

Article 17.

Motor Carrier Safety Regulation Unit.

Part 1. General Provisions.

**§ 20-376. Definitions.**

The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Federal safety and hazardous materials regulations. – The federal motor carrier safety regulations contained in 49 C.F.R. Parts 171 through 180, 382, and 390 through 398.
- (2) Foreign commerce. – Commerce between any of the following:
  - a. A place in the United States and a place in a foreign country.
  - b. Places in the United States through any foreign country.
- (3) Interstate commerce. – As defined in 49 C.F.R. Part 390.5.
- (3a) Interstate motor carrier. – Any person, firm, or corporation that operates or controls a commercial motor vehicle as defined in 49 C.F.R. § 390.5 in interstate commerce.
- (4) Intrastate commerce. – As defined in 49 C.F.R. Part 390.5.
- (5) Intrastate motor carrier. – Any person, firm, or corporation that operates or controls a motor vehicle in intrastate commerce when the vehicle:
  - a. Is a vehicle having a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) or gross combination weight rating (GCWR) or gross vehicle weight (GVW) or gross combination weight (GCW) of 26,001 pounds or more, whichever is greater.
  - b. Is designed or used to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver.
  - c. Is used in transporting a hazardous material in a quantity requiring placarding pursuant to 49 C.F.R. Parts 170 through 185. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 621, s. 5; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 20; 1997-456, s. 36; 1998-149, s. 11; 1999-452, s. 21; 2002-152, s. 3; 2010-129, s. 5.)

Part 2. Authority and Powers of Department of Public Safety.

**§ 20-377. (Effective until July 1, 2025) General powers of Department of Public Safety.**

The Department of Public Safety shall have and exercise such general power and authority to supervise and control the motor carriers of the State as may be necessary to carry out the laws providing for their regulation, and all such other powers and duties as may be necessary or incident to the proper discharge of its duties. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-377. (Effective July 1, 2025) General powers of State Highway Patrol.**

The State Highway Patrol shall have and exercise such general power and authority to supervise and control the motor carriers of the State as may be necessary to carry out the laws providing for their regulation, and all such other powers and duties as may be necessary or incident to the proper discharge of its duties. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(o).)

**§ 20-378: Repealed by Session Laws 1995 (Regular Session, 1996), c. 756, s. 21.**

**§ 20-379. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Department of Public Safety to audit motor carriers for compliance.**

The Department of Public Safety must periodically audit each motor carrier to determine if the carrier is complying with this Article and, if the motor carrier is subject to regulation by the North Carolina Utilities Commission, with Chapter 62 of the General Statutes. In conducting the audit, the Department of Public Safety may examine a person under oath, compel the production of papers and the attendance of witnesses, and copy a paper for use in the audit. An employee of the Department of Public Safety may enter the premises of a motor carrier during reasonable hours to enforce this Article. When on the premises of a motor carrier, an employee of the Department of Public Safety may set up and use equipment needed to make the tests required by this Article. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 22; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-379. (Effective July 1, 2025) State Highway Patrol to audit motor carriers for compliance.**

The State Highway Patrol must periodically audit each motor carrier to determine if the carrier is complying with this Article and, if the motor carrier is subject to regulation by the North Carolina Utilities Commission, with Chapter 62 of the General Statutes. In conducting the audit, the State Highway Patrol may examine a person under oath, compel the production of papers and the attendance of witnesses, and copy a paper for use in the audit. An employee of the State Highway Patrol may enter the premises of a motor carrier during reasonable hours to enforce this Article. When on the premises of a motor carrier, an employee of the State Highway Patrol may set up and use equipment needed to make the tests required by this Article. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 22; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(p).)

**§ 20-380. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Department of Public Safety may investigate accidents involving motor carriers and promote general safety program.**

The Department of Public Safety may conduct a program of accident prevention and public safety covering all motor carriers with special emphasis on highway safety and transport safety and may investigate the causes of any accident on a highway involving a motor carrier. Any information obtained in an investigation shall be reduced to writing and a report thereof filed in the office of the Department of Public Safety, which shall be subject to public inspection but such report shall not be admissible in evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding arising from such accident. The Department of Public Safety may adopt rules for the safety of the public as affected by motor carriers and the safety of motor carrier employees. The Department of Public Safety shall cooperate with and coordinate its activities for motor carriers with other agencies and organizations engaged in the promotion of highway safety and employee safety. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 23; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-380. (Effective July 1, 2025) State Highway Patrol may investigate accidents involving motor carriers and promote general safety program.**

The State Highway Patrol may conduct a program of accident prevention and public safety covering all motor carriers with special emphasis on highway safety and transport safety and may investigate the causes of any accident on a highway involving a motor carrier. Any information

obtained in an investigation shall be reduced to writing and a report thereof filed in the office of the State Highway Patrol, which shall be subject to public inspection but such report shall not be admissible in evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding arising from such accident. The State Highway Patrol may adopt rules for the safety of the public as affected by motor carriers and the safety of motor carrier employees. The State Highway Patrol shall cooperate with and coordinate its activities for motor carriers with other agencies and organizations engaged in the promotion of highway safety and employee safety. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 23; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(q).)

