

**June 2020 Supplement to  
North Carolina Pattern Jury Instructions for Motor Vehicle Negligence Cases**

This supplement contains a new table of contents for the motor vehicle instructions, replacement instructions for motor vehicle cases, and a new motor vehicle index. Place the instructions in the book in the proper numerical sequence. Old instructions with the same number should be discarded.

**Interim Instructions.** As the Pattern Jury Instructions Committee considers new or updated instructions, it posts Interim Instructions that are too important to wait until June to distribute as part of the annual hard copy supplements to the School of Government Website at [sog.unc.edu/programs/ncpjii](http://sog.unc.edu/programs/ncpjii). You may check the site periodically for these instructions or join the Pattern Jury Interim Instructions Listserv to receive notification when instructions are posted to the website. Visit the following link to join the Listserv: [http://lists.unc.edu/read/all\\_forums/subscribe?name=ncpjii](http://lists.unc.edu/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=ncpjii).

This supplement contains the following replacements for existing instructions:

- 102.65 Insulating/Intervening Negligence.
- 105.15 Last Clear Chance—Burden of Proof; Definition; Final Mandate.
- 205.50 Overtaking and Passing on Two-Lane Highway.
- 211.40A Motorist's Duty Toward Pedestrian—Crossing at Other Than Crosswalks.
- 215.31 Windshield and Window Requirements.



**North Carolina**  
**Conference of Superior Court Judges**  
Committee on Pattern Jury Instructions

**North Carolina**  
**PATTERN JURY**  
**INSTRUCTIONS**  
  
**for Motor Vehicle**  
**Negligence**

**Volume I**  
2020 Edition

ISBN 978-1-64238-003-3



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

GUIDE TO THE USE OF THIS BOOK

SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS

NORTH CAROLINA PATTERN JURY INSTRUCTIONS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE  
NEGLIGENCE CASES: \*Dates the instructions were adopted are found at the lower  
left hand corner of the instruction.

### **PART I. GENERAL**

#### **Chapter 1. Preliminary Instructions.**

100.00	Model Motor Vehicle Negligence Charge and Verdict Sheet. (6/2015)
100.10	Opening Statement. (12/04)
100.15	Cameras and Microphones in Courtroom. (5/04)
100.20	Recesses. (6/10)
100.21	Recesses. (6/10)
100.43	Deposition Testimony. (5/04)
100.44	Interrogatories. (12/04)
100.70	Taking of Notes By Jurors. (5/04)
101.00	Admonition to the Trial Judge on Stating the Evidence and Relating the Law to the Evidence. (10/85)
101.05	Function of the Jury. (3/94)
101.10	Burden of Proof and Greater Weight of the Evidence. (3/94)
101.14	Judicial Notice. (10/83)
101.15	Credibility of Witness. (3/94)
101.20	Weight of the Evidence. (3/94)
101.25	Testimony of Expert Witness. (2/94)
101.30	Testimony of Interested Witness. (3/94)
101.32	Evidence--Limitation as to Parties. (10/83)
101.33	Evidence--Limitation as to Purpose. (10/83)
101.35	Impeachment or Corroboration by Prior Statement. (5/92)
101.36	Impeachment of a Party or Witness by Proof of Crime. (4/86)
101.37	Evidence Relating to the Character Trait of a Witness (Including Party) for Truthfulness. (4/86)
101.39	Evidence--Spoilation by a party. (5/01)
101.40	Photograph, Videotape, Motion Pictures, X-Ray, Other Pictorial Representations; Maps, Models, Charts--Illustrative and Substantive Evidence. (10/85)
101.41	Stipulations. (1/88)
101.42	Requests for Admission. (1/88)
101.43	Deposition Evidence. (4/88)
101.45	Circumstantial Evidence. (10/85)

101.46	Definition of [Intent] [Intentionally]. (5/04)
101.50	Duty to Recall the Evidence. (3/94)
101.60	Issues. (3/94)
101.62	Presumptions. (4/84)
101.65	Peremptory Instruction. (8/82)

## **Chapter 2. Negligence Issue.**

102.10	Negligence Issue--Burden of Proof. (5/94)
102.10A	Negligence Issue—Stipuiation of Negligence. (5/09)
102.11	Negligence Issue--Definition of Common Law Negligence. (6/2018)
102.12	Negligence Issue--Definition of Negligence in and of Itself (Negligence Per Se). (5/94)
102.13	Negligence of Minor Between Seven and Fourteen Years of Age. (6/2018)
102.13A	Negligence of a Minor Between Fourteen and Sixteen Years of Age. (5/94)
102.14	Negligence Issue--No Duty to Anticipate Negligence of Others. (5/94)
102.15	Negligence Issue--Doctrine of Sudden Emergency. (6/10)
102.16	Negligence Issue--Sudden Emergency Exception to Negligence Per Se. (5/94)
102.19	Proximate Cause—Definition; Multiple Causes. (5/09)
102.20	Proximate Cause--Peculiar Susceptibility. (4/98)
102.21	"No Contact" Rule. (5/73)
102.24	Proximate Cause--"No Contact Rule." (5/93)
102.25	Negligence Per Se--Violation of Safety Statute or Ordinance. (5/93)
102.26	Proximate Cause--Act of God. (5/94)
102.27	Proximate Cause--Concurring Acts of Negligence. (5/05)
102.28	Proximate Cause--Insulating Acts of Negligence. (Delete Sheet)(6/10)
102.30	Proximate Cause--Defense of Sudden Incapacitation. (2/00)
102.31	Negligence of Minor Between Seven and Fourteen Years of Age. (Delete Sheet) (5/94)
102.35	Contentions of Negligence. (3/94)
102.50	Final Mandate--Negligence Issue. (3/94)
102.60	Concurring Negligence. (5/05)
102.65	Insulating/Intervening Negligence. (6/20)
102.68	Negligence of Owner Entrusting Motor Vehicle to Incompetent, Careless or Reckless Person. (6/11)
102.70	"Dram Shop" Liability--Statutory--Sale or Furnishing of Alcoholic Beverage to Underage Person. (4/04)
102.75	"Dram Shop" Liability--Statutory--Right of Action Lost by Aiding or Abetting Sale or Furnishing. (1/94)
102.81	"Dram Shop" Liability--Common Law--Sale or Furnishing to Intoxicated Person. (1/94)
102.83	Common Law Liability for Providing Impairing Substance to Person Expected to Drive. (6/10)
102.84	Negligence--Infliction of Severe Emotional Distress. (6/18)
102.85	Willful or Wanton Conduct Issue ("Gross Negligence"). (5/97)
102.86	Willful or Wanton Conduct Issue ("Gross Negligence")--Used to Defeat Contributory Negligence. (12/03)
102.87	Willful or Wanton Conduct Issue ("Gross Negligence")--Defense of Contributory Willful or Wanton Conduct by Plaintiff. (3/94)
102.90	Negligence Issue--Joint Conduct--Multiple Tortfeasors. (3/94)

- 102.95 Intentional or Reckless Infliction of Severe Emotional Distress. (5/91)
- 102.97 Action for Loss of Consortium. (5/00)

**Chapter 3. Agency and Derivative Liability.**

- 103.10 Agency Issue—Burden of Proof—When Principal Is Liable. (5/09)
- 103.15 Independent Contractor. (5/92)
- 103.25 Agency—Lent--Servant Doctrine. (10/85)
- 103.40 Ownership of Vehicle as Prima Facie Evidence of Agency. (10/85)
- 103.41 Identification of Driver. (4/89)
- 103.45 Registration as Prima Facie Evidence of Ownership and Agency. (10/85)
- 103.50 Agency--Departure from Employment. (10/85)
- 103.55 Agency--Willful and Intentional Injury Inflicted by an Agent. (10/85)
- 103.60 Agency--Use of Agent's Own Vehicle. (10/85)
- 103.61 Agency--Use of Motor Vehicle by Transferee of Agent. (6/73)
- 103.65 Agency--Riders in Principal's Vehicle. (10/85)
- 103.70 Final Mandate--Agency Issue. (10/85)
- 103.75 Agency--Family Purpose Issue. (10/85)

**Chapter 4. Contributory Negligence Issue.**

- 104.10 Contributory Negligence Issue--Burden of Proof--Definition. (6/2018)
- 104.20 Contributory Negligence--Gratuitous Passenger or Guest. (10/85)
- 104.21 Contributory Negligence Per Se--Gratuitous Passenger Voluntarily and Knowingly Riding With Impaired Driver. (6/10)
- 104.24 Contributory Negligence Per Se--Pedestrian's Violation of Certain Motor Vehicle Laws. (11/79)
- 104.25 Contributory Negligence of Minor Between Seven and Fourteen Years of Age. (6/2018)
- 104.30 Contributory Negligence--No Duty to Anticipate Negligence of Others. (6/89)
- 104.35 Contentions of Contributory Negligence. (3/94)
- 104.40 Contributory Negligence--Doctrine of Sudden Emergency. (5/08)
- 104.50 Final Mandate--Contributory Negligence Issue. (3/94)

**Chapter 5. Last Clear Chance.**

- 105.15 Last Clear Chance--Burden of Proof; Definition; Final Mandate. (5/20)

**Chapter 6. Damage Claims by Plaintiffs.**

- 106&109 Series Reorganization Notice--Damages. (5/00)
- 106.00 Personal Injury Damages--Issue and Burden of Proof. (5/04)
- 106.02 Personal Injury Damages--In General. (5/00)
- 106.04 Personal Injury Damages--Medical Expenses. (6/13)
- 106.06 Personal Injury Damages--Loss of Earnings. (5/00)
- 106.08 Personal Injury Damages--Pain & Suffering. (5/06)
- 106.10 Personal Injury Damages--Scarring or Disfigurement. (1/05)
- 106.12 Personal Injury Damages--Loss (of Use) of Part of the Body. (12/04)
- 106.14 Personal Injury Damages--Permanent Injury. (6/2015)
- 106.16 Personal Injury Damages--Future Worth in Present Value. (5/00)
- 106.18 Personal Injury Damages--Set Off/Deduction of Workers' Compensation Award. (5/00)
- 106.19 Personal Injury Damages--Jury to Consider Only Matters in Evidence. (4/00)

