



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2009 Wisconsin Act 97
[2009 Senate Bill 278]

U-Turns on Highways

Current law provides that an operator of a vehicle *may not* make a turn to proceed in the opposite direction (U-turn) in certain circumstances, including: (1) at intersections where traffic is controlled by a traffic control signal or by a traffic officer; and (2) in any place where there are signs prohibiting U-turns erected by the authority that maintains the highway.

2009 Wisconsin Act 97:

- Removes the general limitation on U-turns at intersections controlled by traffic control signals.
- Prohibits making U-turns on a curve or near the crest of a grade on an undivided highway where visibility is limited.
- Prohibits making U-turns when unsafe or when the U-turn would interfere with traffic.
- Reverses the holding in a 2001 Wisconsin Court of Appeals case, *In Kaufman v. Postle*, 2001 WI App. 86, 26 N.W. 2d 10. In that case, the court determined that the statutes prohibited a motorist from passing a left-turning vehicle on the right by use of a paved shoulder. Act 97 reverses that decision by specifically allowing a motorist *to pass a left-turning vehicle on the right* by use of either the roadway or a paved shoulder.

Effective date: 2009 Wisconsin Act 27 took effect on January 1, 2010.

Prepared by: Don Salm, Senior Staff Attorney

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.