

# Title 11 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## Subtitle 04 STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

### ***Chapter 19 Vehicle Equipment – Portable Variable Messaging Signs - Authorization***

*Authority: Transportation Article, §§ 22-218(c)(7) and 22-218.2(a), Annotated Code of Maryland*

#### **.01 Definition.**

*A. In this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated.*

*B. Terms Defined:*

*(1) “MdMUTCD” means the Maryland Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways adopted in Transportation Article, §25-104, Annotated Code of Maryland.*

*(2) “Portable variable messaging sign”, also referred to as a “portable changeable message sign” in the MdMUTCD, means a sign that is capable of displaying more than one message, of which one message may be a blank display, and that is changeable manually, by remote control, or by automatic control.*

*(3) “Tow truck” has the meaning stated in Transportation Article, §13-920, Annotated Code of Maryland.*

#### **.02 Tow Truck-mounted Portable Variable Messaging Signs.**

*A. All tow truck-mounted portable variable messaging signs shall be:*

- (1) permanently affixed to a tow truck;*
- (2) installed at a height of at least 7 feet measured from the surface of the roadway to the bottom of the sign; and*
- (3) in conformance with the requirements of the MdMUTCD.*

#### **.03 Message Display.**

*A. A message may be displayed only while at the scene of a crash or a disabled vehicle.*

*B. The message that may be displayed is “SLOW DOWN”, displayed as two lines in all upper-case letters.*

*C. Any tow truck-mounted portable variable messaging sign shall only display static text that:*

- (1) is colored yellow or amber, on an opaque black background;*
- (2) is one consistent letter height of at least 10 inches; and*
- (3) contains words within which the letter spacing is between 25 and 40 percent of the letter height.*

*D. The vertical spacing between the lines of text shall be between 50 and 75 percent of the letter height.*

*E. The message shall not include animation, flashing, dissolving, exploding, scrolling, or other dynamic display elements.*

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