106.20	Personal Injury Damages--Final Mandate (Regular). (5/00)
106.22	Personal Injury Damages--Final Mandate (Per Diem Argument by Counsel). (5/00)
106.24	Personal Injury Damages--Defense of Mitigation. (6/14)
106.26	Loss of Future Earning Capacity Where the Plaintiff has no Employment of Past Employment at the Time of the Accident. (Delete Sheet). (4/00)
106.30	Personal Injury Damages--Loss of Consortium. (4/00)
106.32	Personal Injury Damages--Parent's Claim for Negligent Injury to Minor Child. (4/00)
106.40	Wrongful Death Damages. (4/00)
106.41	Wrongful Death Damages--Set Off/Deduction of Workers' Compensation Award. (5/00)
106.42	Wrongful Death Damages--In General. (1/00)
106.44	Wrongful Death Damages--Medical Expenses. (6/13)
106.46	Wrongful Death Damages--Pain and Suffering. (1/00)
106.48	Wrongful Death Damages--Funeral Expenses. (6/13)
106.50	Wrongful Death Damages--Present Monetary Value of Deceased to Next-of-Kin. (1/00)
106.54	Wrongful Death Damages--Final Mandate (Regular). (1/00)
106.56	Wrongful Death Damages--Final Mandate (Per Diem Argument by Counsel). (1/00)
106.60	Property Damages--Issue and Burden of Proof. (4/17)
106.62	Property Damages--Diminution in Market Value. (5/00)
106.64	Property Damages No Market Value--Cost of Replacement or Repair. (5/00)
106.66	Property Damages--No Market Value, Repair or Replacement--Recovery of Intrinsic Actual Value. (5/00)
106.67	Damages for Loss of Use of Vehicle--Measure of Damages; Final Mandate. (5/17)
106.68	Property Damages--Final Mandate. (5/00)
106.90	Punitive Damages--Issue of Existence of Outrageous or Aggravated Conduct. (5/96)
106.91	Punitive Damages--Issue of Existence of Malicious, Willful or Wanton, or Grossly Negligent Conduct--Wrongful Death Cases. (5/97)
106.92	Punitive Damages--Insurance Company's Bad Faith Refusal to Settle a Claim. (5/96)
106.93	Punitive Damages--Issue of Whether to Make Award and Amount. (5/96)
106.94	Punitive Damages--Issue of Whether to Make Award and Amount. (Special Cases). (5/96)
106.96	Punitive Damages--Liability of Defendant. (8/04)
106.98	Punitive Damages--Issue of Whether to Make Award and Amount. (5/96)

**Chapter 7. Consolidated with Chapter 6. (5/00)**

**Chapter 8. Consolidated with Chapter 6. (5/00)**

**Chapter 9. Plaintiff's Negligence.**

108.10	Issue of Plaintiff's Negligence (Counterclaim)--Burden of Proof; Definition; Contentions of Negligence. (6/93)
--------	--



108.50	Final Mandate--Issue of Plaintiff's Negligence (Counterclaim). (6/93)
108.75	Negligence of Third Party Tort Feasor--Contribution. (1/87)

### **Chapter 10. Damage Claims by Defendants.**

109.00	Defendant's Personal Injury Damages (Counterclaim)--Issue and Burden of Proof. (5/00)
109.02	Defendant's Personal Injury Damages (Counterclaim)--In General. (5/00)
109.19	Defendant's Personal Injury Damages (Counterclaim)--Jury to Consider Only Matters in Evidence. (4/00)
109.20	Defendant's Personal Injury Damages (Counterclaim)--Final Mandate (Regular). (5/00)
109.22	Defendant's Personal Injury Damages (Counterclaim)--Final Mandate (Per Diem Argument by Counsel). (5/00)
109.60	Defendant's Property Damages (Counterclaim)--Issue and Burden of Proof. (5/00)
109.62	Defendant's Property Damages (Counterclaim)--Diminution in Market Value. (5/00)
109.64	Defendant's Property Damages (Counterclaim)--No Market Value--Cost of Replacement of Repair. (5/00)
109.66	Defendant's Property Damages (Counterclaim)--No Market Value, Repair or Replacement--Recovery of Intrinsic Actual Value. (5/00)
109.67	Defendant's Property Damages-- Loss of Use of Vehicle. (5/00)
109.68	Defendant's Property Damages (Counterclaim)--Final Mandate. (5/00)

### **Chapter 11. Consolidated with Chapter 10. (5/00)**

### **Chapter 12. Summary Instructions.**

150.10	Jury Should Consider All Contentions. (3/94)
150.12	Jury Should Render Verdict Based on Fact, Not Consequences. (3/94)
150.20	The Court Has No Opinion. (3/94)
150.30	Verdict Must Be Unanimous. (3/94)
150.40	Selection of Foreperson. (3/94)
150.45	Concluding Instructions--When to Begin Deliberations, Charge Conference. (3/94)
150.50	Failure of Jury to Reach Verdict. (10/80)
150.60	Discharging the Jury. (5/88)

## **PART II SPECIFIC ACTS OF NEGLIGENCE.**

### **Chapter 1. Lookout and Control.**

201.20	Reasonable Lookout. (6/93)
201.30	Proper Control. (6/93)
201.31	Proper Control--Skidding Vehicles 2/89)

### **Chapter 2. Speed Restrictions.**

202.10	Speed Restrictions—Reasonable and Prudent (5/09)
202.15	Speed Restrictions--Speed Zones. (3/94)
202.20A	Speed Restrictions--Failure to Reduce Speed. (5/88)
202.40	Speed Restrictions—School and School Activity Buses. (6/10)
202.60	Speed Limitations on Bridges, Causeways and Viaducts. (5/88)

202.80	Speed Limit Not Applicable--Emergency Vehicles. (11/96)
202.81	Speed Limit Not Applicable--Emergency Vehicles--Willful or Wanton Conduct--("Gross Negligence"). (12/03)
202.85	Driving Too Slowly--No Prescribed Minimum Speed. (5/88)
202.90	Driving Too Slowly--Prescribed Minimum Speeds. (5/88)

### **Chapter 3. Right-of-Way; Railroad Crossings.**

203.05	Right-of-Way--Traffic Circle. (4/89)
203.06	Right-of-Way--Vehicles Approaching Intersection at Approximately the Same Time. (4/89)
203.07	Right-of-Way--One Vehicle Intending to Turn Left at Intersection. (6/89)
203.08	Right-of-Way--One Vehicle Intending to Turn Left at Alley, Private Road or Driveway. (6/89)
203.10	Stop Sign Violation. (5/06)
203.15	Stop Sign Violation--Duty of Driver on Starting from Stopped Position. (6/89)
203.20	Stop Sign Violation--Duty of Driver on Dominant Highway. (6/89)
203.25	Right-of-Way of Operator on Servient Street When Entering Intersection After Stopping. (6/89)
203.28	Yield Right-of-Way Signs. (6/89)
203.29	Entering Highway from Private Road or Drive. (6/89)
203.30	Vehicle Control Signals at Intersections. (5/08)
203.31	Signal Lights other than at Intersections. (5/08)
203.50	Railway Crossings--Stop Sign. (6/89)
203.51	Railroad Warning Signals Must Be Obeyed. (6/89)
203.55	Railroad Crossings--Buses and Trucks. (6/89)
203.56	Railroad Crossing--Railroad's Duty of Care--Duty to Keep Lookout; Duty to Give Warning. (4/90)
203.57	Railroad Crossing--Railroad's Duty of Care--Duty to Provide Special Warning at Extra Hazardous Crossings. (4/90)
203.57A	Railroad Crossing--Railroad's Duty of Care--Duty of Railroad to Operate and Maintain Existing Crossing Signals. (5/90)
203.58	Railroad Crossing--Railroad's Duty of Care--Duty to Maintain Crossings. (5/90)
203.58A	Railroad Crossing--Railroad's Duty of Care--Duty of Railroad as to Obstructions. (5/90)
203.59	Operator's Duty of Care at Railroad Crossings. (5/90)

### **Chapter 4. Stopping on Highway.**

203.60	Stopping on Shoulder of Highway. (6/11)
203.60A	Stopping on Shoulder of Highway. (6/11)
203.65	Stopping on Highway or Bridge. (6/11)
203.65A	Stopping on Highway or Bridge, Posted Speed Limit Less Than 45 Miles Per Hour. (6/11)
203.65B	Stopping on Highway or Bridge, Posted Speed Limit Greater Than 45 Miles Per Hour. (6/11)
203.66	Stopping on Highway--Disabled Trucks, Truck Trailers or Semitrailers. (2/89)
203.70	Parking on Highways--Lighting Required. (2/89)
203.71	Night Parking on Highways--Bright Lights Prohibited. (2/89)
203.75	Motor Vehicles Left Unattended--Setting Parking Brakes, Etc. (4/89)

**Chapter 5. Proper Lane.**

- 204.09 Duty to Drive In Proper Lane. (12/88)
- 204.10 Duty to Drive on Right Side--Four or More Lanes. (2/89)
- 204.15 General Duty to Drive on Right Side and Exceptions. (2/89)
- 204.17 Duty to Keep to the Right in Crossing Intersections or Railroads.  
(3/89)
- 204.20 Duty to Drive in Right Lane at Slow Speeds. (2/89)
- 204.25 DELETE SHEET--Driving to the Left of Center on Hillcrest or Curve.  
(6/07)
- 204.51 Operation of Motorcycles--Driving More Than Two Abreast. (2/89)
- 204.52 Operation of Motorcycles--Entitlement to Full Use of a Lane. (2/89)
- 204.80 One-Way Traffic. (2/89)

**Chapter 6. Following and Passing.**

- 205.10 Meeting of Vehicles. (6/89)
- 205.30 Following Too Closely. (2/89)
- 205.32 Following Too Closely--Overtaking Vehicle. (2/89)
- 205.50 Overtaking and Passing on Two-Lane Highway. (2/20)
- 205.51 DELETE SHEET--Overtaking and Passing When Prohibited by Signs,  
Marks, or Markers. (6/07)
- 205.55 Driver to Give Way to Overtaking Vehicle. (2/89)
- 205.60 Passing on Right Prohibited; Exceptions. (2/89)
- 205.65 Common Law Duty to Sound Horn in Passing. (2/89)
- 205.70 Passing Horses or Other Draft Animals. (2/89)
- 205.80 Duty to Dim Headlights. (2/89)

