

MICHIGAN VEHICLE CODE (EXCERPT)
Act 300 of 1949

257.698 Side cowl or fender lamps; running board courtesy lamp; backing lights; lamp or reflector; flashing, oscillating, or rotating lights; private motor vehicle of security guard agency or alarm company; use of lights authorized or required under MCL 257.697, 257.697a, and 257.698a; violation as civil infraction.

Sec. 698. (1) A motor vehicle may be equipped with not more than 2 side cowl or fender lamps that emit an amber or white light without glare.

(2) A motor vehicle may be equipped with not more than 1 running board courtesy lamp on each side that emits a white or amber light without glare.

(3) Backing lights of red, amber, or white may be mounted on the rear of a motor vehicle if the switch controlling the light is so arranged that the light may be turned on only if the vehicle is in reverse gear. The backing lights when unlighted must be covered or otherwise arranged so as not to reflect objectionable glare in the eyes of an operator of a vehicle approaching from the rear.

(4) Unless both covered and unlit, a vehicle operated on the highways of this state must not be equipped with a lamp or a part designed to be a reflector unless expressly required or permitted by this chapter or that meets the standards prescribed in 49 CFR 571.108. Except as otherwise provided, a lamp or a part designed to be a reflector, if visible from the front, must display or reflect a white or amber light; if visible from either side, must display or reflect an amber or red light; and if visible from the rear, must display or reflect a red light.

(5) The use or possession of flashing, oscillating, or rotating lights of any color is prohibited except as otherwise provided by law or under the following circumstances:

(a) A police vehicle must be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating red or blue lights, for use in the performance of police duties.

(b) A fire vehicle or ambulance available for public use or for use of the United States, this state, or any unit of this state, whether publicly or privately owned, must be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights and used as required for safety.

(c) An authorized emergency vehicle may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights for use when responding to an emergency call if when in use the flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights are clearly visible in a 360-degree arc from a distance of 500 feet.

(d) Flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber or green lights, placed in a position as to be visible throughout an arc of 360 degrees, must be used by a state, county, or municipal vehicle engaged in the removal of ice, snow, or other material from the highway and in other operations designed to control ice and snow, or engaged in other non-winter operations. This subdivision does not prohibit the use of a flashing, rotating, or oscillating green light by a fire service.

(e) A vehicle used for the cleanup of spills or a necessary emergency response action taken under state or federal law or a vehicle operated by an employee of the department of natural resources or the department of environment, Great Lakes, and energy that responds to a spill, emergency response action, complaint, or compliance activity may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber or green lights. The lights described in this subdivision must not be activated unless the vehicle is at the scene of a spill, emergency response action, complaint, or compliance activity. This subdivision does not prohibit the use of a flashing, rotating, or oscillating green light by a fire service.

(f) A vehicle to perform public utility service, a vehicle owned or leased by and licensed as a business for use in the collection and hauling of refuse, an automobile service car or wrecker, a vehicle of a peace officer, a vehicle operated by a rural letter carrier or a person under contract to deliver newspapers or other publications by motor route, a vehicle utilized for snow or ice removal under section 682c, a private security guard vehicle as authorized in subsection (7), a motor vehicle while engaged in escorting or transporting an oversize load that has been issued a permit by the state transportation department or a local authority with respect to highways under its jurisdiction, a vehicle owned by the National Guard or a United States military vehicle while traveling under the appropriate recognized military authority, a motor vehicle while towing an implement of husbandry, or an implement of husbandry may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights. However, a wrecker may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights that must be activated only when the wrecker is engaged in removing or assisting a vehicle at the scene of a traffic accident or disablement. The flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights must not be activated except when the warning produced by the lights is required for public safety. A vehicle engaged in authorized highway repair or maintenance may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber or green lights. This subdivision does not prohibit the operator of a vehicle utilized for snow or ice removal under section

682c that is equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights from activating the flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights when that vehicle is traveling between locations at which it is being utilized for snow or ice removal.

(g) A vehicle engaged in leading or escorting a funeral procession or any vehicle that is part of a funeral procession may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating purple or amber lights that must not be activated except during a funeral procession.

(h) An authorized emergency vehicle may display flashing, rotating, or oscillating white lights in conjunction with an authorized emergency light as prescribed in this section.

(i) A private motor vehicle of a physician responding to an emergency call may be equipped with and the physician may use flashing, rotating, or oscillating red lights mounted on the roof section of the vehicle either as a permanent installation or by means of magnets or suction cups and clearly visible in a 360-degree arc from a distance of 500 feet when in use. The physician shall first obtain written authorization from the county sheriff.

