

## GETTING BUS PLATES

Buses in Maine are issued bus plates (class BU) by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. The current charge for bus plates is \$70.00. You must register your vehicle at your nearest Bureau of Motor Vehicles branch office after paying your excise tax at your town office.

Buses crossing state lines and operated for hire on regular routes are required to be in the International Registration Plan (IRP). You may contact the IRP

Unit at (207) 624-9000 ext. 52135 for more information.

## GETTING OPERATING AUTHORITY

Buses operating for hire across state or national boundaries are required to obtain federal operating authority (a Motor Carrier number) from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

## OTHER INFORMATION

The State of Maine requires anyone operating a bus to have a valid commercial driver's license. Please contact the BMV Commercial Driver's License section at (207) 624-9000 ext. 52122 with any questions.

For-hire carriers that operate commercial motor vehicles carrying more than eight passengers (including the driver) will need to:

- Obtain a USDOT number from FMCSA before operating any commercial motor vehicle.
- Comply with the requirements of the Unified Carrier Registration (UCR) Agreement if operating interstate.

You may contact the BMV Operating Authority Unit for more information at (207) 624-9000 ext. 52131.

Buses carrying 20 or more passengers are required to license for fuel tax reporting. You may contact the BMV Fuel Tax Unit at (207) 624-9000 ext. 52136.

Carriers and drivers operating buses for hire in interstate commerce are subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations such as hours of service requirements, substance abuse testing, vehicle marking, etc.