**§ 20-381. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Specific powers and duties of Department of Public Safety applicable to motor carriers; agricultural exemption.**

(a) The Department of Public Safety has the following powers and duties concerning motor carriers:

- (1) To prescribe qualifications and maximum hours of service of drivers and their helpers.
- (1a) To set safety standards for vehicles of motor carriers engaged in foreign, interstate, or intrastate commerce over the highways of this State and for the safe operation of these vehicles. The Department of Public Safety may stop, enter upon, and perform inspections of motor carriers' vehicles in operation to determine compliance with these standards and may conduct any investigations and tests it finds necessary to promote the safety of equipment and the safe operation on the highway of these vehicles.
- (1b) To enforce this Article, rules adopted under this Article, and the federal safety and hazardous materials regulations.
- (2) To enter the premises of a motor carrier to inspect a motor vehicle or any equipment used by the motor carrier in transporting passengers or property.
- (2a) To prohibit the use by a motor carrier of any motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment the Department of Public Safety finds, by reason of its mechanical condition or loading, would be likely to cause a crash or breakdown in the transportation of passengers or property on a highway. If an agent of the Department of Public Safety finds a motor vehicle of a motor carrier in actual use upon the highways in the transportation of passengers or property that, by reason of its mechanical condition or loading, would be likely to cause a crash or breakdown, the agent shall declare the vehicle "Out of Service." The agent shall require the operator thereof to discontinue its use and to substitute therefor a safe vehicle, parts or equipment at the earliest possible time and place, having regard for both the convenience and the safety of the passengers or property. When an inspector or agent stops a motor vehicle on the highway, under authority of this section, and the motor vehicle is declared "Out of Service," no motor carrier operator shall require, or permit, any person to operate, nor shall any person operate, any motor vehicle equipment declared "Out of Service" until all repairs required by the "Out of Service" notice have been satisfactorily completed. Such agents or inspectors shall also have the right to stop any motor vehicle which is being used upon the public highways for the transportation of passengers or property by a motor carrier subject to the provisions of this Article and to eject therefrom any driver or operator who shall be operating or

be in charge of such motor vehicle while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or impairing substances. It shall be the duty of all inspectors and agents of the Department of Public Safety to make a written report, upon a form prescribed by the Department of Public Safety, of inspections of all motor equipment and a copy of each such written report, disclosing defects in such equipment, shall be served promptly upon the motor carrier operating the same, either in person by the inspector or agent or by mail. Such agents and inspectors shall also make and serve a similar written report in cases where a motor vehicle is operated in violation of this Chapter or, if the motor vehicle is subject to regulation by the North Carolina Utilities Commission, of Chapter 62 of the General Statutes.

- (3) To relieve the highways of all undue burdens and safeguard traffic thereon by adopting and enforcing rules and orders designed and calculated to minimize the dangers attending transportation on the highways of all hazardous materials and other commodities.
- (4) To determine the safety fitness of intrastate motor carriers, to assign safety ratings to intrastate motor carriers as defined in 49 C.F.R. § 385.3, to direct intrastate motor carriers to take remedial action when required, to prohibit the operation of intrastate motor carriers when subject to an out-of-service order issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration or the Department.
- (5) To enforce any order issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration including the authority to seize registration plates pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 20-45 from motor carriers whose registration was rescinded and cancelled pursuant to G.S. 20-110(m) or G.S. 20-110(n).

(b) The definitions set out in 49 Code of Federal Regulations § 171.8 apply to this subsection. The transportation of an agricultural product, other than a Class 2 material, over local roads between fields of the same farm by a farmer operating as an intrastate private motor carrier is exempt from the requirements of Parts 171 through 180 of 49 CFR as provided in 49 CFR § 173.5(a). The transportation of an agricultural product to or from a farm within the official State border of North Carolina by a farmer operating as an intrastate private motor carrier is exempt from the requirements of Subparts G and H of Part 172 of 49 CFR as provided in 49 CFR § 173.5(b).

(c) For purposes of 49 C.F.R. § 395.1(k) and any other federal law or regulation relating to hours-of-service rules for drivers engaged in the transportation of agricultural commodities and farm supplies for agricultural purposes, the terms "planting and harvesting season" and "planting and harvesting period" refer to the period from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

(d) The definitions set out in 49 C.F.R. § 390.5 apply to this subsection. A covered farm vehicle engaged in intrastate commerce is exempt from the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 390.21. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 24; 1997-456, ss. 37, 38; 1998-149, s. 12; 1998-165, s. 1; 1999-452, s. 22; 2002-152, ss. 4, 5; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2009-376, s. 9; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2014-103, s. 5; 2017-108, s. 17; 2019-196, s. 4; 2024-30, s. 22(c).)

