

PILOT CAR POLICY

NDHP Motor Carrier Division

Ref: 9-15 (1/2016)

PURPOSE

To establish a policy in the interest of public highway safety to show when pilot cars are required and what the requirements of the pilot car are when moving oversize and overweight loads.

POLICY STATEMENT

As authorized by Article 38-06 NDAC, the NDHP will require pilot cars as part of the permit conditions for the movement of vehicles and loads of extraordinary size and weight on the state highway system.

PROCEDURE

- A. The following factors determine when pilot cars are required:
 1. Overwidth movements.
 - a. All movements exceeding 14 feet 6 inches in overall width but not exceeding 16 feet in overall width shall have one pilot car precede the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet on two-lane highways. On four-lane divided highways there are no pilot car requirements. In lieu of the pilot car requirement, the overwidth vehicle itself, or vehicle towing or hauling an overwidth load, may be equipped with a lighted rotating or flashing amber light or lights that are visible from front and rear for a minimum 500 feet.
 - b. All movements exceeding 16 feet in overall width shall have one pilot car precede the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet and shall have one pilot car follow the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet on two-lane highways. On four-lane divided highways one pilot car shall follow the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet.
 2. Overlength movements.
 - a. All movements exceeding 120 feet in overall length shall have one pilot car follow the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet.
 3. Overheight movements.
 - a. All movements exceeding 18 feet in overall height shall have one pilot car precede the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet.
 4. Overweight movements.
 - a. All movements of self-propelled earthmoving equipment, or when piggybacking the front axle of a scraper on a jump trailer with the rear axle trailing on the ground, that exceed legal axle weights shall have one pilot car follow the movement at a distance of 300 to 700 feet on all highways because of a maximum speed limit of 20 miles per hour.
 - b. The DOT chief engineer, bridge engineer, or district engineer(s) may require one or two pilot cars on other overweight movements that exceed the normal permissible weights.
- B. Other factors determining when pilot cars are required.
 1. Combinations of 1, 2, 3, or 4 above may require one or more pilot cars as determined by the DOT chief engineer, bridge engineer, district engineer(s), or NDHP.

2. All load movements exceeding 18 feet in overall width may be required to have an official escort as determined by the regional commander(s).
 - a. The moving company will contact the regional commander in the region the load originates.
 - b. The regional commander will coordinate with other regional commander(s) in the event the oversize load movement leaves the region of origin.
 - c. The fee for an NDHP escort is \$50 per hour and \$.50 per mile per trooper.
- C. Pilot Car Requirements
1. All vehicles used as pilot cars must meet the following requirements.
 - a. Vehicle must be a passenger vehicle or 2-axle truck only.
 - b. Vehicle must meet requirements of Title 39 NDCC.
 - c. Driver of the pilot car must have a valid driver's license and be 18 years of age or older.
 - d. The vehicle must have on the highest part a sign that is minimum 12 inches in height and 60 inches in length with the words OVERSIZE LOAD on it. The sign shall be yellow with black lettering. The lettering shall not be less than 8 inches high with 1-inch brush stroke. In addition, flashing amber lights shall be mounted on both ends of the sign. In place of the two alternating lights, there can be one centrally mounted revolving amber light on the top of the sign.
 - e. There shall be radio communication between the pilot car(s) and the vehicle being escorted.
 - f. All pilot cars not registered in this state shall be required to purchase temporary registration when escorting intrastate movements.
 - g. When not being used for an escort, all warning signs and lights must be completely covered or removed from the pilot car(s).
 2. When operating in convoy, additional pilot cars will not be required provided that each unit in convoy keep at least 1,000 feet apart so as not to hamper passing traffic.
 3. Due to OSHA requirements, radio communication will not be required when escorting self-propelled earthmoving equipment.