(j) A public transit vehicle may be equipped with a flashing, oscillating, or rotating light mounted on the roof of the vehicle approximately 6 feet from the rear of the vehicle that displays a white light to the front, side, and rear of the vehicle, which light may be actuated by the driver for use only in inclement weather such as fog, rain, or snow, when boarding or discharging passengers, from 1/2 hour before sunset until 1/2 hour after sunrise, or when conditions hinder the visibility of the public transit vehicle. As used in this subdivision, "public transit vehicle" means a motor vehicle, other than a station wagon or passenger van, with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 10,000 pounds.

(k) A person engaged in the manufacture, sale, or repair of flashing, rotating, or oscillating lights governed by this subsection may possess the lights for the purpose of employment, but shall not activate the lights upon the highway unless authorized to do so under subsection (6).

(l) A vehicle used as part of a neighborhood watch program may be equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights, if the vehicle is clearly identified as a neighborhood watch vehicle and the neighborhood watch program is working in cooperation with local law enforcement. The lights described in this subdivision must not be activated when the vehicle is not being used to perform neighborhood watch program duties.

(6) A person shall not sell, loan, or otherwise furnish a flashing, rotating, or oscillating blue or red light designed primarily for installation on an authorized emergency vehicle to a person except a police officer, sheriff, deputy sheriff, authorized physician, volunteer or paid fire fighter, volunteer ambulance driver, licensed ambulance driver or attendant of this state, a county or municipality within this state, a person engaged in the business of operating an ambulance or wrecker service, or a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization that owns and operates an emergency support vehicle used exclusively for emergencies. This subsection does not prohibit an authorized emergency vehicle, equipped with flashing, rotating, or oscillating blue or red lights, from being operated by a person other than a person described in this section if the person receives authorization to operate the authorized emergency vehicle from a police officer, sheriff, deputy sheriff, authorized physician, volunteer or paid fire fighter, volunteer ambulance driver, licensed ambulance driver or attendant, a person operating an ambulance or wrecker service, or a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization that owns and operates an emergency support vehicle used exclusively for emergencies, except that the authorization must not permit the person to operate lights as described in subsection (5)(a), (b), (c), (i), or (j), or to exercise the privileges described in section 603.

(7) A private motor vehicle of a security guard agency or alarm company licensed under the private security business and security alarm act, 1968 PA 330, MCL 338.1051 to 338.1092, may display flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights. The flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights must not be activated on a public highway when a vehicle is in motion.

(8) This section does not prohibit, restrict, or limit the use of lights authorized or required under sections 697, 697a, and 698a.

(9) A person who operates a vehicle in violation of this section is responsible for a civil infraction and shall be ordered to pay a civil fine of not more than \$100.00.

History: 1949, Act 300, Eff. Sept. 23, 1949;—Am. 1951, Act 270, Eff. Sept. 28, 1951;—Am. 1953, Act 206, Imd. Eff. June 10, 1953;—Am. 1957, Act 19, Eff. Sept. 27, 1957;—Am. 1959, Act 151, Imd. Eff. July 16, 1959;—Am. 1964, Act 7, Imd. Eff. Mar. 20, 1964;—Am. 1975, Act 100, Eff. July 1, 1976;—Am. 1976, Act 347, Imd. Eff. Dec. 21, 1976;—Am. 1978, Act 510, Eff. Aug. 1, 1979;—Am. 1980, Act 37, Imd. Eff. Mar. 12, 1980;—Am. 1980, Act 270, Imd. Eff. Oct. 1, 1980;—Am. 1984, Act 100, Imd. Eff. May 8, 1984;—Am. 1984, Act 326, Imd. Eff. Dec. 26, 1984;—Am. 1990, Act 188, Eff. Aug. 15, 1990;—Am. 1990, Act 335, Imd. Eff. Dec. 21, 1990;—Am. 1994, Act 101, Imd. Eff. Apr. 18, 1994;—Am. 1997, Act 8, Imd. Eff. May 16, 1997;—Am. 1998, Act 247, Imd. Eff. July 8, 1998;—Am. 2012, Act 262, Imd. Eff. July 2, 2012;—Am. 2016, Act 161, Eff. Sept. 7, 2016;—Am. 2017, Act 37, Eff. Aug. 21, 2017;—Am. 2018, Act 278, Eff. Sept. 27, 2018;—Am. 2018, Act 342, Eff. Jan. 14, 2019;—Am. 2020, Act 382, Eff. Oct. 1, 2021.