# TAPPAHANNOCK SCHOOL ZONE SPEED SAFETY PROGRAM

***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

## General Information

The Town of Tappahannock is implementing a School Zone Speed Safety Program to improve roadway safety and encourage compliance with posted speed limits. The program is part of broader traffic-safety efforts focused on reducing dangerous speeding behaviors and creating safer conditions for students, pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and all road users throughout the community.

Prior to selecting system locations, Tappahannock conducted traffic engineering reviews, speed studies, and roadway evaluations in school zones throughout the town.

These studies identified locations where speeding was occurring and provided objective data to help determine where additional safety measures could be most effective. The Town used this information, along with school-zone planning requirements, to identify locations where speed safety devices could most effectively support roadway safety.

The School Zone Speed Safety Program is designed to encourage long-term changes in driver behavior through consistent and fair enforcement. School Zone Speed Safety Programs supplement traditional police enforcement efforts by helping improve compliance with posted speed limits in areas where speeding has been identified as a concern. The program's success will be measured by improved speed compliance and safer roadways, not by the number of citations issued. Consistent public education, transparency, and community awareness are important components of the program's overall safety mission.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What is the School Zone Speed Safety Program?**
The School Zone Speed Safety Program is designed to identify only vehicles traveling above the established enforcement threshold and to support the administration of speed enforcement in approved locations. All potential violations are reviewed before a citation is issued.

**Why is Tappahannock implementing a School Zone Speed Safety Program?**
Excessive speed increases both the likelihood and severity of crashes and reduces a driver's ability to react to unexpected situations. Tappahannock is implementing a school zone speed safety program as part of its ongoing commitment to improving roadway safety and encouraging compliance with posted speed limits.

**What are the goals of the program?**
The goals of the program are to:

- Improve compliance with posted speed limits
- Reduce dangerous speeding behavior
- Improve safety near schools and other identified locations
- Encourage long-term changes in driver behavior
- Reduce the risk of crashes and serious injuries

**Is this program intended to generate revenue?**
No. The program is intended to improve roadway safety and encourage compliance with posted speed limits. Under Virginia law, civil penalties collected by the locality are used to support the photo speed monitoring program. Funds exceeding program costs must be dedicated to eligible transportation and traffic-safety initiatives.

## LOCATION & ENFORCEMENT BASICS

**How will I know if I am in a speed camera zone?**
"Photo enforced" signs on the designated roads will alert drivers that speed cameras may be used in that area.

**Where will School Zone Speed Safety Devices be located?**
The following locations are scheduled to begin a warning period on November 16, with citation enforcement beginning December 16:

- Tappahannock Elementary School
- Essex High School

**How were enforcement locations selected?**
Locations were selected using traffic engineering reviews, speed studies, roadway evaluations, and school-zone planning requirements. The Town evaluated traffic conditions at multiple locations to determine where additional speed-management measures could most effectively improve safety.

**Are systems active only during school hours?**
Yes. Tappahannock's School Zone Speed Safety Program will operate during designated school-zone hours, while flashing school-zone lights are activated.

**Will warning notices be issued before citations?**
Yes. The program will begin with a 30-day warning period. During this period, eligible violations will receive warning notices instead of monetary penalties.

**What speed will trigger a citation?**
Virginia law permits automated speed enforcement for vehicles traveling at least 10 mph above the posted speed limit. Tappahannock's program is configured to issue citations at 11 mph or more above the posted speed limit.

**Are citations reviewed before they are issued?**
Yes. A citation is not issued based on the camera alone. Recorded images are reviewed and the violation must be verified before a citation is issued.

**Is the equipment tested and calibrated?**
Yes. All speed safety equipment is tested and calibrated before being placed into service and undergoes routine testing and certification to ensure accuracy.

## CITATIONS & VIOLATIONS

**How much is a citation?**
Tappahannock's civil penalty is $100. Virginia law permits a civil penalty of up to $100 for violations issued through a photo speed monitoring program.