**Chapter 7. Backing Vehicle and Turn Signals.**

- 205.90 Backing of Vehicles. (2/89)
- 206.10 Signal on Starting, Stopping or Turning--Another Vehicle Affected.  
(2/89)

**Chapter 8. Reckless Driving and Driving While Impaired.**

- 207.10 Reckless Driving. (4/89)
- 208.10 Driving While Impaired. (5/09)

**Chapter 9. Turning.**

- 209.10 Turning--Right Turn. (4/89)
- 209.15 Turning at Intersection--Left Turn. (4/89)
- 209.20 Turning at Intersection--Controlled by Buttons, Markers, or Other  
Direction Signs. (4/89)

**Chapter 10. Emergency Vehicles.**

- 210.10 Right-of-Way of Emergency Vehicles--Duty of Driver of Emergency  
Vehicle. (4/89)
- 210.15 Emergency Vehicles--Duty of Driver of Non-Emergency Vehicle. (6/07)
- 210.25 Emergency Vehicles--Interference with Fire Equipment (6/07)
- 210.30 Emergency Vehicles--Chasing Firetrucks (Inside City Limits). (6/07)
- 210.31 Emergency Vehicles--Chasing Firetrucks (Outside City Limits). (6/07)
- 210.35 Emergency Vehicles--Interference With Fire Equipment. (4/89)
- 210.40 Emergency Vehicles--Parking Within 100 Feet of Emergency Vehicle.  
(6/07)

- 210.41 Emergency Vehicles--Approaching Parked or Standing Authorized  
Emergency Vehicles (effective before July 1, 2006). (6/07)
- 210.42 Emergency Vehicles--Approaching Parked or Standing Authorized  
Emergency Vehicles or Public Service Vehicle (effective July 1, 2006).  
(6/13)

**Chapter 11. Pedestrians.**

- 211.01 Motorist's Duty Toward Pedestrian--Intersection or Other Appropriate  
Place With Special Pedestrian Control Signals. (4/89)
- 211.10 Motorists's Duty Toward Pedestrian--Crosswalk or Intersection. (4/89)
- 211.20 Duty of Following Motorist When Vehicle Has Stopped for Pedestrian.  
(4/89)
- 211.30 Pedestrian--Crossing At Intersection or Other Appropriate Place With  
Special Pedestrian Control Signals. (6/89)
- 211.35 Pedestrian--Crossing At Intersection With Vehicular Traffic Control  
Signals. (6/89)
- 211.36 Pedestrian--Crossing At Places With Vehicular Traffic Control Signals  
Other Than at Intersections. (6/89)
- 211.40 Pedestrian--Crossing at Other Than Crosswalks. (6/89)
- 211.40A Motorist's Duty toward Pedestrian--Crossing at Other Than Crosswalks.  
(5/20)
- 211.45 Pedestrian Duty to Walk to Left of Highway and Yield Right-of-Way.  
(6/89)
- 211.45A Motorist's Duty to Pedestrian--Walking on Highway. (6/89)
- 211.46 Motorist's Duty Toward Pedestrian--Turning at Intersection with  
Vehicular Traffic Control Signals. (5/08)
- 211.50 Pedestrian--Standing, Sitting or Lying Upon Highway. (6/89)
- 211.55 Hitchhiker--Pedestrians Soliciting Rides. (6/89)
- 211.56 Pedestrians--Standing or Loitering on Highways; Soliciting  
Employment, Business or Contributions. (6/89)
- 211.70 Right-of-Way of Blind Pedestrians With White Canes or Guide Dogs.  
(6/89)
- 211.75 Pedestrians--Duty of Lookout--Pedestrians With Right-of-Way. (6/89)
- 211.76 Pedestrians--Duty of Lookout--Pedestrians Without Right-of-Way.  
(6/89)
- 211.80 Children (Including Those on Bicycles) on Highways and Streets.  
(6/89)
- 211.82 Children—Transporting Children in Open Bed of Vehicle. (5/09)

**Chapter 12. Speed Competition.**

- 213.10 Racing and Speed Competition. (5/88)

**Chapter 13. Required Equipment.**

- 215.10 Required Lighting Equipment--Ordinary Motor Vehicles—Headlights  
and Taillights. (6/89)
- 215.11 Required Lighting Equipment--Ordinary Motor Vehicles and  
Motorcycles--Stoplights. (6/89)
- 215.15 Required Lighting Equipment--Motorcycles--Nighttime. (10/88)
- 215.16 Required Lighting Equipment--Motorcycles--Daytime. (10/88)
- 215.20 Required Lighting Equipment--Bicycles. (10/88)
- 215.25 Flag or Light at End of Load. (6/10)
- 215.30 Requirement of Safety Glass for Motor Vehicles. (6/89)

215.31	Windshield and Window Requirements. (2/20)
215.35	Inside Mirrors--Most Motor Vehicles. (10/88)
215.36	Mirrors--Pickup Trucks. (10/88)
215.37	Mirrors--When Inside Mirror Would Be Ineffective. (10/88)
215.38	Outside Mirrors--Most Motor Vehicles, Including Motorcycles. (10/88)
215.40	Tires--Safety Requirements. (6/10)
215.40A	Tires—Safety Requirements. (6/10)
215.50	Overloading or Overcrowding Motor Vehicles Prohibited. (10/88)
215.55	Motorcycles--Overcrowding; Helmets. (10/88)
215.60	Securing Loads--Open Flat Trucks. (4/89)
215.65	Towed Vehicles--Attachment; Snaking. (10/88)
215.70	Vehicle Transporting Explosives Before June 24, 1985. (10/88)
215.71	Vehicle Transporting Explosives After June 24, 1985. (10/88)
215.75	Steering Mechanism. (10/88)
215.80	Brakes--Most Motor Vehicles. (10/88)
215.81	Brakes--Motorcycles. (10/88)
215.82	Brakes--Trucks and Tractor-Trucks. (10/88)
215.83	Brakes--Towed Vehicles. (10/88)

**Chapter 14. Stop at Scene of Accident.**

217.10	Duty to Stop and Render Aid at Scene of Accident. (5/09)
--------	--

**Chapter 15. School Buses.**

218.10	Stopping for School and Other Buses Transporting Children (or Senior Citizens). (5/06)
218.11	Stopping for School and Other Buses Transporting Children (or Senior Citizens). (5/06)
218.50	Receiving or Discharging School Bus Passengers. (6/89)

**Chapter 16. Operating Vehicle Without License.**

220.10	Operation of Vehicle Without a Class "C" License--Under Age. (6/89)
220.20	Knowingly Permitting One to Operate a Vehicle Without a License—General Provision. (6/89)
220.21	Permitting Unlicensed Minor to Drive. (6/89)

**Chapter 17. Interstate Highway Violations.**

221.10	Controlled-Access Highway--Crossing Central Dividing Line. (4/89)
221.15	Controlled-Access Highway--Turns. (4/89)
221.20	Controlled-Access Highway--Driving in Improper Lane, Wrong Way. (4/89)
221.25	Controlled-Access Highway--Entering and Exiting. (4/89)
221.30	Controlled-Access Highway--Stopping on Right-of-Way. (4/89)
221.35	Controlled-Access Highway--Failure to Yield Right-of-Way. (4/89)

**Chapter 18. Miscellaneous Acts of Negligence.**

225.10	Location of Video Monitors and Screens in Motor Vehicles. (6/10)
225.11	Driving While Texting. (6/13)
225.13	Commercial Motor Vehicle—Driving While Using A Mobile Telephone Or Other Electronic Device. (6/13)
225.20	Coasting Prohibited. (10/88)
225.22	Driving Through Safety Zone. (4/89)
225.23	Driving on Sidewalks. (4/89)

225.35	Persons Riding Animals and Drivers of Animal-Drawn Vehicles. (6/89)
225.37	Special Acts of Negligence--Moped Operator (Under Age). (6/10)

**APPENDICES.**

A. DEFINITIONS FROM THE MOTOR VEHICLE CODE. (2/89)

B. TABLE OF SECTIONS OF GENERAL STATUTES INVOLVED IN CIVIL INSTRUCTIONS  
THROUGH 225.35. (6/85)

C. DESCRIPTIVE WORD INDEX. (6/15)

102.65 INSULATING/INTERVENING NEGLIGENCE.

*NOTE WELL: Insulating negligence, also referred to in North Carolina case law as intervening or superseding negligence, Barber v. Constien, 130 N.C. App. 380, 383, 502 S.E.2d 912, 914 (1998), is not a separate issue. It is "an elaboration of a phase of proximate cause." Childers v. Seay, 270 N.C. 721, 726, 155 S.E.2d 259, 263 (1967).<sup>1</sup>*

A natural and continuous sequence of causation may be interrupted or broken by the negligence of a second person. This occurs when a second person's negligence was not reasonably foreseeable by the first person and causes its own natural and continuous sequence which interrupts, breaks, displaces or supersedes the consequences of the first person's negligence. Under such circumstances, the negligence of the second person, not reasonably foreseeable by the first person, insulates the negligence of the first person and would be the sole proximate cause of the [injury] [damage].<sup>2</sup>

In this case, the defendant, *(state name of defendant)*,<sup>3</sup> contends that if [he] [she] was negligent, which [he] [she] denies, such negligence was not a proximate cause of the plaintiff's [injury] [damage] because it was insulated by the negligence of *(state name of other person who defendant alleges was negligent)*.