**§ 20-381. (Effective July 1, 2025) Specific powers and duties of State Highway Patrol applicable to motor carriers; agricultural exemption.**

(a) The State Highway Patrol has the following powers and duties concerning motor carriers:

- (1) To prescribe qualifications and maximum hours of service of drivers and their helpers.
- (1a) To set safety standards for vehicles of motor carriers engaged in foreign, interstate, or intrastate commerce over the highways of this State and for the safe operation of these vehicles. The State Highway Patrol may stop, enter upon, and perform inspections of motor carriers' vehicles in operation to determine compliance with these standards and may conduct any investigations and tests it finds necessary to promote the safety of equipment and the safe operation on the highway of these vehicles.
- (1b) To enforce this Article, rules adopted under this Article, and the federal safety and hazardous materials regulations.
- (2) To enter the premises of a motor carrier to inspect a motor vehicle or any equipment used by the motor carrier in transporting passengers or property.
- (2a) To prohibit the use by a motor carrier of any motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment the State Highway Patrol finds, by reason of its mechanical condition or loading, would be likely to cause a crash or breakdown in the transportation of passengers or property on a highway. If an agent of the State Highway Patrol finds a motor vehicle of a motor carrier in actual use upon the highways in the transportation of passengers or property that, by reason of its mechanical condition or loading, would be likely to cause a crash or breakdown, the agent shall declare the vehicle "Out of Service." The agent shall require the operator thereof to discontinue its use and to substitute therefor a safe vehicle, parts or equipment at the earliest possible time and place, having regard for both the convenience and the safety of the passengers or property. When an inspector or agent stops a motor vehicle on the highway, under authority of this section, and the motor vehicle is declared "Out of Service," no motor carrier operator shall require, or permit, any person to operate, nor shall any person operate, any motor vehicle equipment declared "Out of Service" until all repairs required by the "Out of Service" notice have been satisfactorily completed. Such agents or inspectors shall also have the right to stop any motor vehicle which is being used upon the public highways for the transportation of passengers or property by a motor carrier subject to the provisions of this Article and to eject therefrom any driver or operator who shall be operating or be in charge of such motor vehicle while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or impairing substances. It shall be the duty of all inspectors and agents of the State Highway Patrol to make a written report, upon a form prescribed by the State Highway Patrol, of inspections of all motor equipment and a copy of each such written report, disclosing defects in such equipment, shall be served promptly upon the motor carrier operating the same, either in person by the inspector or agent or by mail. Such agents and inspectors shall also make and serve a similar written report in cases where a motor vehicle is operated in violation of this Chapter or, if the motor vehicle is subject to regulation by the North Carolina Utilities Commission, of Chapter 62 of the General Statutes.
- (3) To relieve the highways of all undue burdens and safeguard traffic thereon by adopting and enforcing rules and orders designed and calculated to minimize

the dangers attending transportation on the highways of all hazardous materials and other commodities.

- (4) To determine the safety fitness of intrastate motor carriers, to assign safety ratings to intrastate motor carriers as defined in 49 C.F.R. § 385.3, to direct intrastate motor carriers to take remedial action when required, to prohibit the operation of intrastate motor carriers when subject to an out-of-service order issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration or the State Highway Patrol.
- (5) To enforce any order issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration including the authority to seize registration plates pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 20-45 from motor carriers whose registration was rescinded and cancelled pursuant to G.S. 20-110(m) or G.S. 20-110(n).

(b) The definitions set out in 49 Code of Federal Regulations § 171.8 apply to this subsection. The transportation of an agricultural product, other than a Class 2 material, over local roads between fields of the same farm by a farmer operating as an intrastate private motor carrier is exempt from the requirements of Parts 171 through 180 of 49 CFR as provided in 49 CFR § 173.5(a). The transportation of an agricultural product to or from a farm within the official State border of North Carolina by a farmer operating as an intrastate private motor carrier is exempt from the requirements of Subparts G and H of Part 172 of 49 CFR as provided in 49 CFR § 173.5(b).

(c) For purposes of 49 C.F.R. § 395.1(k) and any other federal law or regulation relating to hours-of-service rules for drivers engaged in the transportation of agricultural commodities and farm supplies for agricultural purposes, the terms "planting and harvesting season" and "planting and harvesting period" refer to the period from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

(d) The definitions set out in 49 C.F.R. § 390.5 apply to this subsection. A covered farm vehicle engaged in intrastate commerce is exempt from the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 390.21. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 24; 1997-456, ss. 37, 38; 1998-149, s. 12; 1998-165, s. 1; 1999-452, s. 22; 2002-152, ss. 4, 5; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2009-376, s. 9; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2014-103, s. 5; 2017-108, s. 17; 2019-196, s. 4; 2024-30, s. 22(c); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(r).)