**Who receives the citation?**
Citations are mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle.

**How will I receive a citation?**
Citations are mailed to the registered owner using vehicle registration information maintained by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

**Does a citation affect my driving record?**
No. Speed safety citations are civil violations and do not result in points against a driver's license.

**What information is included on a citation?**
The citation provides information about the alleged violation, the civil penalty, payment instructions, and how to contest the violation. It also provides information necessary to review the evidence associated with the alleged violation.

## PAYMENTS & HEARINGS

**How can I pay a citation?**
Citations may be paid through the methods identified on the citation notice and payment portal.

- **To pay online:** You may view your citation images and pay your fine at www.onlinecitationpayment.com.
- **To pay by phone:** Call toll-free at (866) 271-1171 to pay by credit card 24/7. Between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday, a representative will assist you with payments or questions.
- **To pay by mail:** To pay the citation, mail the return coupon from your fine notice along with a check or money order [NO CASH] payable to Town of Tappahannock. To ensure proper processing, print the citation number on your payment. Send payment to:

  **Town of Tappahannock, VA**
  **C/O Payment Processing Center**
  **PO Box 831185**
  **Philadelphia, PA 19182-1185**

**Can I view the images from my citation?**
Yes. Violation images may be viewed through the program website using the citation number and PIN provided on the notice.

**How do I contest a citation?**
Instructions for contesting an alleged violation are provided with the citation. Individuals who wish to contest a citation should follow the instructions and deadlines provided on the notice.

**What happens if I request a hearing?**
If a hearing is requested, the evidence associated with the violation will be reviewed as part of the adjudication process.

**What evidence is available during a hearing?**
Evidence may include violation photographs, speed data, equipment calibration records, and system maintenance records, when applicable.

## PRIVACY, DATA RETENTION & SECURITY

**Are speed safety cameras used for surveillance?**
Virginia law limits speed cameras to collecting information needed to enforce speed violations and places restrictions on how that information can be used and shared.

**Can the cameras track where I travel?**
No. Speed safety Devices cannot identify the people inside a vehicle — the equipment has no facial recognition capability. Unlike ALPR and other surveillance systems, Speed Safety Devices are built to document a vehicle's speed and license plate for a specific violation, not to recognize or track individuals.

**Does the system use facial recognition technology?**
No. The Speed Safety Program does not use facial recognition technology.

**Who owns the data collected by the program?**
The Town of Tappahannock owns all program-related data.

**Who can access program data?**
Access to program data is limited to authorized personnel involved in administering and enforcing the program. Virginia law also restricts how information collected by photo speed monitoring devices may be used and disclosed.

**What information is captured when a violation occurs?**
The system captures images of the vehicle, license plate information, and data necessary to verify and process the violation.