You will consider this matter only if you find that the defendant was negligent. If you find the defendant was negligent, that negligence would be insulated- and the defendant would not be liable to the plaintiff- if the negligence of *(state name of other person)* was such as to have broken the causal connection or sequence between the defendant's negligence and the plaintiff's [injury] [damage], thereby excluding the defendant's negligence as a proximate cause. The negligence of *(state name of other person)* would thus become as between the negligence of the defendant and *(state name of other person)*, the sole proximate cause of the plaintiff's [injury] [damage].<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, if the causal connection between the negligence of the defendant and the plaintiff's [injury] [damage] was not broken, and the defendant's negligence continued to be a proximate cause of the plaintiff's [injury] [damage] up to the moment of [the collision] [(*describe other occurrence*)],<sup>5</sup> then the defendant would be liable to the plaintiff.<sup>6</sup>

If, at the time of the defendant's negligent act, the defendant reasonably could have foreseen<sup>7</sup> negligent conduct which was likely to produce [injury] [damage] on the part of one in the position of (*state name of other person*),<sup>8</sup> the causal connection would not be broken, and the negligence of the defendant would not be prevented from being a proximate cause of the plaintiff's [injury] [damage].

However, if the negligence of the defendant would not have resulted in the plaintiff's [injury] [damage] except for the negligence of (*state name of other person*), and if negligence and resulting injury on the part of one in the position of (*state name of other person*) was not reasonably foreseeable to the defendant, then the causal connection would be broken and the negligence of the defendant (*state name of defendant*) would not be a proximate cause of the plaintiff's [injury] [damage].<sup>9</sup>

The burden is not on the defendant to prove that [his] [her] negligence, if any, was insulated by the negligence of (*state name of other person*). Rather, the burden is on the plaintiff to prove, by the greater weight of the evidence, that the negligence of the defendant was a proximate cause of the plaintiff's [injury] [damage].<sup>10</sup>

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1. Barber v. Constien "The law of intervening negligence provides that under certain circumstances another sufficiently independent act, unassociated with defendant's initial negligence, may insulate defendant from liability." David A. Logan & Wayne A. Logan, *North Carolina Torts* § 7.30, 166 (1996). See also *Strong's North Carolina Index* 4th § 20 (2010):

*In order to insulate the negligence of one party, the intervening negligence of another must be such as to break the sequence or causal connection between*



*the negligence of the first party and the injury, so as to exclude the negligence of the first party as one of the proximate causes of the injury. (citation omitted).*

"[T]he question of whether the intervening negligence of another tort-feasor will operate to insulate the negligence of the original tort-feasor is ordinarily a question for the jury." *Tabor v. Kaufman*, 196 N.C. App. 745, 748, 675 S.E.2d 701, 703 (2009) (citation omitted). This is "[b]ecause '[p]roximate cause is an inference of fact [and] [i]t is only when the facts are all admitted and only one inference may be drawn from them that the court will declare whether an act was the proximate cause of an injury or not.'" *Id.* (citation and emphasis omitted).

"Where proper instructions on proximate cause are given, the court is under no duty to instruct the jury specifically with respect to insulating negligence in the absence of proper request[.]" *Childers v. Seay*, 270 N.C. 721, 726, 155 S.E.2d 259, 263 (1967). But even when the instruction is requested, the burden of proof does not shift to the defendant to prove that *his* negligence, if any, was insulated by the negligence of another party. The burden remains with the plaintiff, because "[s]uperseding or insulating negligence is an extension of plaintiff's burden of proof on proximate cause." *Clarke v. Mikhail*, 243 N.C. App. 677, 686, 779 S.E.2d 150, 158 (2015).

*The instruction, when given, will often follow the instruction on joint and concurring negligence. See N.C.P.I.-Civil 102.60 ("Concurring Negligence").*

2. See *Harton v. Telephone Co.*, 141 N.C. 455, 462-63, 54 S.E. 299, 301-02 (1906):

An efficient intervening cause is a new proximate cause which breaks the connection with the original cause and becomes itself solely responsible for the result in question. It must be an independent force, entirely superseding the original action and rendering its effect in the causation remote. It is immaterial how many new elements or forces have been introduced, if the original cause remains active, the liability for its result is not shifted. . . . If . . . the intervening responsible cause be of such a nature that it would be unreasonable to expect a prudent man to anticipate its happening, he will not be responsible for damage resulting solely from the intervention. The intervening cause may be culpable, intentional, or merely negligent." (citation omitted).

In *Hairston v. Alexander Tank*, 310 N.C. 227, 237, 311 S.E.2d 559, 567 (1984), the Supreme Court of North Carolina characterized the *Harton* analysis of the doctrine of intervening negligence as "determinative with respect to this issue." Applying it, the court reversed a grant of judgment *nov* to an automobile dealership, whose employee had failed to tighten the lug nuts on a wheel, causing the wheel to come off and forcing the car to pull over 3.5 miles from the dealership. The driver of the car was killed when a second vehicle (van), which stopped to provide assistance, was struck by a third vehicle (truck), causing the van to crush the car owner against the car. Whether the negligence of the truck driver was or was reasonably foreseeable by the automobile dealer's employee, could not be resolved as a matter of law. *Hairston*, 310 N.C. at 233, 311 S.E.2d at 565.

3. If the plaintiff is claiming insulating negligence, this instruction should be adapted accordingly.

4. See *Strong's*, *supra* note 1 ("Intervening negligence of an outside agency or responsible third person will insulate prior negligence only if the intervening negligence is the sole proximate cause of the injury."(footnote omitted)); *Sloan v. Miller Building Corp.*, 128 N.C. App. 37, 44, 493 S.E.2d 460, 465 (1997) ("Insulating negligence 'is a new proximate cause which breaks the connection with the original cause and becomes itself solely

responsible for the result in question.” (citation omitted)).

5. See *Strong’s*, *supra* note 1 (“If the negligence of the first party continues to be a proximate cause up to the moment of injury, it cannot be insulated by the negligence of a second party.” (footnote omitted)).

6. See *Batts v. Faggart*, 260 N.C. 641, 645, 133 S.E.2d 504, 507 (1963) (quoting *Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Co. v. Kellogg*, 94 U.S. 469, 475 (1876):

The question always is, [w]as there an unbroken connection between the wrongful act and the injury, a continuous operation? Did the facts constitute a continuous succession of events, so linked together as to make a natural whole, or was there some new and independent cause intervening between the wrong and the injury? It is admitted that the rule is difficult of application.)).

7. See *Hester v. Miller*, 41 N.C. App. 509, 513, 255 S.E.2d 318, 321 (1979) (“The foreseeability standard should not be strictly applied. It is not necessary that the whole sequence of events be foreseen, only that some injury would occur.”); *cf. Barber*, 130 N.C. App. at 385–89, 502 S.E. 2d at 915–19 (rejecting an earlier version of this pattern instruction for its failure to include a charge on “reasonable foreseeability”).

8. See *Tabor*, 196 N.C. App. at 748, 675 S.E.2d at 703 (“The test by which the negligent conduct of one is to be insulated as a matter of law by the independent negligent act of another is reasonable unforeseeability on the part of the original actor of the subsequent intervening act and resultant injury.”(citation and internal quotations omitted)); *Adams v. Mills*, 312 N.C. 181, 194, 322 S.E.2d 164, 173 (1984) (“[I]n order for the conduct of the intervening agent to break the sequence of events and stay the operative force of the negligence of the original wrongdoer, the intervening conduct must be of such nature and kind that the original wrongdoer had no reasonable ground to anticipate it.”).

9. For illustrative cases, see *Tabor*, 196 N.C. App. at 749–750, 675 S.E.2d at 704:

Defendant [Kaufman] was traveling on the highway in front of Plaintiff when Defendant came to a sudden stop and turned left without using his turn signal. As a result, Plaintiff and the driver of a vehicle behind her (vehicle two) slammed on their brakes and were able to come to a complete stop on the highway. However, a third vehicle driven by [2nd Defendant] Thibodeaux was unable to stop and collided with the rear of vehicle two, causing vehicle two to collide with Plaintiff’s vehicle . . . . [T]here [is] a genuine issue of material fact as to whether the collision caused by Thibodeaux’s negligence was a foreseeable result of Defendant’s negligent actions.

See also *Hillman v. United States Liability Ins. Co.*, 59 N.C. App. 145, 151–52, 296 S.E.2d 302, 307 (1982), where the defendant braked suddenly and was struck from the rear by the plaintiff who was unable to stop and slid into the defendant. A third vehicle behind the plaintiff came to a complete stop, but a fourth vehicle was unable to stop and collided with the third vehicle pushing it into the rear of the plaintiff’s vehicle. See *id.* at 152, 296 S.E.2d at 307:

In terms of proximate causation[,] it is not unforeseeable that one or more, if not all, of the following cars will not be able to stop in time to avoid a “chain reaction” collision. The probable consequences reasonably to be anticipated from suddenly stopping on a highway are exactly those outlined here, a line of cars undergoing a series of impacts in an unbroken sequence.

See also *Hester*, 41 N.C. App. at 510–14, 255 S.E.2d at 320–21, where the defendant

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abruptly slowed and turned off the road without using a turn signal. The plaintiff braked and came to a complete stop, but a third vehicle traveling behind the plaintiff failed to stop and crashed into the rear of the plaintiff's vehicle. The Court held that the facts did "not establish intervening negligence as a matter of law and that the negligence of the defendant[ ] might have set in motion a chain of circumstances leading up to plaintiff's injuries."

10. See *Clarke v. Mikhail*, 243 N.C. App. 677, 686, 779 S.E.2d 150, 158 (2015) ("Superseding or insulating negligence is an extension of a plaintiff's burden of proof on proximate cause."); see also *Hampton v. Hearn*, \_\_\_ N.C. App. \_\_\_, \_\_\_, 838 S.E.2d 650, 657-59 (2020) (considering and rejecting contention that the party asserting subsequent medical care amounted to insulating negligence in a medical malpractice case must make *prima facie* evidentiary showing of the applicable standard of care and breach of that standard of care).



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105.15 LAST CLEAR CHANCE—BURDEN OF PROOF; DEFINITION; FINAL  
MANDATE.<sup>1</sup>

The (*state number*) issue reads:

"Did the defendant have the last clear chance to avoid the plaintiff's injury or damage?"