#### **§ 20-382. For-hire motor carrier registration, insurance verification, and temporary trip permit authority.**

(a) UCRA. – The Commissioner may enter into the Unified Carrier Registration Agreement (UCRA), established pursuant to Section 4305 of Public Law 109-73, and into agreements with jurisdictions participating in the UCRA to exchange information for any audit or enforcement activity required by the UCRA. Upon entry into the UCRA, the requirements set under the UCRA apply to the Division. If a requirement set under the UCRA conflicts with this section, the UCRA controls. Rules adopted to implement this section must ensure compliance with mandates of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the United States Department of Transportation.

(a1) Carrier Registration. – A motor carrier may not operate a for-hire motor vehicle in interstate commerce in this State unless the motor carrier has complied with all of the following requirements:

- (1) Registered its operations with its base state.
- (1a) Done one of the following:

- a. Filed a copy of the certificate of authority issued to it by the United States Department of Transportation allowing it to transport regulated items in this State and any amendments to that authority.
- b. Certified to the Division that it carries only items that are not regulated by the United States Department of Transportation.
- (2) Verified, in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, that it has insurance for each for-hire motor vehicle it operates.
- (3) Paid the fees set in G.S. 20-385.

(b) **Insurance Verification.** – A motor carrier that operates a for-hire motor vehicle in interstate commerce in this State and is regulated by the United States Department of Transportation must verify to the Division that each for-hire motor vehicle the motor carrier operates in this State is insured in accordance with the requirements set by the United States Department of Transportation. A motor carrier that operates a for-hire motor vehicle in interstate commerce in this State and is exempt from regulation by the United States Department of Transportation must verify to the Division that each for-hire motor vehicle the motor carrier operates in this State is insured in accordance with the requirements set by the North Carolina Utilities Commission.

(c) **Trip Permit.** – A motor carrier that is not registered as required by this section may obtain an emergency trip permit. An emergency trip permit allows the motor carrier to operate a for-hire motor vehicle in this State for a period not to exceed 10 days. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 621, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 25; 2007-492, s. 3; 2010-97, s. 4.)

**§ 20-382.1. Registration of for-hire intrastate motor carriers and verification that their vehicles are insured.**

(a) **Registration.** – A for-hire motor carrier may not operate a for-hire motor vehicle in intrastate commerce in this State unless the motor carrier has complied with all of the following requirements:

- (1) For a motor carrier that hauls household goods, registered its operations with the State by doing one of the following:
  - a. Obtaining a certificate of authority from the North Carolina Utilities Commission.
  - b. Obtaining a certificate of exemption from the Division.
- (1a) For a motor carrier that does not haul household goods, registered its operations with the Division.
- (2) Verified, in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, that it has insurance for each for-hire motor vehicle it operates in this State.
- (3) Paid the fees set in G.S. 20-385.

(b) **Insurance Verification.** – A for-hire motor carrier that operates a for-hire vehicle in intrastate commerce in this State must verify to the Division that each for-hire motor vehicle it operates in this State is insured. To do this, the motor carrier must submit an insurance verification form to the Division and must file annually with the Division a list of the for-hire vehicles it operates in this State. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 621, s. 2; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 26.)

**§ 20-382.2. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Penalty for failure to comply with registration or insurance verification requirements.**

(a) Acts. – A motor carrier who does any of the following is subject to a civil penalty of one thousand dollars (\$1,000):

- (1) Operates a for-hire motor vehicle in this State without registering its operations, as required by this Part.
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 2007-492, s. 4, effective August 30, 2007.
- (3) Operates a for-hire motor vehicle in intrastate commerce in this State for which it has not verified it has insurance, as required by G.S. 20-382.1.

(b) Payment and Review. – When the Department of Public Safety finds that a for-hire motor vehicle is operated in this State in violation of the registration and insurance verification requirements of this Part, the Department must place the motor vehicle out of service until the motor carrier is in compliance and the penalty imposed under this section is paid unless the officer that imposes the penalty determines that operation of the motor vehicle will not jeopardize collection of the penalty. A motor carrier that denies liability for a penalty imposed under this section may pay the penalty under protest and follow the procedure in G.S. 20-178.1 for a departmental review of the penalty.

(c) Judicial Restriction. – A court of this State may not issue a restraining order or an injunction to restrain or enjoin the collection of a penalty imposed under this section or to permit the operation of a vehicle placed out of service under this section without payment of the penalty.