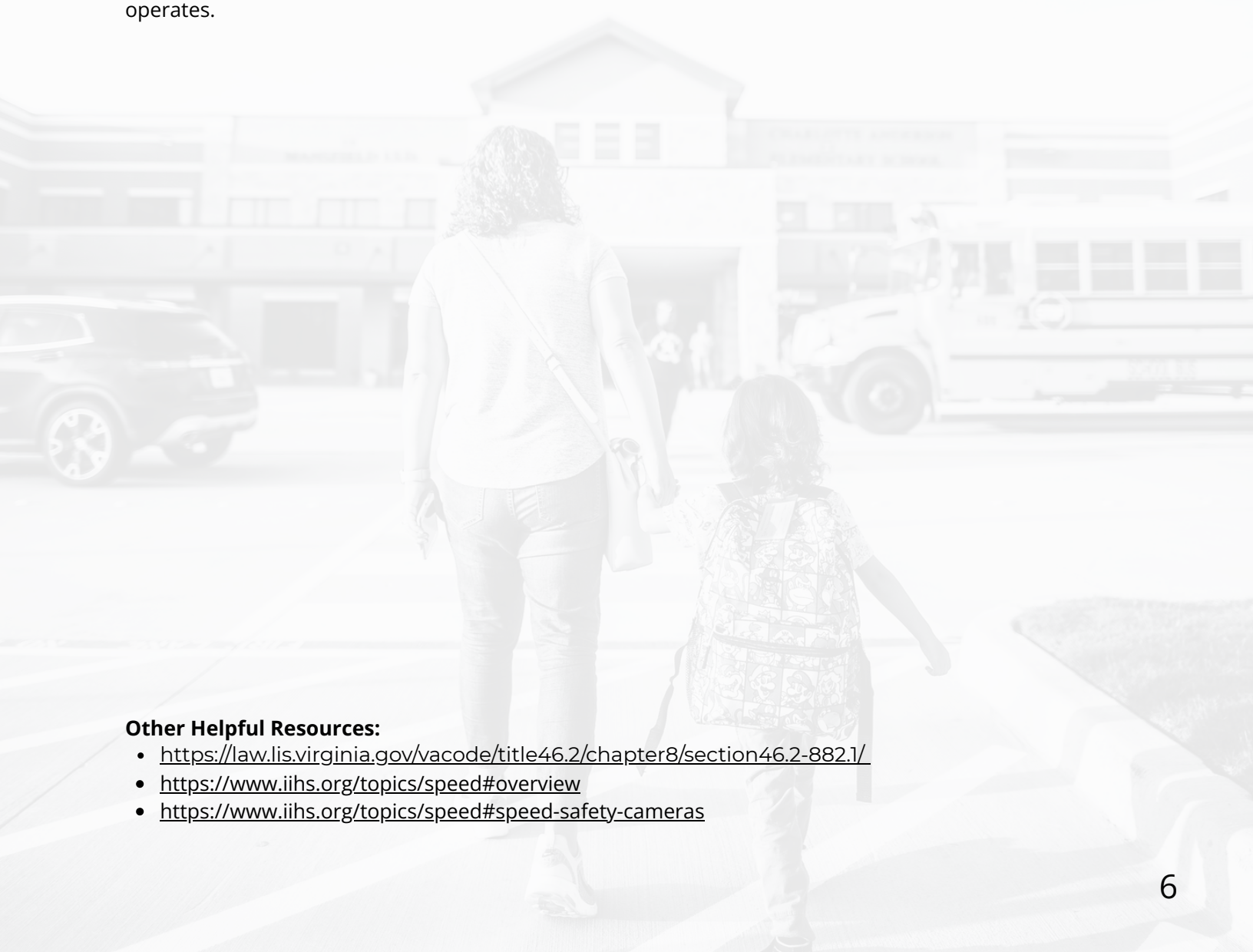
**How long is violation data retained?**
Virginia law establishes specific retention requirements for information collected through photo speed monitoring devices. Information is retained only as permitted for the enforcement and resolution of a violation and is purged in accordance with applicable statutory requirements.

**How is my information protected?**
Program data is protected through encryption, access controls, and other security safeguards. Access is restricted to authorized personnel, and Virginia law limits how information collected through photo speed monitoring devices may be used and disclosed. Information is retained and purged in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## QUICK FACTS

- Two school zones: Tappahannock Elementary School and Essex High School.
- Speed safety devices operate during designated school-zone periods while flashing school-zone lights are activated.
- Tappahannock's citation threshold is 11 mph or more above the posted speed limit.
- A 30-day warning period occurs before citations are issued.
- Potential violations are human-reviewed before citations are issued.
- Citation amount: $100 civil penalty.
- Program information is subject to Virginia's statutory use, disclosure, and retention requirements.
- The program is designed to improve traffic safety and speed compliance.

The Tappahannock School Zone Speed Safety Program is focused on improving safety in areas where speeding puts students and other road users at risk. Through consistent enforcement, public education, and transparency, the Town aims to encourage safer driving and greater compliance with posted speed limits. Residents are encouraged to review available program information and learn how the program operates.



**Other Helpful Resources:**

- https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title46.2/chapter8/section46.2-882.1/
- https://www.iihs.org/topics/speed#overview
- https://www.iihs.org/topics/speed#speed-safety-cameras