

## CHAPTER 34

**AN ACT** concerning the use of emergency warning lights and sirens by certain emergency management volunteers and amending the title and body of P.L.1977, c.223.

**BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. The title of P.L.1977, c.223 is amended to read as follows:

**AN ACT** relating to emergency warning lights for members of volunteer fire companies, volunteer first aid or rescue squads, and volunteer Offices of Emergency Management, supplementing chapter 3 of Title 39 of the Revised Statutes and repealing P.L.1971, c.352.

2. Section 1 of P.L.1977, c.223 (C.39:3-54.7) is amended to read as follows:

C.39:3-54.7 Display of emergency warning lights.

1. a. An active member in good standing of any of the following organizations may display, on a motor vehicle operated by that member, an emergency warning light or lights as provided in this act:

(1) a volunteer fire company or a volunteer first aid or rescue squad recognized by and rendering service in any municipality; or

(2) any county or municipal volunteer Office of Emergency Management recognized by and rendering service in any county or municipality, provided the member's official duties include responding to a fire or emergency call.

b. The Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission shall not require the member to specify on which motor vehicles the emergency warning light or lights may be mounted.

3. Section 5 of P.L.1977, c.223 (C.39:3-54.11) is amended to read as follows:

C.39:3-54.11 Identification cards; issuance.

5. a. The Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission shall prepare suitable identification cards bearing the signature of the chief administrator which, upon the request of the mayor or chief executive officer of any municipality recognizing and being served by a volunteer fire company or a volunteer first aid or rescue squad on a form and in a manner prescribed by the chief administrator, shall be forwarded to the mayor or chief executive officer, to be countersigned and issued by the mayor or chief executive officer to the members in good standing of the volunteer fire company or first aid or rescue squad.

b. Identification cards issued pursuant to this section and sections 5 and 6 of P.L.2005, c.34 (C.39:3-54.22 and C.39:3-54.23) shall be considered permits to display and operate emergency warning lights as provided for in this act and shall apply to any motor vehicle driven by the member of a volunteer fire company, a volunteer first aid or rescue squad or a volunteer Office of Emergency Management. Emergency warning lights shall not be mounted prior to the issuance of the identification cards. Each member of a volunteer fire company, a volunteer first aid or rescue squad or a volunteer Office of Emergency Management must carry the identification card while an emergency warning light or lights are displayed on his vehicle.

4. Section 6 of P.L.1977, c.223 (C.39:3-54.12) is amended to read as follows:

C.39:3-54.12 Rights of motor vehicle with emergency lights in operation.

6. Nothing contained herein is intended to grant to any member of a volunteer fire company, a volunteer first aid or rescue squad or a volunteer Office of Emergency Management any privileges or exemptions denied to the drivers of other vehicles, and such members displaying emergency warning lights shall drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and shall obey all the traffic laws of this State, provided, however, that the drivers of non-emergency vehicles upon any highway shall yield the right of way to the vehicle of any member of a volunteer fire company, a volunteer first aid or rescue squad or a volunteer Office of Emergency Management displaying emergency warning lights in the same manner as is provided for authorized emergency vehicles pursuant to R.S.39:4-92.

C.39:3-54.22 Application, approval for permit to display emergency light by county volunteer Office of Emergency Management member.

5. An active member of a county volunteer Office of Emergency Management shall submit an application for a permit to the County Emergency Management Coordinator prior to displaying an emergency warning light or lights pursuant to the provisions of this act. The coordinator shall approve the application if the volunteer's official duties require him to respond to fire or emergency calls. The completed application shall be forwarded to the Director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders or other appropriate authority of the county that recognizes and serves the applicant's Office of Emergency Management. Upon approval, the mayor or chief executive officer shall forward the application to the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission for issuance of the permit

C.39:3-54.23 Application, approval for permit to display emergency light by municipal volunteer Office of Emergency Management member.

6. An active member of a municipal volunteer Office of Emergency Management shall submit an application to the Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator to display an emergency warning light or lights pursuant to the provisions of this act. The coordinator shall approve the application if the volunteer's official duties require him to respond to fire or emergency calls. The completed application shall be forwarded to the mayor or chief executive officer of the municipality that recognizes and serves the applicant's Office of Emergency Management. Upon approval, the mayor or chief executive officer shall forward the application to the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission for issuance of the permit.

7. This act shall take effect on the first day of the third month following enactment.

Approved February 25, 2005.