

New rule requires transit buses to stop before railroad crossings

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King County Metro says riders shouldn't be surprised if buses now stop every time before they drive over railroad tracks — even when there is no train coming.

A change in state regulations took effect Thursday that requires transit buses, charter buses, school buses and trucks hauling hazardous materials to stop at almost all track crossings. They're not required to stop at streetcar tracks, marked abandoned rail lines, or crossings controlled by traffic signals showing green lights, or police or authorized flaggers allowing passage.

"So, don't be surprised when a bus slows down and activates its four-way hazard lights when it approaches almost any railroad crossing — including locations where buses may have not stopped before," Metro officials said in a [news release](#). "The buses are required to stop at these crossings whether they have passengers on board or are heading back to the transit base empty."

State lawmakers approved the [changes](#) this year to bring state law more up to speed with federal regulations so Washington state wouldn't be in jeopardy of losing federal grant money.