You will answer this issue only if you have answered the (*state number*) issue as to the defendant's negligence "Yes" in favor of the plaintiff, and the (*state number*) issue as to the plaintiff's contributory negligence "Yes" in favor of the defendant.<sup>2</sup> Ordinarily such an answer on the contributory negligence issue would be a complete defense. However, there is an exception, called the Last Clear Chance Doctrine, under which the plaintiff's negligence is excused and will not prevent the recovery of damages.

On this (*state number*) issue the burden of proof is on the plaintiff. This means that the plaintiff must prove, by the greater weight of the evidence, the following four things:<sup>3</sup>

First, that the plaintiff negligently placed [himself] [herself] in a position of peril<sup>4</sup> from which [he] [she] could not escape by the exercise of reasonable care.

Second, that the defendant knew, or by the exercise of reasonable care should have discovered,<sup>5</sup> the plaintiff's position of peril and inability to escape from it.

Third, that the defendant had the time and means<sup>6</sup> to avoid [injury] [damage] to the plaintiff and failed to exercise reasonable care to do so;

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And Fourth, that the defendant negligently failed to use the available time and means to avoid injury, and that such failure proximately caused the plaintiff's [injury] [damage].

Finally, as to this (*state number*) issue on which the plaintiff has the burden of proof, if you find, by the greater weight of the evidence, that the plaintiff negligently placed [himself] [herself] in a position of peril from which [he] [she] could not escape by the exercise of reasonable care and that the defendant knew, or by the exercise of reasonable care should have discovered, the plaintiff's position of peril and inability to escape from it; and that the defendant had the time and means<sup>4</sup> to avoid [injury] [damage] to the plaintiff and failed to exercise reasonable care to do so; and that such failure proximately caused the plaintiff's [injury] [damage]; then it would be your duty to answer this issue "Yes" in favor of the plaintiff.

If, on the other hand, you fail to find any one or more of these things, then it would be your duty to answer this issue "No" in favor of the defendant.

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1. If this issue of Last Clear Chance is submitted, the last sentence on N.C.P.I.—Civil 104.10 Motor Vehicles Volume should be deleted from that instruction. See N.C.P.I.—Civil 104.10 Motor Vehicle Volume, note 3.

2. This sentence will be accurate only when there is a single defendant and no agency issue. In more complex situations the judge must give precise instructions as to what answers to what issues will call for an answer to this issue.

3. *Vancamp v. Burgner*, 328 N.C. 495, 498, 402 S.E.2d 375, 376-77 (1991) (quoting *Clodfelter v. Carroll*, 261 N.C. 630, 634-35, 135 S.E.2d 636, 638-39 (1964)).

4. Although a pedestrian who steps in front of an oncoming vehicle is "obviously in peril before she steps directly in front of a the car," such position of peril "must be helpless or inadvertent" to invoke the doctrine of last clear chance. *Culler v. Hamlett*, 148 N.C. App. 372, 379, 559 S.E.2d 195, 201 (2002) (citation omitted). Last clear chance does not apply "where the injured party is at all times in control of the danger and simply chooses to take the risk." *Patterson v. Worley*, \_\_\_ N.C. App. \_\_\_, \_\_\_ 828 S.E.2d 744, 748 (2019) (quoting *Williams v. Odell*, 90 N.C. App. 699, 704, 370 S.E.2d 62, 66 (1988)).

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A pedestrian's contributory negligence places that person in a position of peril if, *immediately preceding the accident*, he or she is unable to escape or avoid injury by the exercise of reasonable care. *Overton v. Purvis*, 154 N.C. App. 543, 549, 573 S.E.2d 219, 224 (2002) (Thomas, J., dissenting), *rev'd*, 586 S.E.2d 265, 357 N.C. 497 (2003) (*reversing for reasons stated in the dissenting opinion of the Court of Appeals*).

5. See *Hofecker v. Casperson*, 168 N.C. App. 341, 349, 607 S.E.2d 664, 669-70 (2005) (Tyson, J., dissenting), *rev'd* 360 N.C. 159, 662 S.E.2d 489 (2005) (*reversed for reasons stated in dissenting opinion of the Court of Appeals*) (summary judgment for the defendant proper on last clear chance issue where plaintiff alleged solely that defendant's "vehicle struck plaintiff while plaintiff was located somewhere in the roadway).

This allegation, standing alone, without a forecast of evidence to show [defendant] failed to maintain a proper lookout or that he could have avoided the accident is insufficient to withstand a motion for summary judgment." (Examples cited in the case include that plaintiff "failed to forecast any evidence [defendant] (1) was driving at a 'greatly excessive speed,' (2) 'had a view of 1,200 to 1,500 feet [or any other significant distance] before the collision,' (3) 'could have moved either to the left or right had he seen' plaintiff and avoided the accident, (4) was preoccupied or distracted prior to the accident; or (5) failed to abide by the rules of the road or traveled in the wrong lane of traffic."). Plaintiff thus "failed to forecast any evidence to show [defendant] was speeding, not paying attention, failed to maintain a proper lookout, or would have reasonably discovered plaintiff's position." *Id.*, 168 N.C. App. at 349, 607 S.E.2d at 670 (citations omitted)).

6. Elaboration will be necessary when lack of means is due to the negligence of the defendant. "If the jury found that a headlight would have enabled the defendant, by due diligence on the part of its servant, to have seen the intestate in time to have stopped the train before reaching him, then the failure to provide one and have it at the front was a continuing negligent omission of duty, the performance of which would have given the defendant the last clear chance to prevent the injury and therefore have made its negligence the proximate cause of it." *Lloyd v. R.R.*, 118 N.C. 1010, 1013, 24 S.E. 805, 806 (1896).





205.50 OVERTAKING AND PASSING ON TWO-LANE HIGHWAY.<sup>1</sup>

The motor vehicle law provides that the driver of a vehicle in overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction on a two-lane highway (*use one or more of the following bracketed statements as the evidence justifies*)

[shall pass at least two feet to the left thereof, and shall not again drive to the right side of the highway until safely clear of the vehicle being overtaken]<sup>2</sup>

[shall not drive to the left side of the center of the highway, unless such left side is clearly visible and is free of oncoming traffic for a sufficient distance ahead to permit such overtaking and passing to be made in safety]<sup>3</sup>

[shall not overtake and pass upon [the crest of a grade] [a curve in the highway] where the driver's view along the highway is obstructed within a distance of five hundred feet]<sup>4</sup>

[shall not drive to the left side of a visible centerline<sup>5</sup> placed by the Department of Transportation upon [the crest of a grade] [a curve] in a highway]]<sup>6</sup>

[shall not overtake and pass at [a railway grade crossing] [a street intersection in a city or town<sup>7</sup>] [a highway intersection designated and marked as such with appropriate signs by the Department of Transportation] (unless permitted to pass by a traffic or police officer)]<sup>8</sup>

[shall not overtake and pass on any portion of the highway which is marked by [signs] [markings] [markers] placed by the Department of

Transportation<sup>9</sup>, stating or clearly indicating that passing should not be attempted].<sup>10</sup>

A violation of [this law] [any of these provisions of law] is negligence within itself.<sup>11</sup>

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1. As the title makes clear, this instruction does "not apply upon a one-way street nor to the driver of a vehicle turning left in or from an alley, private road, or driveway." N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(f). In addition, although N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150 does not specifically contain a limitation to two-lane highways, the provisions thereof "were plainly not intended to apply to multiple highways which . . . furnish parallel lanes on which vehicles moving in the same direction may pass without encountering traffic from the opposite direction." *Byerly v. Shell*, 312 F.2d 141, 143 (4th Cir. 1962).

2. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-149(a); provided that this section shall not apply as to streets in cities and towns upon which local authorities have designated separate lanes for traffic and have clearly marked such lanes upon the surface of such street. See N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150.1. For occasions when passing on the right may be permitted, see N.C.P.I.-Civil 205.60, Motor Vehicle Volume.

3. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(a).

4. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(b). The 500-foot rule applies when there is no center line. When there is a center line on a curve or hill, the center line provision (N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(d)) governs. *Walker v. Bakeries Co.*, 234 N.C. 440, 442, 67 S.E.2d 459, 461 (1951) ("Whether the one statutory regulation or the other applies to the driver of an overtaking vehicle proceeding upon a curve in the highway depends on whether the curve is marked by a visible center line placed upon the highway by the [Department of Transportation]").

See also *Johnson v. Harris*, 166 F. Supp. 417, 421 (M.D.N.C. 1958) (holding that crossing the center line on a curve was negligence within itself). But cf. *Rushing v. Polk*, 258 N.C. 256, 128 S.E.2d 675 (1962), wherein the defendant, after crossing a yellow line (at the crest of a hill) in an attempt to pass, lost control and ran off the road, injuring the plaintiff, a passenger in the defendant's car. The Court held that, with respect to the plaintiff-passenger, crossing the yellow line was not negligence within itself, stating: "[y]ellow lines are designed primarily to prevent collision between an overtaking and passing automobile and a vehicle coming in the opposite direction, and to protect occupants of other cars, pedestrians and property on the highway." *Id.* at 259, 128 S.E.2d at 678 (citations omitted). As support the Court cited *Walker, supra*, in which the N.C. Supreme Court observed: "Although the statute is primarily designed to prevent collision between an overtaking automobile and a vehicle coming from the opposite direction, its provisions are germane to litigation between an overtaking motorist and the driver of an overtaken vehicle if there is evidence to the effect that the underlying accident was occasioned by an unsuccessful effort on the part of the former to pass the latter upon a marked curve. The driver of the overtaken vehicle is certainly not required in such case to anticipate that the latter will attempt to pass in violation of the

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statute." *Walker*, 234 N.C. at 443, 67 S.E.2d at 461. It seems that the decision in *Rushing v. Polk* should be taken as confined to fact situations closely resembling the facts of that case.

5. "[F]or the purposes of [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150] a 'centerline' is a solid yellow line which indicates that passing from the adjacent lane is forbidden." *Croom v. Humphrey*, 175 N.C. App. 765, 768, 625 S.E.2d 165, 167 (2006).

6. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(d). See note 3 *supra*.

7. "[A] private driveway is not an intersecting highway within the meaning of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(c)." *Levy v. Carolina Aluminum*, 232 N.C. 158, 161, 59 S.E.2d 632, 634 (1950).

8. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(c).

9. Solid centerlines are considered "markings" under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(e). 49 N.C.A.G. 1 (1979).

10. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-150(e). *Note Well: If the slower moving vehicle is a bicycle or moped, subsection 20-150(e)'s prohibition on overtaking and passing does not apply, provided the driver of the faster moving vehicle complies with the following: the bicycle or moped is proceeding in the same direction as the faster moving vehicle; the driver of the faster moving vehicle either provides a minimum of four feet between the faster moving vehicle and the bicycle or moped or completely enters the left lane of the highway; the operator of the bicycle or moped is not making a left turn or signaling in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-154 that the operator intends to make a left turn; and the driver of the faster moving vehicle complies with all other requirements as set forth in § 20-150(e).*

11. *Duncan v. Ayers*, 55 N.C. App. 40, 45-46, 284 S.E.2d 561, 565 (1981); see also note 3 *supra*.



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211.40A MOTORIST'S DUTY TOWARD PEDESTRIAN—CROSSING AT OTHER  
THAN CROSSWALKS.<sup>1</sup>

The motor vehicle law provides that a pedestrian: *(Here use one or more of the following bracketed statements as the evidence justifies)*

[shall not cross a roadway, except in a marked crosswalk, at any place between adjacent intersections at which traffic control signals are in operation]<sup>2</sup>

[crossing a roadway at any point other than within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection<sup>3</sup> or a marked crosswalk, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway]

[crossing a roadway at a point where a pedestrian tunnel or overhead pedestrian crossing has been provided, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway].

The motor vehicle law further provides that, despite the duty of the pedestrian to yield the right-of-way, every operator of a vehicle shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian upon any roadway, and shall give warning by sounding the horn when necessary (and shall exercise proper precaution upon observing any [child]<sup>4</sup> [confused or incapacitated person] upon a roadway).<sup>5</sup>

An operator has the right to assume, until put on notice to the contrary, that a pedestrian will obey the law and yield the right-of-way. The mere fact that the pedestrian is oblivious to danger does not impose on the operator a duty to yield the right-of-way. Such a duty arises when, and only when, the operator sees, or in the exercise of reasonable care should see, that the

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pedestrian is not aware of the approaching danger and for that reason will continue to expose [himself] [herself] to peril.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, the operator must exercise that care which a reasonably careful and prudent person would exercise under the existing circumstances. A failure to exercise such care would be negligence.

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1. The evidence in a pedestrian crossing case may be such as to present an issue of Last Clear Chance. See *Wanner v. Alsup*, 265 N.C. 308, 144 S.E.2d 18 (1965). In such a case this instruction might be given in conjunction with the instruction (N.C.P.I.-Civil 105.15) on Last Clear Chance. Last clear chance does not apply where the defendant "did not have 'such a chance as would have enabled a reasonably prudent man in like position to have acted effectively'" to avoid causing injury. *Patterson v. Worley*, \_\_\_ N.C. App. \_\_\_, \_\_\_ 828 S.E.2d 744, 748 (2019) (quoting *Mathis v. Marlow*, 261 N.C. 636, 639, 135 S.E.2d 633, 635 (1964) (citation omitted)).

2. Traffic control signals are devices, signs, or signals used to control vehicles, including stop signs, steady-beam lights, and flashing stop lights. N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-158.

3. For definition of an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, see N.C.P.I.-Civil 211.10, *Anderson v. Carter*, 272 N.C. 426, 158 S.E.2d 607 (1968).

4. See also N.C.P.I.—Civil 211.80 (Children on Highways and Streets).

5. The last portion of this sentence in parentheses should be given only when in the exercise of due care the operator saw or should have seen the child, or the confused or incapacitated person.

6. This paragraph of the instruction is based on *Jenkins v. Thomas*, 260 N.C. 768, 133 S.E.2d 694 (1963). It is also supported by *Wanner v. Alsup*, *supra* note 1.

## 215.31 WINDSHIELD AND WINDOW REQUIREMENTS.

The motor vehicle law provides that (*here use one or more of the following bracketed statements, as the evidence justifies*)

[no motor vehicle with a windshield shall be operated on a highway without a windshield wiper<sup>1</sup> in good working order (and if the vehicle has more than one windshield wiper, all the windshield wipers must be in good working order)].

[it is unlawful for any person to drive a vehicle on a highway or a public vehicular area with a window that does not comply with window tinting restrictions as required by statute].<sup>2</sup>

A violation of [this law] [any of these provisions of law] is negligence in and of itself.

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1. The statute defines wiper as a device used “to clear rain or other substances from the windshield in front of the driver of the vehicle.” N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-127(a).

2. If there is an issue as to window tinting or reflectivity, see N.C. Gen. Stat. § 20-127(b).





MOTOR VEHICLE VOLUME  
DESCRIPTIVE WORD INDEX

(All references are to N.C.P.I.--Civil (Motor Vehicle Volume) instruction numbers)

ACCIDENT, DUTY TO STOP AND RENDER AID, 217.10

ACT OF GOD, 102.26.

ACTIVITY BUSES. See SCHOOL BUSES.

ADMISSIONS, REQUESTS FOR, 101.42.

ADMONITION TO JUDGE ON STATING EVIDENCE AND RELATING THE LAW THERETO,  
101.00.

AGENCY.

Basic charge--issue; definition; burden of proof, 103.10.

Departure from course of employment, 103.50.

Family purpose--complete instruction, 103.75.

Final mandate, 103.70.

Independent contractor, 103.15.

Lent-servant doctrine, 103.25.

Ownership as prima facie proof of agency, 103.40.

Registration as prima facie proof of ownership and agency, 103.45.

Riders in vehicle--authority of agent to permit, 103.65.

Use of agent's own vehicle, 103.60.

Use of motor vehicle by transferee of agent, 103.61.

Willful or intentional injury by agent, 103.55.

ALLEN CHARGE, 150.50.

AMBULANCES. See EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

ANIMALS.

Duties of person riding or driving, 225.35.

Passing horses or other draft animals, 205.70.

ANTICIPATING NEGLIGENCE OF OTHERS.

On issue of contributory negligence, 104.30.

On issue of defendant's negligence, 102.14.

ATTORNEY'S FEES NOT TO BE CONSIDERED BY JURY, 106.49.

BACKING VEHICLES, 205.90.

BICYCLES.

Children riding on or near highway, 211.80.

Lights required, 215.20.

BLIND PERSON--CROSSING AT INTERSECTION, 211.70.

BRAKES.

Required for most motor vehicles, 215.80.

Required for motorcycles, 215.81.

Required for towed vehicles, 215.83.

Required for trucks, 215.82.

BRIDGES--SPEED ON, 202.60.

BURDEN OF PROOF

Definition, 101.10.

Clear, strong, and convincing, 101.11.

BUSINESS OR RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT--SOUNDING HORN FOR PASSING, 205.65.

CAMERAS IN COURTROOM, 100.15.

CHARACTER OF A WITNESS, 101.37.

CHARTS, 101.40.

CHILDREN. See MINORS.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, 101.45.

CLEAR, STRONG, AND CONVINCING EVIDENCE, 101.11.

COASTING PROHIBITED, 225.20.

CONCLUDING INSTRUCTION, 150.45.

CONCURRING NEGLIGENCE, 102.60.

CONSORTIUM, CLAIM FOR LOSS OF

action, 106.80.

damages, 106.85.

CONTENTIONS OF ATTORNEYS, 150.10.

CONTENTIONS OF NEGLIGENCE.

Defendant's negligence, 102.35.

Plaintiff's contributory negligence, 104.35.

Plaintiff's negligence (counterclaim), 108.10.

CONTRIBUTION--NEGLIGENCE OF THIRD PARTY TORT FEASOR, 108.75.

CONTRIBUTORY NEGLIGENCE ISSUE.

Burden of proof, 104.10.

Contentions of, 104.35.

Definition of, 104.10.

Gratuitous passenger or guest,

Duties of, 104.20.

Voluntarily and knowingly riding with drunk driver, 104.21.

Minor between 7 and 14 years of age, 104.25.

No duty to anticipate other's negligence, 104.30.

Pedestrian's violation of motor vehicle laws, 104.24.

Sudden emergency doctrine, 104.40.

Willful or wanton conduct to defeat contributory negligence, 102.86.

Willful or wanton conduct, defense of contributory willful or wanton conduct, 106.87.

CONTROL OF VEHICLE.

General proper control, 201.30.

Skidding, 201.31.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE—DRIVING WHILE USING MOBILE PHONE, 225.13

COURT HAS NO OPINION, 150.20.

CREDIBILITY OF WITNESS, 101.15.

CURVES.

Driving left of center, 204.25.

Passing, 205.50

Speed, 202.20.

DAMAGES—MEASURE OF. See also PERSONAL INJURY DAMAGE ISSUE AND PROPERTY DAMAGE ISSUE.

Irrelevant matters not considered, 106.49.

Loss of use of vehicle, 107.60 (plaintiff); 110.60 (defendant--counterclaim).

Personal injury, 106.00-106.32

Defendant's (counterclaim), issue and burden of proof, 109.00

Property damage, 107.40 (plaintiff); 110.40 (defendant--counterclaim).

Punitive damages, 106.53 (existence of outrageous or aggravated conduct); 106.54 (whether to make award and amount; (106.55) whether to make award--special cases).

Worker's compensation award as set off/deduction, 106.46.

Wrongful death, 106.75.

DEPARTURE FROM COURSE OF EMPLOYMENT, 103.50.

DEPOSITION.

Evidence, 101.43.

Testimony, 100.43.

DISABLED VEHICLES.

Parking on highway, 203.65.

Parking on shoulder, 203.60 (footnote); 203.60A (footnote)

Stopping on highway or bridge (posted speed limit less than 45 miles per hour), 203.65A

Stopping on highway or bridge (posted speed limit more than 45 miles per hour), 203.65B

Trucks--warning signals required, 203.66.

DRAM SHOP LIABILITY.

Common law liability for providing alcohol to person expected to drive, 102.83.

