

DID YOU KNOW???

IN DEPTH MEANING OF TRAFFIC SIGNAL ARROWS

Most drivers have a good idea of the meaning of red, yellow, and green traffic signal arrows, but many aren't sure of what they can or can't do legally or safely when facing these arrows. The purpose of this article is to clarify the meaning for the most common traffic signal arrows that a motorist is apt to encounter when driving, not just in Franklin County but anywhere in the US.

Steady Red Arrow

In New York State, Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL) prohibits any turn in the direction indicated by a steady red arrow. However, if your intended movement is allowed by another signal indication, you may make that movement. An example might be a ball green light plus a red left turn arrow. In this case, you may proceed straight or turn right, but not left because of the red left turn arrow, even if there is no oncoming traffic. In some states, a right turn on a red arrow is permitted and in others, a right turn on a red arrow is allowed when coupled with a sign that reads "RIGHT ON RED ARROW AFTER STOP", but this is not allowed anywhere in New York.

Steady green arrow

A steady green arrow means traffic movement in the direction indicated by the green arrow is permitted, and furthermore, is not normally in conflict with any other allowable movement, including pedestrians. However, traffic proceeding on a green indication is always required to yield the right of way to other traffic already within the intersection. Furthermore, a senior citizen, or a disabled person, may start crossing the highway as soon as they see the walk signal, but they may not reach the other side before conflicting traffic gets a green indication.

Flashing yellow arrow

Previous articles have been written regarding the meaning of the relatively new "flashing yellow arrow" indication now prevalent in more and more intersections. This indication means that a driver may turn in the direction of the flashing yellow arrow but with extreme caution, as conflicting traffic may be present. Traffic proceeding on a flashing yellow arrow is required to yield the right of way to oncoming traffic and pedestrians in adjacent crosswalks. An example of this is at an intersection that has a left turn lane coupled with a left turn green arrow. At some point, the green arrow is followed by a flashing yellow arrow, indicating a left turn may be made with caution, as there may be oncoming traffic. It is also permissible to make the indicated turn by a flashing yellow arrow even if facing a ball red, but this turn **MUST** be made with care.

Red X, green arrows over reversible lanes

A red X and a green arrow are also used to indicate what traffic movements are permitted for reversible lanes, such as encountered in larger cities, including Montreal. When facing a green arrow pointed down, over your lane, it means that lane is open to traffic in your direction, whereas a lane with a red X signal over the lane means that lane is **NOT** open for traffic in your direction.

Pay attention to all traffic signal arrows and drive carefully at all times.