(d) Proceeds. – A penalty imposed under this section is payable to the Department of Transportation, Fiscal Section. The clear proceeds of all civil penalties assessed by the Department pursuant to this section, minus any fees paid as interest, filing fees, attorneys' fees, or other necessary costs of court associated with the defense of penalties imposed pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 621, s. 3; 1997-466, s. 3; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, ss. 2, 3; 2005-64, s. 1; 2007-492, s. 4; 2009-376, ss. 2(b), 14; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

#### **§ 20-382.2. (Effective July 1, 2025) Penalty for failure to comply with registration or insurance verification requirements.**

(a) Acts. – A motor carrier who does any of the following is subject to a civil penalty of one thousand dollars (\$1,000):

- (1) Operates a for-hire motor vehicle in this State without registering its operations, as required by this Part.
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 2007-492, s. 4, effective August 30, 2007.
- (3) Operates a for-hire motor vehicle in intrastate commerce in this State for which it has not verified it has insurance, as required by G.S. 20-382.1.

(b) Payment and Review. – When the State Highway Patrol finds that a for-hire motor vehicle is operated in this State in violation of the registration and insurance verification requirements of this Part, the State Highway Patrol must place the motor vehicle out of service until the motor carrier is in compliance and the penalty imposed under this section is paid unless the officer that imposes the penalty determines that operation of the motor vehicle will not jeopardize collection of the penalty. A motor carrier that denies liability for a penalty imposed under this section may pay the penalty under protest and follow the procedure in G.S. 20-178.1 for a departmental review of the penalty.

(c) Judicial Restriction. – A court of this State may not issue a restraining order or an injunction to restrain or enjoin the collection of a penalty imposed under this section or to permit the operation of a vehicle placed out of service under this section without payment of the penalty.



(d) Proceeds. – A penalty imposed under this section is payable to the Department of Transportation, Fiscal Section. The clear proceeds of all civil penalties assessed by the State Highway Patrol pursuant to this section, minus any fees paid as interest, filing fees, attorneys' fees, or other necessary costs of court associated with the defense of penalties imposed pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 621, s. 3; 1997-466, s. 3; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, ss. 2, 3; 2005-64, s. 1; 2007-492, s. 4; 2009-376, ss. 2(b), 14; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(s).)

**§ 20-383. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Inspectors and officers given enforcement authority.**

Only designated inspectors, officers, and personnel of the Department of Public Safety shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of this Article and provisions of Chapter 62 applicable to motor transportation, and they are empowered to make complaint for the issue of appropriate warrants, information, presentments or other lawful process for the enforcement and prosecution of violations of the transportation laws against all offenders, whether they be regulated motor carriers or not, and to appear in court or before the North Carolina Utilities Commission and offer evidence at the trial pursuant to such processes. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2012-78, s. 10.)

**§ 20-383. (Effective July 1, 2025) Inspectors and officers given enforcement authority.**

Only designated inspectors, officers, and personnel of the State Highway Patrol shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of this Article and provisions of Chapter 62 applicable to motor transportation, and they are empowered to make complaint for the issue of appropriate warrants, information, presentments or other lawful process for the enforcement and prosecution of violations of the transportation laws against all offenders, whether they be regulated motor carriers or not, and to appear in court or before the North Carolina Utilities Commission and offer evidence at the trial pursuant to such processes. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2012-78, s. 10; 2024-57, s. 3E.2(t).)

**§ 20-384. Penalty for certain violations.**

A motor carrier who fails to conduct a safety inspection of a vehicle as required by Part 396 of the federal safety regulations or who fails to mark a vehicle that has been inspected as required by that Part commits an infraction and, if found responsible, is liable for a penalty of up to fifty dollars (\$50.00). (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 1018, s. 13; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 754, s. 6; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 27.)

**Part 3. Fees and Charges.**

**§ 20-385. Fee schedule.**

(a) The fees listed in this section apply to a motor carrier. These fees are in addition to any fees required under the Unified Carrier Registration Agreement.

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|-----|---|-------|
| (1) | Repealed by Session Laws 2007-492, s. 5, effective August 30, 2007.   |       |
| (2) | Application by an intrastate motor carrier for a certificate of exemption   | 64.75 |
| (3) | Certification by an interstate motor carrier that it is not regulated by the United States Department of Transportation | 64.75 |

- (4) Application by an interstate motor carrier for an emergency trip permit

24.75.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 2007-492, s. 5, effective August 30, 2007. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 621, s. 4; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 756, s. 28; 2005-276, s. 44.1(p); 2007-492, s. 5; 2015-241, s. 29.30(q).)

**§ 20-386. Fees, charges and penalties; disposition.**

All fees and charges received by the Division under G.S. 20-385 shall be in addition to any other tax or fee provided by law and shall be placed in the Highway Fund. (1985, c. 454, s. 1.)