Sale to intoxicated person, 102.81, 102.82.

Sale to underage person, 102.70.

Defense of aiding and abetting sale, 102.75.

DRIVER IDENTIFICATION, 103.41.

DRIVER'S DUTY TO PEDESTRIAN. See PEDESTRIAN.

DRIVING LEFT OF CENTER. See also DRIVING ON RIGHT.

On curves, 204.25.

On hill crests, 204.25.

Passing--two-lane highway, 205.50.

DRIVING ON RIGHT. See also DRIVING LEFT OF CENTER.

Four-lane highway, 204.10.

In general, 204.15.

Intersections, 204.17.

Motorcycles, 204.50.

Mountain highway, 225.30.

Passing on right, 205.60.

Railroad crossings, 204.17.

Slow speed, 204.20.

DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED, 208.10.

DYNAMITE CHARGE, 150.50.

EMERGENCY, SUDDEN, 102.40 (defendant's negligence); 104.40 (contributory negligence).

EMERGENCY, SUDDEN, EXCEPTION TO NEGLIGENCE PER SE, 102.41.

EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

Approaching parked or standing emergency vehicles, 210.41, 210.42.

Chasing firetrucks, 210.30 (inside city limits); 210.31 (outside city limits).

Duty of driver on non-emergency vehicle, 210.15.

Interference with fire equipment, 210.35.

Parking close to, 210.40.

Right-of-way, 210.10.

Speed.

General, 202.80 (Delete Sheet).

Willful or wanton conduct, 202.81.

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS.

Intentional or reckless infliction of, 102.95.

Negligent infliction of, 102.84.

EVIDENCE

Circumstantial, 101.45.

Deposition, 101.43.

Duty to Recall, 101.50.

EXPERT WITNESS, 101.25.

EXPLOSIVES.

Fire extinguishers required on vehicle carrying, 215.70; 215.71.

Marking or flagging vehicle carrying, 215.70; 215.71.

Railway crossings--when vehicle carrying must stop, 203.55.

FAILURE OF JURY TO REACH VERDICT, 150.50.

FAILURE TO REDUCE SPEED, 202.20A.

FAMILY PURPOSE DOCTRINE--COMPLETE INSTRUCTION, 103.75.

FINAL MANDATES.

Agency issue, 103.70.

Contributory negligence issue, 104.50.

Family purpose issue, 103.75.

Last clear chance issue, 105.15.

Loss of use of vehicle--damage issue, 107.60 (plaintiff); 110.60 (defendant--counterclaim).

Negligence issue, 102.50 (defendant's negligence); 108.50 (plaintiff's negligence--counterclaim).

Personal injury damage issue, 106.50 (plaintiff's); 109.50 (defendant's--counterclaim).

Property damage issue, 107.50 (plaintiff's); 110.50 (defendant's--counterclaim).

Wrongful death damage issue, 106.75.

FIRE TRUCKS AND FIRE DEPARTMENT VEHICLES. See EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

FLAG REQUIREMENTS.

Disabled trucks, 203.66.

Protruding load, 215.25.

Vehicles carrying explosives, 215.70.

FLAT TRUCKS--SECURING LOAD, 215.60.

FOLLOWING TOO CLOSELY.

Generally, 205.30.

Overtaking vehicle, 205.32.

FOREPERSON OF JURY--SELECTION OF, 150.40.

FUNCTION OF JURY, 101.05.

GLASS--SAFETY GLASS REQUIRED, 215.30.

GREATER WEIGHT OF THE EVIDENCE, 101.10.

GUEST PASSENGER

Duties of, 104.20.

Knowingly riding with drunk driver, 104.24.

HEADLIGHTS. See LIGHTS.

HILLS.

Driving left of center, 204.25.

Passing, 205.50.

Speed, 202.20.

HITCHHIKING, 211.55.

HORN SOUNDING.

Mountain highways, 225.30.

Passing, common law duty, 205.65.

Passing outside business or residential district, 205.66.

IDENTIFICATION OF DRIVER, 103.41.

ILLUSTRATIVE EVIDENCE, 101.40.

IMPEACHMENT OF WITNESS.

By character evidence, 101.37.

By cross-examination as to prior conviction of crime, 101.36.

By prior inconsistent statement, 101.35.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR, 103.15.

INFLATION NOT TO BE CONSIDERED BY JURY, 106.49.

INSULATING NEGLIGENCE, 102.65.

INSURANCE NOT TO BE CONSIDERED BY JURY, 106.49.

INTERESTED WITNESS, 101.30.

INTERROGATORIES, 100.44.

INTERSECTIONS.

Blind persons crossing, 211.70.

Passing at, 205.50.

Pedestrians crossing, 211.10.

Right-of-way.

First vehicle entering, 203.07.

Signal lights inside corporate limits where ordinance introduced in evidence, 203.35.

Signal lights inside corporate limits where ordinance not introduced, 203.36.

Stop signs, 203.10, 203.15.

Vehicle control signal outside corporate limits, 203.30.

Vehicle on right, 203.06.

Yield signs, 203.28.

Speed at, 202.20.

Turning left, 209.15.

Turning right, 209.10.

INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS.

Crossing central dividing line, 221.10.

Entering and exiting, 221.25.

Failing to yield right-of-way, 221.35.

Improper lane, 221.20.

Stopping on, 221.30.

Turns on, 221.15.

Wrong way on, 221.20.

ISSUES--GENERAL EXPLANATION, 101.60.

JUDGE HAS NO OPINION, 150.20.

JUDGE'S RECAPITULATION OF EVIDENCE, 101.00.

JUDICIAL NOTICE, 101.14.

JUROR, NOTE TAKING, 100.70.

JURY BASE VERDICT ON FACT NOT CONSEQUENCES, 150.12.

JURY DISCHARGE, 150.60.

JURY FAILURE TO REACH VERDICT, 150.50.

JURY TO CONSIDER ALL CONTENTIONS, 150.10.

JURY TO CONSIDER ONLY MATTERS IN EVIDENCE, 106.49.

LANE.

Duty to drive in proper, 204.09.

Slow driver in right, 204.20.

LAST CLEAR CHANCE--COMPLETE INSTRUCTION, 105.15.

with Memo--when to give instruction.

LENT-SERVANT DOCTRINE, 103.25.

LICENSE.

Operating without license and under age, 220.10.

Permitting operation by unlicensed driver, 220.20, 220.21.

LIGHTS.

- Bright lights prohibited when parked, 203.71.
- Dimming headlights required, 205.80.
- Night parking on highway, 203.70, 203.71.
- Protruding load, 215.25.
- Required lights--bicycles, 215.20.
- Required lights--most motor vehicles, 215.10.
- Required lights--most motor vehicles and motorcycles--stoplights, 215.11.
- Required lights--motorcycles, 215.15; 215.16.

LIMITING INSTRUCTION AS TO PARTIES, 101.32.

LIMITING INSTRUCTION AS TO PURPOSE, 101.33.

LIQUOR--DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED, 208.10.

LOOKOUT--DUTY TO KEEP, 201.20.

MANDATES. See FINAL MANDATES.

MAPS, 101.40.

MEETING VEHICLES--KEEPING TO RIGHT, 205.10.

MINORS.

- Contributory negligence of child between 7 and 14 years of age, 104.25.
- Children (including those on bicycles) on highways and streets, 211.80.
- Duty of motorist toward child on highway, 211.40, 211.45, 211.80.
- Negligence of minor between seven and fourteen years of age, 102.13.
- Negligence of minor between fourteen and sixteen years of age, 102.13A.
- Operating without license and under age, 220.10.
- Parent's claim for negligent injury to, 106.87.
- Transporting in open bed of vehicle, 211.82

MITIGATION OF DAMAGES, 106.45.

MODELS, 101.40.

MODEL MOTOR VEHICLE NEGLIGENCE CHARGE and VERDICT SHEET, 100.00.

MOPED OPERATOR (UNDER AGE), 235.37.

MOTION PICTURES, 101.40.

MOTORCYCLES.

- Brakes required, 215.81.
- Full use of a lane permitted, 204.52.
- Helmets required for riders, 215.55.
- Lights required, 215.11; 215.15; 215.16.
- More than two abreast prohibited, 204.51.
- Overcrowding, 215.55.
- Rear view mirror required, 215.38.

NARROW OR WINDING ROADWAY, 202.20, 225.30.

NEGLIGENCE ISSUE.

- Burden of proof, 102.10.
- Concurring negligence, 102.60.

Defendant's negligence, 102.10.

Definition of common law negligence, 102.11

Definition of negligence per se, 102.12.

Joint conduct, multiple tortfeasors, 102.90.

Negligence of minor between seven and fourteen years of age, 102.13.

Negligence of minor between fourteen and sixteen years of age, 102.13A.

No duty to anticipate negligence, 102.14.

Plaintiff's negligence (counterclaim), 108.10.

Stipulation, 102.10A

Sudden emergency, 102.15.

Third party tortfeasor, contribution, 108.75.

Willful or wanton conduct, 102.85

Willful or wanton conduct--defense of contributory, willful or wanton conduct, 102.87.

Willful or wanton conduct to defeat contributory negligence, 102.86.

#### NEGLIGENCE PER SE.

Definition, 102.12.

Sudden emergency exception, 102.16; 102.41.

Violation of safety statute, 102.25.

"NO CONTACT" RULE, 102.21; 102.24.

NO PASSING SIGNS, 205.50, 205.51.

NOTE-TAKING BY JURORS, 100.70.

ONE-WAY TRAFFIC, 204.80.

OPENING STATEMENT, 100.10.

#### OVERLOADING AND OVERCROWDING.

Motorcycles, 215.55.

Other vehicles, 215.50.

OWNERSHIP OF VEHICLE AS PRIMA FACIE PROOF OF AGENCY, 103.40.

PARKING. See also LIGHTS.

On highway, 203.65.

On highway, posted speed of less than 45 mph, 203.65A

On highway, posted speed of more than 45 mph, 203.65B

On shoulder of highway, 203.60.

Setting brakes, etc., 203.75.

Too close to emergency vehicle, 210.40.

PASSENGERS. See RIDERS IN VEHICLE.

