

- d) Park rangers;
 - e) Community college police and school district police;
 - f) Bay Area Rapid Transit District police, transit district peace officers, airport law enforcement; railroad police;
 - g) Legislative sergeants-at-arms;
 - h) Members of the California National Guard; and,
 - i) Probation officers. (Vehicle Code § 25258)
- 2) Provides that any law enforcement agency vehicle driven by a peace officer, including parole officers, in the performance of their duties is an “authorized emergency vehicle.” (Vehicle Code § 165.)
- 3) Defines “parole officer” and limits the extent of their authority as follows:
- a) To conditions of parole, probation, mandatory supervision, or post release community supervision by any person in this state on parole, probation, mandatory supervision, or post release community supervision.
 - b) To the escape of any inmate or ward from a state or local institution.
 - c) To the transportation of persons on parole, probation, mandatory supervision, or post release community supervision.
 - d) To violations of any penal provisions of law which are discovered while performing the usual or authorized duties of the officer's employment.
 - e) To the rendering of mutual aid to any other law enforcement agency. (Penal Code § 830.5)
- 4) Creates the Commission on Correctional Peace Officer Standards and Training to establish standards for the training and professional development of rank-and-file state correctional peace officers, as well as first-line and second-line supervisory state correctional peace officers. (Penal Code § 13600)

This bill:

- 1) Designates this act as the Agent Joshua Byrd Memorial Act.

- 2) Authorizes parole officers to display a steady or flashing blue warning light visible from the front, sides, or rear of their emergency vehicle if they complete a 4-hour classroom training course regarding the operation of emergency vehicles that is certified by the Commission on Correctional Peace Officer Standards and Training.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Purpose of the bill.* According to the author, “Without blue warning lights, other law enforcement officers and first responders are less likely to recognize, assist and support parole officers in the performance of their duties. This is especially important in cases where an officer is transporting someone who is suffering from a medical emergency, such as in the case of Agent Joshue Byrd. Agent Byrd was shot and killed in the line of duty on July 17, 2025. Emergency services were unable to reach the scene, and parole officer vehicles present did not have emergency lights. Agent Byrd’s colleagues were unable to quickly transport him to the ambulance’s staging or the hospital itself, and he passed away from his injuries. When something like this happens, every second counts. The Parole Officers’ branch of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) has been asking for blue lights on their vehicles for years. CDCR has consistently denied this request because of cost. Now, CDCR has issued a new policy allowing certain parole officers to be issued amber lights on their vehicles for celebrations. This new policy begs the question: why is CDCR willing to pay for a purely ceremonial light but not one that is proven to be lifesaving?”
- 2) *Blue Lights.* This bill authorizes parole officers to display a blue warning light to help better identify parole officers and their vehicles to the public and other law enforcement officers. Because vehicles driven by parole officers are defined as emergency vehicles, they are currently authorized to display flashing white, red, and amber lights. Blue lights, on the other hand, are largely limited to law enforcement vehicles only. However, the list of applicable entities is broad and includes probation officers performing significantly similar functions.

Parole officers can be involved in transporting individuals for urgent medical attention or responding quickly to a scene for support. The ability to display blue lights may help with recognition at the scene and the ability for expedited travel in emergency transport situations. A letter in support for SB 962 from the California Correctional Peace Officers Association echoes these points, “[w]ithout blue warning lights, other law enforcement and first responders are

less likely to recognize, assist, and support parole officers in the performance of their duties. This is especially important in cases where an officer is transporting someone suffering a medical emergency. When this happens, every second counts. Parole officers may also be called upon for assistance by other law enforcement during emergencies but cannot display blue warning lights to alert other officers to the scene. This creates unnecessary confusion for the public and officers.”

- 3) *Precedent.* This bill mirrors a previous change made through SB 587 (Atkins, Chapter 286, Statutes 2017), which authorized probation officers to use blue lights on their emergency vehicles after training. The duties of parole and probation officers are similar enough to justify aligning their access to display blue warning lights from their emergency vehicles. In order to utilize blue lights authorized under this bill, a parole officer must first complete a four-hour classroom training course on the operation of emergency vehicles that is certified by the Commission on Correctional Peace Officer Standards and Training.
- 4) *Emergency Vehicles and High-speed pursuit.* This bill does not expand any existing authority of parole officers to conduct high-speed vehicle pursuit, nor does it change any existing training requirements for high-speed vehicle pursuit.
- 5) *Double-referral.* This bill has been double referred to the Senate Public Safety Committee.

RELATED/PREVIOUS LEGISLATION:

SB 349 (Archuleta, 2025) – This bill was substantially similar to SB 962. It would have authorized parole officers to display a blue warning light from their emergency vehicles if the officer completes a certified training course on the operation of emergency vehicles. *This bill failed passage in Senate Appropriations.*

SB 1021 (Archuleta, 2024) – This bill would have authorized parole officers to display the blue warning light from their emergency vehicles if they complete a 4-hour classroom training course regarding the operation of emergency vehicles that is certified by the Standards and Training for Corrections Division of the Board of State and Community Corrections. *This bill failed passage in Senate Appropriations.*

SB 587 (Atkins, Chapter 286, Statutes 2017) – This bill authorizes probation officers to display a blue warning light on their authorized emergency vehicles if

the officer completes an emergency vehicle operations course certified by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, April 1, 2026.)

SUPPORT:

California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) (Sponsor)
California Association of Highway Patrolmen
Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC)

OPPOSITION:

None received

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