Part 4. Penalties and Actions.

**§ 20-387. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Motor carrier violating any provision of Article, rules or orders; penalty.**

Any motor carrier which violates any of the provisions of this Article or refuses to conform to or obey any rule, order or regulation of the Division or Department of Public Safety shall, in addition to the other penalties prescribed in this Article forfeit and pay a sum up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each offense, to be recovered in an action to be instituted in the Superior Court of Wake County, in the name of the State of North Carolina on the relation of the Department of Public Safety; and each day such motor carrier continues to violate any provision of this Article or continues to refuse to obey or perform any rule, order or regulation prescribed by the Division or Department of Public Safety shall be a separate offense. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 10; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-387. (Effective July 1, 2025) Motor carrier violating any provision of Article, rules or orders; penalty.**

Any motor carrier which violates any of the provisions of this Article or refuses to conform to or obey any rule, order or regulation of the Division or State Highway Patrol shall, in addition to the other penalties prescribed in this Article forfeit and pay a sum up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each offense, to be recovered in an action to be instituted in the Superior Court of Wake County, in the name of the State of North Carolina on the relation of the State Highway Patrol; and each day such motor carrier continues to violate any provision of this Article or continues to refuse to obey or perform any rule, order or regulation prescribed by the Division or State Highway Patrol shall be a separate offense. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 10; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-388. Willful acts of employees deemed those of motor carrier.**

The willful act of any officer, agent, or employee of a motor carrier, acting within the scope of his official duties of employment, shall, for the purpose of this Article, be deemed to be the willful act of the motor carrier. (1985, c. 454, s. 1.)

**§ 20-389. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Actions to recover penalties.**

Except as otherwise provided in this Article, an action for the recovery of any penalty under this Article shall be instituted in Wake County, and shall be instituted in the name of the State of North Carolina on the relation of the Department of Public Safety against the person incurring such penalty; or whenever such action is upon the complaint of any injured person, it shall be instituted in the name of the State of North Carolina on the relation of the Department of Public Safety upon

the complaint of such injured person against the person incurring such penalty. Such action may be instituted and prosecuted by the Attorney General, the District Attorney of the Wake County Superior Court, or the injured person. The procedure in such actions, the right of appeal and the rules regulating appeals shall be the same as provided by law in other civil actions. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-389. (Effective July 1, 2025) Actions to recover penalties.**

Except as otherwise provided in this Article, an action for the recovery of any penalty under this Article shall be instituted in Wake County, and shall be instituted in the name of the State of North Carolina on the relation of the State Highway Patrol against the person incurring such penalty; or whenever such action is upon the complaint of any injured person, it shall be instituted in the name of the State of North Carolina on the relation of the State Highway Patrol upon the complaint of such injured person against the person incurring such penalty. Such action may be instituted and prosecuted by the Attorney General, the District Attorney of the Wake County Superior Court, or the injured person. The procedure in such actions, the right of appeal and the rules regulating appeals shall be the same as provided by law in other civil actions. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-390. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Refusal to permit Department of Public Safety to inspect records made misdemeanor.**

Any motor carrier, its officers or agents in charge thereof, that fails or refuses upon the written demand of the Department of Public Safety to permit its authorized representatives or employees to examine and inspect its books, records, accounts and documents, or its plant, property, or facilities, as provided for by law, shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor. Each day of such failure or refusal shall constitute a separate offense and each such offense shall be punishable only by a fine of not less than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) and not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000). (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 393; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-390. (Effective July 1, 2025) Refusal to permit State Highway Patrol to inspect records made misdemeanor.**

Any motor carrier, its officers or agents in charge thereof, that fails or refuses upon the written demand of the State Highway Patrol to permit its authorized representatives or employees to examine and inspect its books, records, accounts and documents, or its plant, property, or facilities, as provided for by law, shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor. Each day of such failure or refusal shall constitute a separate offense and each such offense shall be punishable only by a fine of not less than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) and not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000). (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 393; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-391. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Violating rules, with injury to others.**

If any motor carrier doing business in this State by its agents or employees shall be guilty of the violations of the rules and regulations provided and prescribed by the Division or the Department of Public Safety, and if after due notice of such violation given to the principal officer thereof, if residing in the State, or, if not, to the manager or superintendent or secretary or treasurer if residing in the State, or, if not, then to any local agent thereof, ample and full recompense for the wrong or

injury done thereby to any person as may be directed by the Division or Department of Public Safety shall not be made within 30 days from the time of such notice, such motor carrier shall incur a penalty for each offense of five hundred dollars (\$500.00). (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 11; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-391. (Effective July 1, 2025) Violating rules, with injury to others.**