#### PASSING.

Crossing center line, 204.25, 205.50.

Meeting vehicles, 205.10.

No passing signs, 205.50, 205.51.

On two-lane highway, 205.50.

Overtaken vehicle to give way, 205.55.

Passing animals, 205.70.



Passing on right, 205.60.

Railway grade crossings, 205.50.

Sounding horn, 205.65 (common law duty); 205.66 (outside business or residential area).

When overtaken vehicle stopped for pedestrian, 211.20.

#### PEDESTRIANS.

Blind pedestrians at intersections, 211.70.

Contributory negligence when violating motor vehicle laws, 104.24.

Crossing at intersection, 211.30 (with special pedestrian control signals); 211.35 (with vehicular traffic signals); 211.46 (motorist's duty).

Crossing at other places, 211.01 (motorist's duty with special pedestrian signals); 211.30 (with special pedestrian control signals); 211.36 (with vehicular traffic signals).

Crossing highway in crosswalk, 211.10.

Crossing highway where no crosswalk, 211.40.

Driver's duty to,

At crosswalk or intersection, 211.10.

At intersection or other place with special pedestrian signals, 211.01.

Turning at intersection with traffic lights, 211.46.

Of following driver when vehicle stopped for pedestrian, 211.20.

Hitchhiking, 211.55.

Lookout duty of, 211.75 (with right-of-way); 211.76 (without right-of-way).

Motorist's duty toward, 211.40A (at crosswalk); 211.45A (walking on highway).

Soliciting business, etc. on highway, 211.56.

Standing or loitering on highway, 211.56.

Standing, sitting or lying on highway to obstruct traffic, 211.50.

Walking on left of highway, 211.45.

When vehicle stopped for pedestrian--duty of following driver, 211.20.

#### PER DIEM ARGUMENT, 106.51.

#### PEREMPTORY INSTRUCTION, 101.65.

#### PERSONAL INJURY DAMAGE ISSUE--STATEMENT OF; BURDEN OF PROOF. See also DAMAGES.

Defendant's (counterclaim), 109.00.

Plaintiff's 106.00.

#### PHOTOGRAPHS, 101.40.

#### POLICE VEHICLES. See EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

#### PRESUMPTIONS, 101.62.

#### PRIOR INCONSISTENT STATEMENT OF WITNESS, 101.35.

#### PROPERTY DAMAGE ISSUE--STATEMENT OF: BURDEN OF PROOF.

Defendant's (counterclaim), 110.10.

Plaintiff's 107.10.

#### PROXIMATE CAUSE.

Act of God, 102.26.

- Definition, 102.19.
- General instruction, 102.20.
- Insulating negligence, 102.28, 102.65.
- Joint and concurring negligence, 102.27, 102.60.
- Multiple causes, 102.19, 102.60.
- "No contact" rule, 102.21; 102.24.
- Peculiar Susceptibility, 102.20.

#### PUNITIVE DAMAGES.

- Defendant's liability, 106.60.
- Existence of malicious conduct, wrongful death case, 106.53A.
- Existence of outrageous or aggravated conduct, 106.53.
- Insurance company's bad faith failure to settle claim, 106.53B.
- Whether to make award and amount, 106.54; 106.61.
- Whether to make award--special cases, 106.55.

#### RACING ON HIGHWAYS AND STREETS, 213.10.

#### RAILROAD CROSSING.

- Buses and trucks to stop, 203.55.
- Operator's (Driver's) duty of care at, 203.59.
- Passing at, 205.50.
- Railroad's duty of care at,
  - Extra hazardous crossing, 203.57.
  - Give warning, 203.56.
  - Keep lookout, 203.56.
  - Maintain, 203.58.
  - Maintain signals, 203.57A.
  - Obstructions, 203.58A.
- Stop signs, 203.50.
- Warning signals, 203.51.

#### REAR VIEW MIRRORS.

- Inside mirrors--most vehicles, 215.35.
- Outside mirrors (including motorcycles), 215.38.
- Pickup trucks, 215.36.
- Vehicles so loaded as to render inside mirror ineffective, 215.37.

#### RECAPITULATION OF EVIDENCE, 101.00.

#### RECESSES, 100.20.

#### RECKLESS DRIVING, 207.10.

#### REGISTRATION OF VEHICLE AS PRIMA FACIE PROOF OF OWNERSHIP AND AGENCY, 103.45.

#### RELATING THE LAW TO THE EVIDENCE, 101.00.

#### RESCUE SQUAD VEHICLE. See EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

#### REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND STIPULATIONS, 101.50.

#### RIDERS IN VEHICLE.

- Authority of agent to invite or permit, 103.65.

Gratuitous passenger or guest.

Duty of, 104.20.

Knowingly riding with drunk driver, 104.21.

RIGHT-OF-WAY. See also PEDESTRIANS.

Emergency vehicles, 210.10, 210.15.

Meeting vehicles, 205.10.

Overtaken vehicle to give way, 205.55.

Private road or drive, 203.29, 225.35.

Traffic circle, 203.05.

Vehicles at intersections.

Duty of driver on dominant highway, 203.20, 203.25.

One vehicle intending to turn left, 203.07 (at intersection); 203.08 (at alley, private road or driveway).

Signal lights, 203.31 (other than at intersections); 203.35 (inside corporate limits where ordinance introduced in evidence); 203.36 (inside corporate limits where ordinance not introduced).

Stop signs, 203.10, 203.15.

Vehicle control signals at intersection, 203.30.

Vehicle on right, 203.06.

Vehicle turning, 209.10 (right); 209.15 (left).

When driver on servient highway has right-of-way, 203.25.

Yield signs, 203.28.

SAFETY ZONE, DRIVING THROUGH, 225.22.

SAFETY STATUTE OR ORDINANCE--VIOLATION AS NEGLIGENCE PER SE, 102.25.

SCHOOL BUSES.

Not to stop on divided highways, 218.50.

Speed limits, 202.40.

Stopping at railway crossings, 203.55.

Stopping for, 218.10.

SCHOOL ZONES--SPEED LIMIT, 202.21.

SHOULDER OF HIGHWAY.

Parking on, 203.60.

Walking on, 211.45.

SIDEWALKS, DRIVING ON, 225.23.

SIGNAL LIGHTS. See RIGHT-OF-WAY.

SKIDDING VEHICLE, 201.31.

SLOW DRIVING.

Driving on right, 204.20.

No prescribed minimum speed, 202.85.

Prescribed minimum speed, 202.90.

SPECIAL HAZARDS--REDUCING SPEED, 202.20.

SPEED.

Basic speed limits, 202.15.

Bridges, causeways and viaducts, 202.60.  
Curve, 202.20.  
Driving too slowly. See Slow Driving.  
Emergency vehicles.  
    General, 202.80 (Delete Sheet).  
    Willful or wanton conduct (gross negligence), 202.81.  
Hill crest, 202.20.  
Intersection, 202.20.  
Failure to reduce, 202.20A.  
Mountain highway, 225.30.  
Narrow or winding roadway, 202.20, 225.30.  
Reasonable and prudent, 202.10.  
Reckless driving, 207.10.  
School and activity buses, 202.40.  
School zones, 202.21.  
Speed competition (racing), 213.10.  
When being passed, 205.55.  
SPEED COMPETITION ON HIGHWAYS AND STREETS, 213.10.  
STARTING--SIGNALS REQUIRED, 206.10.  
STEERING MECHANISM, 215.75.  
STIPULATION OF NEGLIGENCE, 102.10A  
STIPULATIONS, 101.41.  
STOP LIGHTS ON VEHICLES. See LIGHTS.  
STOP SIGNS. See RAILWAY GRADE CROSSINGS; RIGHT-OF-WAY.  
STOPPING--SIGNALS REQUIRED, 206.10.  
STOPPING AFTER ACCIDENT, 217.10.  
STOPPING FOR SCHOOL BUSES, 218.10.  
STOPPING ON HIGHWAY, 203.65.  
STOPPING ON SHOULDER OF HIGHWAY, 203.60.  
STOPPING TO RENDER AID, 217.10  
SUDDEN EMERGENCY, 102.40 (defendant's negligence); 104.40 (contributory negligence).  
SUDDEN EMERGENCY EXCEPTION TO NEGLIGENCE PER SE, 102.41.  
SUMMARIZING THE EVIDENCE, 101.50.  
TAILLIGHTS. See LIGHTS.  
TAXES NOT TO BE CONSIDERED BY JURY, 106.49.  
TELEVISION VIEWERS IN VEHICLES, 225.10.  
TESTIMONY, DEPOSITION, 100.43.  
TEXTING WHILE DRIVING, 225.11  
THIRD PARTY TORT FEASOR NEGLIGENCE, 108.75.  
TIRES--SAFETY REQUIREMENTS, 215.40.  
TOWED VEHICLES.  
    Anti-snaking equipment required, 215.65.

Attachment, 215.65.

Brakes required, 215.83.

TRAFFIC CIRCLE--RIGHT-OF-WAY, 203.05.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS. See RIGHT-OF-WAY.

TURNING.

Signals required, 206.10.

Turning at intersection controlled by buttons, markers or other direction signs, 209.20.

Turning left at intersection, 209.15.

Turning right, 209.10.

UNANIMOUS VERDICT, 150.30.

USE OF VEHICLE--LOSS AS DAMAGES. See DAMAGES.

VERDICT--MUST BE UNANIMOUS, 150.30.

VIDEOTAPE, 101.40.

WEIGHT OF THE EVIDENCE.

Greater weight of--definition, 101.10.

Jury to determine, 101.20.

WILLFUL OR WANTON CONDUCT ISSUE,

Defense of contributory willful or wanton conduct, 102.87.

General, 102.85.

Used to defeat contributory negligence, 102.86.

WINDSHIELD AND WINDOW REQUIREMENTS, 215.30, 215.31.

WITNESS.

Credibility, 101.15.

See IMPEACHMENT OF WITNESS.

WRONGFUL DEATH DAMAGES, 106.40-106.56

Punitive damages, 106.91.

X-RAYS, 101.40.

YIELD SIGNS. See RIGHT-OF-WAY.

