



TRAFFIC AND SAFETY MANUAL

Chapter 2 – Signing 2B – Regulatory Signs

Speed Limit Signs

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General

Speed limits are established on primary highways and primary highway extensions upon the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation, commonly referred to as a speed study, as required by statute. The study is described in [Section 7C](#) of the Traffic and Safety Manual. Speed limit changes on primary highway extensions are made by the Iowa DOT, generally with concurrence of the city involved. The process for establishing speed limits is described in [Section 5A](#) of the Traffic and Safety Manual. Speed limit sign placement is covered in [Section 2A-8](#) of the Traffic and Safety Manual.

Statutory Speed Limits

Most speed limits on primary highway extensions have been established on the basis of a speed study, but in cases where no speed study has been conducted, the speed limit should be as stated in [Chapter 321.285 of the Iowa Code](#).

Park and Institutional Roads

The Iowa DOT is responsible for establishing and posting speed limits on extensions of primary highways through parks and institutions. For other state park and institution roads the controlling agency has jurisdiction and is responsible for establishing the speed limits. The Iowa DOT has a duty to maintain those roads, which may include sign installation. For further information about maintenance of State Park and Institutional Roads refer to Iowa DOT [Policy 800.04](#).

School Speed Limits

A School Speed Limit assembly shall be used to indicate the speed limit where a reduced speed zone for a school area or school crosswalk during certain time periods has been established by Staff Action. The assembly consists of a Speed Limit Sign Beacon, School plaque, Speed Limit sign and When Flashing plaque, to identify the time periods that the school speed limit is in effect. The end of the school speed zone should be marked with a End School Zone (S5-2) sign and a standard speed limit sign showing the speed limit for the section of highway that follows. The End School Zone sign and the speed limit sign will be installed in the same post with the speed limit sign installed to the left of the End School Zone sign. A School Advance Warning sign with supplemental Ahead plaque shall be used in advance of a School Speed Limit assembly. The State Traffic Engineer will provide assistance with the determination for use of school speed limits at the request of the District Office.

Minimum Speed Limit Signs

The minimum speed limit on the interstate system in Iowa is forty miles per hour. A minimum speed may also be established on divided multilane highways if warranted by engineering and traffic investigations and established by Staff Action. When used, the minimum speed limit sign shall be placed below the speed limit sign and shall not be used alone.

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