If any motor carrier doing business in this State by its agents or employees shall be guilty of the violations of the rules and regulations provided and prescribed by the Division or the State Highway Patrol, and if after due notice of such violation given to the principal officer thereof, if residing in the State, or, if not, to the manager or superintendent or secretary or treasurer if residing in the State, or, if not, then to any local agent thereof, ample and full recompense for the wrong or injury done thereby to any person as may be directed by the Division or State Highway Patrol shall not be made within 30 days from the time of such notice, such motor carrier shall incur a penalty for each offense of five hundred dollars (\$500.00). (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 11; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-392. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Failure to make report; obstructing Division or Department of Public Safety.**

Every officer, agent or employee of any motor carrier, who shall willfully neglect or refuse to make and furnish any report required by the Division or Department of Public Safety for the purposes of this Article, or who shall willfully or unlawfully hinder, delay or obstruct the Division or Department of Public Safety in the discharge of the duties hereby imposed upon it, shall forfeit and pay five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each offense, to be recovered in an action in the name of the State. A delay of 10 days to make and furnish such report shall raise the presumption that the same was willful. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 12; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-392. (Effective July 1, 2025) Failure to make report; obstructing Division or State Highway Patrol.**

Every officer, agent or employee of any motor carrier, who shall willfully neglect or refuse to make and furnish any report required by the Division or State Highway Patrol for the purposes of this Article, or who shall willfully or unlawfully hinder, delay or obstruct the Division or State Highway Patrol in the discharge of the duties hereby imposed upon it, shall forfeit and pay five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each offense, to be recovered in an action in the name of the State. A delay of 10 days to make and furnish such report shall raise the presumption that the same was willful. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 12; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-393. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Disclosure of information by employee of Department of Public Safety unlawful.**

It shall be unlawful for any agent or employee of the Department of Public Safety knowingly and willfully to divulge any fact or information which may come to his knowledge during the course of any examination or inspection made under authority of this Article, except to the Department of Public Safety or as may be directed by the Department of Public Safety or upon approval of a request to the Department of Public Safety by the Utilities Commission or by a court or judge thereof. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-393. (Effective July 1, 2025) Disclosure of information by employee of State Highway Patrol unlawful.**

It shall be unlawful for any agent or employee of the State Highway Patrol knowingly and willfully to divulge any fact or information which may come to his knowledge during the course of any examination or inspection made under authority of this Article, except to the State Highway Patrol or as may be directed by the State Highway Patrol or upon approval of a request to the State Highway Patrol by the Utilities Commission or by a court or judge thereof. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-394. Remedies for injuries cumulative.**

The remedies given by this Article to persons injured shall be regarded as cumulative to the remedies otherwise provided by law against motor carriers. (1985, c. 454, s. 1.)

**§ 20-395. Willful injury to property of motor carrier a misdemeanor.**

If any person shall willfully do or cause to be done any act or acts whatever whereby any building, construction or work of any motor carrier, or any engine, machine or structure of any matter or thing appertaining to the same shall be stopped, obstructed, impaired, weakened, injured or destroyed, he shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 394; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

**§ 20-396. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Unlawful motor carrier operations.**

(a) Any person, whether carrier, shipper, consignee, or any officer, employee, agent, or representative thereof, who by means of any false statement or representation, or by the use of any false or fictitious bill, bill of lading, receipt, voucher, roll, account, claim, certificate, affidavit, deposition, lease, or bill of sale, or by any other means or device, shall knowingly and willfully seek to evade or defeat regulations as in this Article provided for motor carriers, shall be deemed guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and only punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the first offense and not more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for any subsequent offense.

(b) Any motor carrier, or other person, or any officer, agent, employee, or representative thereof, who shall willfully fail or refuse to make a report to the Division or Department of Public Safety as required by this Article, or other applicable law, or to make specific and full, true, and correct answer to any question within 30 days from the time it is lawfully required by the Division or Department of Public Safety so to do, or to keep accounts, records, and memoranda in the form and manner prescribed by the Division or Department of Public Safety or shall knowingly and willfully falsify, destroy, mutilate, or alter any such report, account, record, or memorandum, or shall knowingly and willfully neglect or fail to make true and correct entries in such accounts, records, or memoranda of all facts and transactions appertaining to the business of the carrier, or person required under this Article to keep the same, or shall knowingly and willfully keep any accounts, records, or memoranda contrary to the rules, regulations, or orders of the Division or Department of Public Safety with respect thereto, shall be deemed guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and be punished for each offense only by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000). As used in this subsection the words "kept" and "keep" shall be construed to mean made, prepared or compiled as well as retained. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 395; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 13; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-396. (Effective July 1, 2025) Unlawful motor carrier operations.**

(a) Any person, whether carrier, shipper, consignee, or any officer, employee, agent, or representative thereof, who by means of any false statement or representation, or by the use of any false or fictitious bill, bill of lading, receipt, voucher, roll, account, claim, certificate, affidavit, deposition, lease, or bill of sale, or by any other means or device, shall knowingly and willfully seek to evade or defeat regulations as in this Article provided for motor carriers, shall be deemed guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and only punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the first offense and not more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for any subsequent offense.

(b) Any motor carrier, or other person, or any officer, agent, employee, or representative thereof, who shall willfully fail or refuse to make a report to the Division or State Highway Patrol as required by this Article, or other applicable law, or to make specific and full, true, and correct answer to any question within 30 days from the time it is lawfully required by the Division or State Highway Patrol so to do, or to keep accounts, records, and memoranda in the form and manner prescribed by the Division or State Highway Patrol or shall knowingly and willfully falsify, destroy, mutilate, or alter any such report, account, record, or memorandum, or shall knowingly and willfully neglect or fail to make true and correct entries in such accounts, records, or memoranda of all facts and transactions appertaining to the business of the carrier, or person required under this Article to keep the same, or shall knowingly and willfully keep any accounts, records, or memoranda contrary to the rules, regulations, or orders of the Division or State Highway Patrol with respect thereto, shall be deemed guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and be punished for each offense only by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000). As used in this subsection the words "kept" and "keep" shall be construed to mean made, prepared or compiled as well as retained. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 395; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 13; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

**§ 20-397. (Effective until July 1, 2025) Furnishing false information to the Department of Public Safety; withholding information from the Department of Public Safety.**

(a) Every person, firm or corporation operating under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Safety or who is required by law to file reports with the Department of Public Safety who shall knowingly or willfully file or give false information to the Department of Public Safety in any report, reply, response, or other statement or document furnished to the Department of Public Safety shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(b) Every person, firm, or corporation operating under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Safety or who is required by law to file reports with the Department of Public Safety who shall willfully withhold clearly specified and reasonably obtainable information from the Department of Public Safety in any report, response, reply or statement filed with the Department of Public Safety in the performance of the duties of the Department of Public Safety or who shall fail or refuse to file any report, response, reply or statement required by the Department of Public Safety in the performance of the duties of the Department of Public Safety shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 396; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g).)

**§ 20-397. (Effective July 1, 2025) Furnishing false information to the State Highway Patrol; withholding information from the State Highway Patrol.**

(a) Every person, firm or corporation operating under the jurisdiction of the State Highway Patrol or who is required by law to file reports with the State Highway Patrol who shall knowingly or willfully file or give false information to the State Highway Patrol in any report, reply, response, or other statement or document furnished to the State Highway Patrol shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(b) Every person, firm, or corporation operating under the jurisdiction of the State Highway Patrol or who is required by law to file reports with the State Highway Patrol who shall willfully withhold clearly specified and reasonably obtainable information from the State Highway Patrol in any report, response, reply or statement filed with the State Highway Patrol in the performance of the duties of the State Highway Patrol or who shall fail or refuse to file any report, response, reply or statement required by the State Highway Patrol in the performance of the duties of the State Highway Patrol shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1985, c. 454, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 396; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-159, s. 31.5(b); 2002-190, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2024-57, s. 3E.2(u).)

#### **§ 20-398. Household goods carrier; marking or identification of vehicles.**

(a) No carrier shall operate or attempt to operate any motor vehicle upon a highway, public street, or public vehicular area within the State in the transportation of household goods for compensation unless the name or trade name and the North Carolina number assigned to the carrier by the North Carolina Utilities Commission appear on each side of the vehicle in letters and figures not less than three inches high. The North Carolina number assigned to the carrier shall also be placed on the rear left upper quadrant of the vehicle in letters and figures not less than three inches high. In case of a tractor-trailer unit, the side markings must be on the tractor and the rear markings must be on the trailer. The markings required may be printed on the vehicle or on durable placards securely fastened on the vehicle.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the provisions of this section shall apply to every vehicle used by the carrier in his or her operation whether owned, rented, leased, or otherwise. However, if a vehicle is rented or leased, the words "Operated By" shall also appear above or preceding the name of the carrier, unless the vehicles are under permanent lease, in which case the name of the lessor and the words "Operated By" need not appear.

(c) The provisions of this section do not apply to carriers engaged only in interstate commerce. If the carrier is engaged in both interstate and intrastate commerce and is marked as required by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, then in that case, it will only be necessary for the carrier to print his or her North Carolina number in a conspicuous place near his or her name in letters and figures corresponding in size with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations.

(d) Any person, whether carrier or any officer, employee, agent, or representative thereof, who violates this section shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and punished only by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for the first offense and not more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for any subsequent offense.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 20-383 to the contrary, any law enforcement officer with territorial jurisdiction is authorized to enforce the provisions of this section. (2011-244, s. 1; 2021-23, s. 1.)